

PORTLAND FIRE & RESCUE

May 3, 2018



FIR 1.11 - UNSAFE BUILDINGS ALERT PROGRAM

I. SCOPE

- A. This policy is established January 15, 2008.
- B. Applies to all commercial occupancies where PF&R has authority.
- C. This policy provides a tool for identifying structures that due to their construction, use, or their state of maintenance; pose extraordinary hazards to emergency personnel.
- D. A structure will be identified as an “Unsafe Building” only when it presents a significant threat to firefighter safety.

II. SPECIFIC

- A. References
 - 1. 2016 Portland Fire Code (PFC)
 - 2. 2014 Oregon Structural Specialty Code as adopted by Portland

III. GUIDANCE

- A. The following criteria shall be considered when determining if a building will receive an “Unsafe Building” designation:
 - 1. Unexpected and extraordinarily unusual conditions are present in the building. The standard here is the dangerous conditions may be unnoticeable to arriving personnel.
 - 2. Unrepaired fire damage or extensive interior demolition that may not be noticeable from the outside, and where the repair work has been suspended indefinitely.
 - 3. Buildings that have been altered substantially without permits resulting in a dangerously substandard building or a confusing floor plan.
 - 4. Substantial structural problems without plans for repair or demolition. This condition is commonly caused by a leaking roof. Over time, the roof itself, and the floor structure below may be affected causing structural deterioration.
 - 5. An unreinforced masonry building (URM) that has substantial settling and cracking of the brick walls.

- B. There are various hazardous conditions that when found, should be addressed and rectified by the building owner as soon as possible. A building may be designated as an "Unsafe Building" until the hazardous conditions are corrected.
- C. Posting signage for unsafe buildings
 1. A building identified as an "Unsafe Building" will have a sign posted above (or near) the main entrance, and any other possible entry points to warn firefighters the building is unsafe.
 2. The sign will have a white letter "U" over a red reflective background and will be clearly visible from the street. The use of this sign shall be informational only, and shall not in any way limit the discretion of the on-scene Incident Commander. The building owner will be responsible for placing the sign(s) on the building as directed by the assigned FMO Inspector.
 3. Signage will be available from the Fire Marshal's Office.

Sign examples



- D. Removal of compliant situations
 1. When a building is determined to no longer be significant threat to firefighter safety the information shall be forwarded to the Fire Marshal, or designee, to be removed from the "Unsafe Buildings List".

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Reviewed By:	A. Jackson
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