



NEWS RELEASE

OFFICE OF LOUISIANA STATE FIRE MARSHAL

Department of Public Safety & Corrections • Public Safety Services

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Post-Flood Requirements for Businesses

Fire Marshal establishes guidelines for safe re-opening of businesses affected by floodwaters

Baton Rouge, LA – As Louisiana business owners scramble to address the damage left by recent floodwaters, the State Fire Marshal's Office has established the following guidelines to assist businesses by facilitating the submission of required documentation prior to reopening. These guidelines will remain in effect until November 30, 2016.

- State law requires that repairs of commercial structures that affect exits, stairs, seating arrangements, fire detection and suppression systems, or other details of construction must be submitted to the State Fire Marshal's Office for review.
- For businesses that received flood damage below four (4) feet from a finished floor and where the repair and replacement of materials and components are to be accomplished without alterations, there is no requirement to submit plans for review. However, if fire-rated construction, such as walls and doors, has been affected, business owners are to call the State Fire Marshal's Office to schedule an inspection after repairs are completed.
- If electrical systems or equipment have been compromised, owners are encouraged to contact their local permitting office for an inspection before restoring electricity to the building. In areas where there may be no permitting authorities, owners should have an inspection conducted by licensed electricians.
- For repairs to businesses that suffered direct flood damage above four (4) feet, or where alterations to the existing structure are proposed, owners are required to submit plans to the State Fire Marshal's Office for review. This can be accomplished online at www.lasfm.org. Click on "OSFM-IMS" button in the introduction box.
- Once received, reviewers will issue a response within 24 hours of receipt of the plans. In the event of unforeseen issues with the submittal, business owners may seek a permit from a local permitting office to

begin construction at their own risk. Please note that owners will be required to correct any deficiencies a review may find.

- There will be no charge for review services or inspections to flood-affected businesses.

The State Fire Marshal's Office further establishes that temporary use of an existing building where a change is proposed will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis and an inspection by the State Fire Marshal's Office will be required to determine if the proposed use is acceptable. Owners can call the office at 1-800-256-5452 to schedule an inspection.

In businesses where an existing fire detection and/or suppression system has been compromised or damaged by the flood, a contractor licensed through the Fire Marshal's Office must inspect and/or repair the system prior to the business being allowed to open. The contractor will need to submit plans to the Fire Marshal's Office, which can be done online as stated above, with a response expected within 24 hours of submission. However, if a response is delayed, the contractor can begin work with the owner assuming all risks. Again, any deficiency found during the review process will need to be corrected before the business opens.

For portable and/or modular industrialized buildings, only those buildings provided by properly registered manufacturers and dealers that contain a state-issued decal will be considered for use. Please note that manufactured (mobile) homes or similar structures for residential use are not acceptable for commercial use.

It must be noted that full compliance with the Life Safety Code and referenced standards is expected in all repairs and/or remodeling.

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