

TACOMA FIRE DEPARTMENT

Information Bulletin



Fire Escape Testing

Both building occupants and fire fighters may use fire escapes during emergencies. To ensure fire escapes work properly, they must be visually inspected every six months and load tested every five years. There are professional testing agencies listed in the phone book. Check the yellow pages under fire escapes and fire protection, or contact a licensed structural engineer.

BI-ANNUAL VISUAL INSPECTION

The building owner or designated representative needs to verify:

- Bolts and supports are not damaged or rusted.
- Paint is in good condition.
- All moving parts, ladders, stairs, windows, and doors are operable.

The attached documentation form for the inspection shall be sent to the Fire Prevention Division (3471 S. 35th St. Tacoma, WA 98409) and a copy kept at the building.

FIVE-YEAR STRESS (LOAD) TEST

The stress test shall be designed by and performed under the observation of an agency approved by the Fire Department or a structural engineer licensed by the State of Washington.

The engineer or testing agency will need the following information:

The stress test shall subject the fire escape stairways and their balconies to a uniform proof load of 200 pounds per square foot in addition to the dead loads. The proof loading for the railings and ladders shall be 150 percent of the

required even and concentrated service loads. The required even and concentrated horizontally applied service loads are: 50 pounds per lineal foot and 200 pounds concentrated load for railings; and 100 pounds per lineal foot and 500 pounds concentrated load for ladders. Fire escapes failing the stress test shall be repaired if approved or removed from the building and replaced with stairways meeting the requirements for stairways in new construction.

Documentation of the stress test shall be sent to the Fire Prevention Division with a copy kept at the building.

REPAIRS

If any structural repairs are needed, a building permit must be obtained for the work prior to the repairs being made. Contact the Building and Land Use Services Division (BLUS) at (253) 591-5030.





Tacoma Fire Department

Fire Escape Bi-Annual Checklist

Any person owning, operating, or maintaining occupancy or premises subject to the Fire Code shall ensure all fire escapes and balconies are operated bi-annually to determine that all moving parts (ladders, stairs, windows, doors) are operable.

Indicate the items listed below have been checked and are acceptable.

Bolts and supports are not damage or rusted	Pass	Fail
Paint is in good condition	Pass	Fail
All moving parts, ladder, stairs, windows, and doors are operable.	Pass	Fail

Address of building: _____

Name of building: _____

Person conducting evaluation:

Print name: _____

Signature: _____

Date of inspection: _____

Report detail of an item that failed
