

Commercial Kitchen Fire Systems Inspections Required

Semi-Annual Inspection & Maintenance

“A trained person who has undergone the instructions necessary to perform the maintenance and recharge service reliably and has the applicable manufacturer’s listed installation manual and service bulletins shall service the wet chemical fire-extinguishing system 6 months apart...and shall include the following:

- (1) A check to see that the hazard has not changed.
- (2) An examination of all detectors, the expellant gas container(s), the agent cylinder(s), releasing devices, piping, hose assemblies, nozzles, signals, all auxiliary equipment, and the liquid level of all non-pressurized wet chemical containers.
- (3) Verification that the agent distribution piping is not obstructed.

The maintenance report, with recommendations, if any, shall be filed with the owner or with the designated party responsible for the system. Each wet chemical system shall have a tag or label securely attached, indicating the month and year the maintenance is performed and identifying the person performing the service. Only the current tag or label shall remain in place.”

-NFPA 17A – 7.3 - Maintenance

To maintain its UL 300 listing and current code requirements, your automatic fire suppression system must be inspected on a semi-annual basis by a licensed company. This maintenance includes testing and verifying functionality of the system, as well as replacing parts as listed in the owner’s manual and NFPA specifications.

Owner’s Responsibility

NFPA 17A – 7.2 – Owner’s Inspection

“Inspection shall be conducted on a monthly basis in accordance with the manufacturer’s listed installation and maintenance manual or the owner’s manual...and shall include the following:

- (1) The extinguishing system is in its proper location.
- (2) The manual actuators are unobstructed.
- (3) The tamper indicators and seals are intact.
- (4) The maintenance tag or certificate is in place.
- (5) No obvious physical damage or condition exists that might prevent operation.
- (6) The pressure gauge(s), if provided, is in operable range.
- (7) The nozzle blow-off caps are intact and undamaged.
- (8) The hood, duct, and protected cooking appliances have not been replaced, modified, or relocated.

If any deficiencies are found, appropriate corrective action shall be taken immediately. The date the inspection is performed and the initials of the person performing the inspection shall be recorded. The records shall be retained for the period between the semi-annual maintenance inspections.

Kitchen Hood Cleaning

The National Fire Protection Association's NFPA 96 requires trained and certified personnel to clean restaurant kitchen hoods and exhausts on a regular basis (NFPA 96-11.4). Their mandated cleaning schedule is as follows:

- Systems serving solid fuel cooking operations: Monthly
- Systems serving high-volume cooking operations such as 24-hour cooking, charbroiling, or wok cooking: Quarterly
- Systems serving moderate-volume cooking operations: Semiannually
- Systems serving low-volume cooking operations, such as churches, day camps, seasonal businesses, or senior centers: Annually

According to NFPA-96 section 11.6.1: "Upon inspection, if found to be contaminated with deposits from grease-laden vapors, the entire exhaust system shall be cleaned by a properly trained, qualified, and certified company or person(s) acceptable to the authority having jurisdiction in accordance with Section 11.4."

The entire exhaust system includes the hood, filters, fan and all associated horizontal and vertical ductwork.

In addition, NFPA-96 section 11.6.2 states: "Hoods, grease removal devices, fans, ducts, and other appurtenances shall be cleaned to remove combustible contaminants prior to surfaces becoming heavily contaminated with grease or oily sludge."

Grease and particulate buildup in the exhaust system is a fire hazard, and greatly impacts on the efficiency and lifetime of mechanical equipment. According to the NFPA, the majority of restaurant fires originate on the kitchen cooking appliances and flares into the kitchen exhaust system. If the entire exhaust system is not cleaned, a significant risk for fire exists whenever cooking appliances are used