MY KITCHEN FIRE SUPPRESSION SYSTEM INSPECTION REPORT: WHAT IS IT TELLING ME?
Having a kitchen fire suppression system is the first step in mitigating risk and staying in compliance with fire codes. The next step is to keep the system maintained, including regular 6-month inspections. These inspections will help keep you informed of possible deficiencies and in line with code compliance. They also help to lessen the chance of unwanted discharges which most often occur from failure to properly maintain.

THE SUPPRESSION SYSTEM INSPECTION:

A 6-month fire suppression system inspection should always be performed by a certified professional fire safety company. Most inspections are scheduled during slow or off hours, so as not to interfere during a time when cooking equipment is needed most. The inspection will usually take about 30 to 60 minutes. If you have a considerably large cooking line, an inspection can take longer.

A major concern for restaurant owners is cost. Often this can cause a lapse in regular inspections. The cost of an inspection is determined based on the size of a system. Larger systems may serve multiple exhaust hoods, may have multiple agent tanks and will normally have more nozzles and fusible links (heat detectors). On average, a restaurant owner should expect to pay $100-$200 for each 6-month suppression system inspection, which should include parts that require regular replacement. Correction of deficiencies would normally be an additional charge, regardless of whether they are performed at the time of inspection or at a later appointment.
YOUR SUPPRESSION SYSTEM INSPECTION REPORT:

The report is a business’ documentation proving the regular inspection on the fire suppression system. This document can be relevant to business and property insurance, code inspectors, fire officials, and for the owner’s peace of mind. The inspection report may be a required submission for your insurance carrier as well as your fire and building code department. The submission of the fire suppression system inspection reports are normally the responsibility of the restaurant owner. However, some jurisdictions require that reports be sent to the authorities directly from the service agent.

The information contained on a suppression system inspection report provides valuable insight into a kitchen’s fire safety. The report will identify any deficiencies found in a system. When performing regular inspections, deficiencies are often minor and can be simple fixes. Small adjustments can often be performed on site by the fire safety tech performing the inspection. Larger deficiencies may require an additional appointment. For example – a new fryer has been added to a kitchen and will need to have an additional nozzle piped in and fusible link added to the heat detection network. The scheduled appointment may not allow time for such an adjustment. Or, the equipment may need to be ordered and a tech will have to return back to perform the renovation and create a new report saying the owner properly addressed the deficiency.
Kitchen suppression system inspection reports will record the date and time a tech performs an inspection. It will also identify the system in terms of the model, manufacture dates, number of agent tanks, etc. A tag may be hung on the system as a record of inspection, but the service agent must provide a full inspection report for the owner or owner’s representative. The report will show all of the system components that have been inspected which will be marked according to the technician’s findings. There is a section for the tech to indicate comments as well as areas of non-compliance. At the end of the procedure the tech will review findings and areas of concerns with the restaurant owner or kitchen manager. A signature is required by an authorized party as notification of the inspection results and receipt of their carbon copy of the inspection. This should be filed away with important documents and records.

The inspection report also records the set-up of a kitchen’s appliances. Often when kitchen workers are cleaning, equipment can become shifted or moved around. When this happens appliances can end up out of alignment with parts of the system designed to protect them. By keeping track of a kitchen layout, a fire safety tech can make sure your system will provide adequate and immediate response to ignition points in a kitchen. When you make changes to your kitchen appliance line, an inspection is warranted and adjustments to the system may be required. Additionally, you will also receive a system inspection report for new installations, starting you on the right path to regular maintenance.

Seldom are problems found that would require the total shut down of a kitchen. Often a kitchen can continue to operate while arrangements are made to address larger deficiencies. In addition to being compliant with current fire codes, addressing deficiencies as soon as possible is generally required for insurance policy coverage in the event of a loss. Also if a restaurant owner is
properly submitting inspection reports to the code agency they may send an officer out to check and make sure corrections were made to deficiencies recorded.

Inspection reports also help keep relevant parties to a business on the same page when it comes to fire safety. Each document is dated for verifications of service at appropriate intervals. Inspection reports also provide security and protection to all parties. The restaurant owner keeping up with 6-month fire suppression system inspections remains in compliance with fire code and will maintain proper insurance coverage. Insurance companies receive assurance that the insured property is being protected and that liability risk is also being reduced. Code officers can also rely on these reports for accuracy and to lessen occurrences of non-compliance or failure to have proper inspections performed.

**CHOOSING A SUPPRESSION SYSTEM INSPECTION COMPANY:**

Every business owner should research their fire safety inspection company. Ask for referrals from your professional community. Look into references and verify a company is certified before allowing any work to begin. Your local building code official can tell you who is or isn’t qualified. A service technician is required by code to be trained and certified, and must possess the appropriate manuals and service bulletins for each type of system they service. If someone walks into your kitchen with a screwdriver, a pen and an inspection report and is on his way back out in 10 or 15 minutes, you can bet you have not had a proper inspection done.

If an appointment for an inspection isn’t scheduled and someone shows up saying they are at an establishment to perform one, it
may be a scam. Often these fraudsters will ask to be paid in cash for their service. Never have an inspection performed by someone that has not been authorized. If an employee is unsure if this person is legitimate, they should ask to see credentials and give the company a call to confirm. Should a scam artist have performed an inspection on a kitchen, it would be wise to call a certified company to come out and inspect. If corrections are needed they should be made as soon as possible.

A commercial kitchen is the heart of a restaurant business. Protecting the property, the equipment, and the people is what a fire suppression system is designed to do. By following a regular 6-month inspection schedule, a restaurant owner can ensure they stay up to code, maintain insurance, and decrease the risk of fire loss. Performing regular inspections and maintenance can also decrease the risk of unwanted discharges. Start scheduling regular suppression system inspections and rest easy that if a fire occurs you’ve got it covered.
ABOUT US

ALBANY FIRE EXTINGUISHER provides the professional installation and service for fire suppression systems that many businesses seek. AFE is a third generation, locally-owned business with a strong presence in the Albany, New York area, having worked with industries including restaurants, retail, higher education and school districts, hotels and destination locations, government entities, the medical industry, and warehouse and manufacturing facilities. Outfitted with all of the equipment necessary for proper installation and maintenance, and expert knowledge of regulation changes, Albany Fire Extinguisher provides exceptional service with proven results.