



**City of Manassas Fire & Rescue Department  
Office of the Fire Marshal  
9324 West Street Suite 204  
Manassas, Virginia 20110  
703-257-8455 or 703-257-8233  
email: firemarshal@ci.manassas.va.us**

## **Overview of Fire Safety for Assembly Occupancies**

### ***What is Assembly Occupancy?***

An Assembly Occupancy is any building or portion of a building in which 50 or more persons gather for such purposes as deliberation, worship, entertainment, dining, amusement, or awaiting transportation.

### ***What is your responsibility to your staff and patrons?***

The owner or person responsible for the operation of the assembly occupancy shall check all exits before the buildings or space is occupied.

If the exits are impaired or need corrective action the building should not be opened to the public until the impairment has been corrected.

Ensure that the Occupant Load sign is posted in a conspicuous location near the main exit.

Train your staff to maintain an accurate count of patrons entering and exiting your establishment.

Train your staff on how to activate fire alarm systems, notify emergency services, evacuate customers, and use the available fire suppression equipment.

### ***Important terms:***

**Occupant Load** – The maximum number of persons that can safely occupy a space or building with consideration of the number and size of exits available.

**Means of Egress** - Three separate components that are identified as: the exit access path, the exit doorway, and the exit discharge outside of the building. All three areas must be kept clear at all times.

**Emergency Lighting** - Lighting provided to illuminate the exit pathway in case of a power failure that operates on a re-chargeable battery pack.

**Special Performance Features** - Components or hardware that enhance building safety by reducing fire and smoke spread by isolating the fire. These are commonly identified as "fire doors" or "fire partitions."

## **Tips to avoid problems:**

Be alert to any potential fire dangers.

Keep all exits unobstructed at all times.

Prior to the start of special events, announce the location of the exits.

Maintain an accurate count of patrons at all times to ensure compliance with your occupant load.

Ensure that all decorative finishes are not flammable.

Do not block fire lanes.

Have your commercial kitchen hood steam cleaned every six months

Periodically check all electrical, heating, and cooling systems, fire detection, and fire suppression systems.

Designate an area for smoking and provide non-flammable ashtrays.

The use of candles or open flame devices must be approved by the Fire Marshal. This includes the use of flame producing devices on tables.

## **Fire Marshal Inspection Program**

The Office of the Fire Marshal periodically inspects places of assembly throughout the year both during the day and at night. Fire Marshal's meet with the on-duty manager and review any unsafe issues. We expect all places of assembly to comply with the posted occupant load and to maintain a safe environment for patrons.

Please contact the Office of the Fire Marshal if you have any questions at 703-257-8233 or 703-257-8455.

***Thank you for helping to keep Manassas  
a fire-safe community.***