



GADSDEN FIRE DEPARTMENT

Bureau of Fire Prevention

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General Fire Code Requirements for Businesses

The type of business to be performed in any building dictates the needed requirements. However, the following is a general guide to assist potential owners in moving forward with fire code compliance. The Gadsden Fire Prevention Bureau encourages any potential buyer or business owner to contact us to discuss more specific issues early in the process. The following is in no way a complete list of requirements and it is the responsibility of the owner to ensure that they have contacted the Gadsden Fire Prevention Bureau to ensure that all requirements have been completed prior to opening the business to the public.

- 1) Alabama State Law requires that a state licensed architect be utilized for any renovation, or construction of a building greater than 2500 sq. ft. Any building to be utilized for assembly occupancies (churches, schools, auditoriums, restaurants, and night clubs) must enlist an architect and submit drawings to the Building Official, and Fire Marshal for review.
- 2) All businesses must have a commercial grade 10lb or larger fire extinguisher mounted and serviced annually. The number of extinguishers required is 1 extinguisher for every 75 ft. of travel distance.
- 3) A type I hood shall be installed at or above all commercial cooking appliances and domestic cooking appliances used for commercial purposes that produce grease vapors.
- 4) Any new residential occupancy above or below a business of any kind must be equipped throughout with an approved sprinkler system. This is to include the apartment and business occupancy below or above.
- 5) Night clubs, restaurants, or assembly occupancy with a designed occupant load of greater than 100 or greater than 5,000 sq. ft. must install an automatic sprinkler system. (Exception: Churches with an occupant load of 300 or more, or greater than 12,000 sq. ft. are required to do so)
- 6) Any assembly occupancy with a designed occupant load greater than 300 must install a manual fire alarm system.
- 7) Means of egress must be illuminated and lighted exit signs provided.
(Exception: Exits that are used as the main entrance to the building and are clearly identifiable as such)
- 8) No extension cord usage allowed in commercial buildings.
- 9) All electrical panels (breaker boxes) must be labeled.