

# **PUBLIC SAFETY COMPLIANCE PROGRAM** **RAISING THE BAR ON PUBLIC SAFETY**

Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo Emergency Services – Fire Prevention Branch



The following guide for managers and owners of event venues and bars in the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo introduces and explains the Public Safety Compliance Program and its relevance. Please follow this guide carefully as it will be used as an inspection reference by the Public Safety Compliance Team (PSCT).

The Public Safety Compliance Program is dedicated to increasing safety in bars and at special events throughout the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo.

This program works to identify fire and life safety hazards, while raising public awareness of fire prevention.

The PSCT works closely with local businesses, specifically, bars and event venues, to ensure building, fire and safety code compliance.

What does the Public Safety Compliance Team inspect?

Through property inspections, the PSCT promotes an environment that is safe for staff and occupants at bars and special event venues in the Municipality. The inspections are conducted on a random, variable basis and are not prearranged with property owners and managers.

In extreme situations, where listed requirements are not met, the Fire Marshal or a Fire Safety Codes Officer can shut down an event and/or evacuate an establishment until concerns are addressed and remedied.

## THE PUBLIC SAFETY COMPLIANCE TEAM SEEKS COMPLIANCE ON A NUMBER OF CRITERIA FOR BAR OR EVENT VENUES:

### 1. Adherence to the maximum occupant load

- The building's capacity (maximum occupant load) must be clearly stated on the establishment's occupant load certificate, supplied by Regional Emergency Services, which is posted at or near the main entrance.
  - The building's capacity is directly related to fire and life safety precautions, such as:
    - More than 60 people – two exits must be provided.
    - More than 100 people – panic hardware must be installed on exit doors.
    - More than 150 people – fire alarm system is required.
    - The maximum capacity of tent or air-supported structures is based on the area and existing capacity of the tent, not the surrounding compound.

### 2. Imminent fire and life safety hazards

- Exits must not be locked or blocked.
- Establishment must not be overcrowded.
- Building capacity must not be exceeded.

### 3. Open-flame

- Any entertainment involving open-flame requires a permit. This requirement also pertains to bars that serve flaming drinks or ignite alcohol for effect. These activities are not permitted unless approval is granted by the Fire Marshal or a Fire Safety Codes Officer.

### 4. Holiday-themed decorations

- Decorations must not interfere with fire or smoke detectors or sprinkler heads.

### 5. Unsafe exits

- Emergency exits must not be (illegally) padlocked or chained as a means of crowd control or as a security measure.
- Vehicles must not be parked in front of exits.
- Lineups must not block exits.

### 6. Emergency systems

- Functional exit lighting.
- Functional emergency lights.
- Alarm system power.

### 7. Kitchen Hazards

- Range canopy maintenance (grease control) and open-flame environments.

### 8. Electrical hazards

- Portable electrical equipment in tents or air-supported structures.

## OWNERS AND MANAGERS

Owners and managers of bars and event venues are responsible for ensuring that an establishment and/or its equipment meet all fire safety regulations and other licensing standards.

The following checklist is designed to assist managers and owners of establishments in meeting all applicable fire safety regulations.

## COMPLIANCE CHECKLIST

### Check your exits

Are the corridors and aisles leading to the exits clear?

Are the doors and discharge areas free of obstruction? (Obstructions can include patrons, tables, chairs, boxes, temporary service stations, beer tubs, and other items)

Are exit signs lighted and clearly visible?

Do doors have appropriate hardware? (Panic hardware, or, doors that open by a press bar is required if the building's capacity exceeds 100 people.)

### Do exit doors open easily?

- All exit doors must be free of any bolts, bars, chains, or other devices that require keys or special knowledge to open.
- Exit doors must open in the direction of travel and be easily opened from the inside.
- Exits must be free of any outside impediment such as snow or parked cars.
- Exits should never be locked or blocked during business hours.



### Check your stairwells

Are stairs and immediate areas free of storage material and other obstructions?

Do stairwell doors open and close properly?

Are the stairwell doors equipped with proper closures, such as latching and release devices?

### Check your safety equipment

Are the emergency lights, fire extinguishers and fire alarms operational and in good working order?

Is the occupancy load certificate in plain view and located at or near the main entrance?

### Check your occupant load

Is the occupant load certificate in plain view and located at or near the main entrance?

Are door staff aware of the maximum occupant load?

Are door staff keeping record of the number of people in the establishment?

### Check your emergency access route

Is there proper signage to designate the fire lane?

Is there clear access to the main entrance?

Is the route clear of parked vehicles and other obstructions?

Is there clear access to fire hydrants?

Is there clear access to fire hose connections?

Non-compliance with the fire and life-safety requirements of the Alberta Fire Code can result in fines up to \$15,000 or six months in jail. If necessary, further fines of up to \$1,000 a day can be levied.

For more information on the Public Safety Compliance Program, or building, fire and safety code compliance, please visit [www.rmwb.ca/fireprevention](http://www.rmwb.ca/fireprevention), or, call the Fire Prevention Branch at **780.792.5519**.