

Texas State Fire Marshal's Office

State Building Inspections Annual Report

December 2024



TDI | Texas Department
of Insurance





State Building Inspections Annual Report

Fiscal year 2024

by the

Texas State Fire Marshal's Office

Submitted December 2024

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Debra Knight".

Debra Knight
State Fire Marshal
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State Fire Marshal's Office Fire Safety Inspection Services

Overview

[State law](#) authorizes the State Fire Marshal's Office (SFMO), under the Texas Department of Insurance commissioner's direction, to take any action necessary to protect state-owned or state-leased buildings (state buildings) and the building's occupants against fire hazards.

The state fire marshal includes the State Office of Risk Management and each state agency occupying or managing state buildings in all communication about fire hazards.

SFMO [must](#) periodically inspect state buildings and report the findings to the governor, lieutenant governor, speaker of the house, and appropriate standing committees of the legislature before January 1 each year.

After each state building inspection, SFMO provides the detailed inspection report with the violations and potential dangers to the agency, building owner, and building occupants.

Fire Safety Inspections Services

SFMO has 14 inspectors to inspect state buildings, and one inspector dedicated to the Capitol Complex. There are about 25,000 state buildings.

Fire Safety Inspections Services duties

- Conduct building inspections based on the inspection schedule.
- Inspect buildings outside the schedule based on a risk analysis in consultation with the Texas Facilities Commission and the State Office of Risk Management.
- Work with state agencies to prioritize inspections and find high-risk deficiencies.
- Conduct fee-based, firework retail site, ammonium nitrate storage facility, and complaint inspections and consultations to make sure the building or site meets fire code requirements.
- Inspect buildings leased by state agencies outside of Texas Facilities Commission contracts.

Operational goals

- Verify fire drills occur regularly at state buildings.
- Request building and construction project plans and conduct peer reviews of the plans.
- Find the necessary contacts for all state agencies to facilitate better communication and to have a point of contact when providing guidance on corrections in state buildings.

Ongoing projects

Texas Department of Criminal Justice building inspection request

Conduct Texas Department of Criminal Justice requested building inspections to:

- Set a baseline of a building's fire protection system operational state.
- Find missing code-required fire protection systems.

Texas Department of Criminal Justice correctional unit inspections

Conduct Operation Lone Star correctional unit inspections in South Texas. This includes working with the Texas Department of Criminal Justice, the Texas Commission on Jail Standards, and local contractors to make sure buildings follow fire codes.

Texas Department of Family and Protective Services residence inspections

Work with the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services to inspect residences before leasing the residence for children without placement.

School inspections

Conduct school district requested inspections to verify they follow fire and life safety codes.

New construction inspections

Provide cursory plan reviews for state agencies with new construction or renovations to make sure buildings meet adopted fire codes.



Fiscal year 2024 inspections snapshot

Key findings

In fiscal year 2024, SFMO conducted 6,926 inspections (inspections, reinspections, and firework retail site inspections), including two large university campus inspections over multiple days and required the entire inspections team to complete.

The highlights below include all inspections conducted in the fiscal year.



Key inspection violations

Agencies and other entities said a lack of funding affects their ability to correct violations, such as:

- Not maintaining:
 - Commercial kitchen suppression systems.
 - Emergency lights.
 - Fire alarms.
 - Fire sprinklers.
 - Lighted exit signs.
 - Portable fire extinguishers.
- Using extension cords and power strips as permanent electrical wiring.
- Unprotected openings in firewalls and smoke barriers.
- Missing required fire-rated separation between different occupancy classifications.
- Modifications or damage to fire doors.

Fiscal year 2024 inspections

| Inspections | Buildings inspected | Buildings reinspected | Square feet inspected | Violations found | Violations corrected | Firework retail sites |
|--|---------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|
| State agency | | | | | | |
| Colleges and universities | 1,565 | 94 | 68,465,179 | 9,793 | 868 | - |
| Employees Retirement System | - | 1 | 400,000 | - | 1 | - |
| Health and Human Services Commission leased spaces | 1 | - | 3,125 | 1 | - | - |
| State Bar of Texas | 1 | 1 | 156,000 | 30 | 30 | - |
| State hospitals | 243 | 76 | 3,052,135 | 459 | 261 | - |
| State-supported living centers | 532 | 118 | 4,318,721 | 698 | 601 | - |
| Texas Adjutant General Office | 5 | 0 | 153,004 | 69 | 1 | - |
| Texas Dept. of Criminal Justice | 794 | 49 | 10,944,397 | 2,651 | 557 | - |
| Texas Dept. of Family and Protective Services | 12 | 8 | 37,592 | 37 | 31 | - |
| Texas Dept. of Public Safety | 19 | 43 | 384,380 | 70 | 225 | - |
| Texas Dept. of Transportation | 348 | 190 | 2,640,971 | 511 | 559 | - |
| Texas Dept. of Transportation rest areas and information centers | 9 | 6 | 60,520 | 41 | 37 | - |
| Texas Facilities Commission state-leased spaces | 65 | 113 | 2,067,092 | 501 | 624 | - |
| Texas Facilities Commission state-owned properties | 85 | 34 | 2,836,568 | 195 | 111 | - |
| Texas General Land Office | 5 | 3 | 578,811 | 25 | 22 | - |
| Texas Historical Commission | 17 | 19 | 52,812 | 84 | 97 | - |
| Texas Juvenile Justice Dept. | 33 | 5 | 352,312 | 52 | 42 | - |
| Texas Parks and Wildlife Dept. | 182 | 122 | 637,505 | 321 | 258 | - |
| Texas State Preservation Board | 174 | 13 | 25,540,005 | 19 | 19 | - |
| Texas Workforce Commission and Texas Workforce Solutions | 12 | 21 | 603,780 | 93 | 267 | - |
| State agency subtotal | 4,102 | 916 | 123,284,909 | 15,650 | 4,611 | - |
| Other inspections | | | | | | |
| Ammonium nitrate storage facilities | 34 | - | 60,151 | 2 | 1 | - |
| Fee-based, complaints, consultations, and retail firework sites | 880 | 468 | 15,063,012 | 2,305 | 2,759 | 526 |
| Other inspections subtotal | 914 | 468 | 15,123,163 | 2,307 | 2,760 | 526 |
| Total | 5,016 | 1,384 | 138,408,072 | 17,957 | 7,371 | 526 |



State Agency Inspection Reports

Note: Issues listed in the violations found lists are in some of the inspected buildings.

Colleges and universities

College and university inspections include state-owned and satellite campuses, health care systems, and associated school-owned buildings. This year included two large university campus inspections. The inspections took multiple days and the entire inspections team to complete.



Violations found

- Fire doors and door frames missing annual inspection.
- Damaged fire doors or missing listed labels.
- Fire doors didn't close and latch properly.
- Unsealed penetrations in technology closets and mechanical/electrical rooms.
- Student appliances plugged into surge protectors, not wall outlets.
- Too many combustibles stored in several mechanical/electrical rooms.
- Licensed firms found fire alarm and sprinkler systems not maintained to code.
- Damaged ceiling tiles.
- Upper floors lacked enough secondary exits.
- Fueling sites lacked required safety signage.
- Breaker panel circuit labels weren't being maintained.
- Emergency lighting, lighted exit signs, and fire sprinkler systems lacked inspections, tests, and maintenance.
- Portable fire extinguishers lacked monthly or annual inspections.
- Fire alarm and fire sprinkler systems weren't maintained, inspected annually, or showed issues.
- Missing National Fire Protection Association 704 signs.

Violations corrected

- Some universities requested a review of code requirements before renovations and new construction.
- Inspected universities gave a prompt response to the inspection report.
- To confirm compliance with fire codes, many universities established procedures for SFMO to conduct a fire and life safety inspection on a building for purchase or received as a donation.

Colleges and universities goals

- Perform more routine fire and life safety inspections.
- Correct violations promptly.
- Report fires through proper state fire reporting procedures.
- Universities with fire marshal offices will work with SFMO towards a proactive inspection process.
- Universities that haven't been inspected since 2017 will work with SFMO to conduct full campus inspections.
- Buildings where fire protection systems weren't maintained or not working are considered high risk and will be inspected more frequently.

Employees Retirement System of Texas



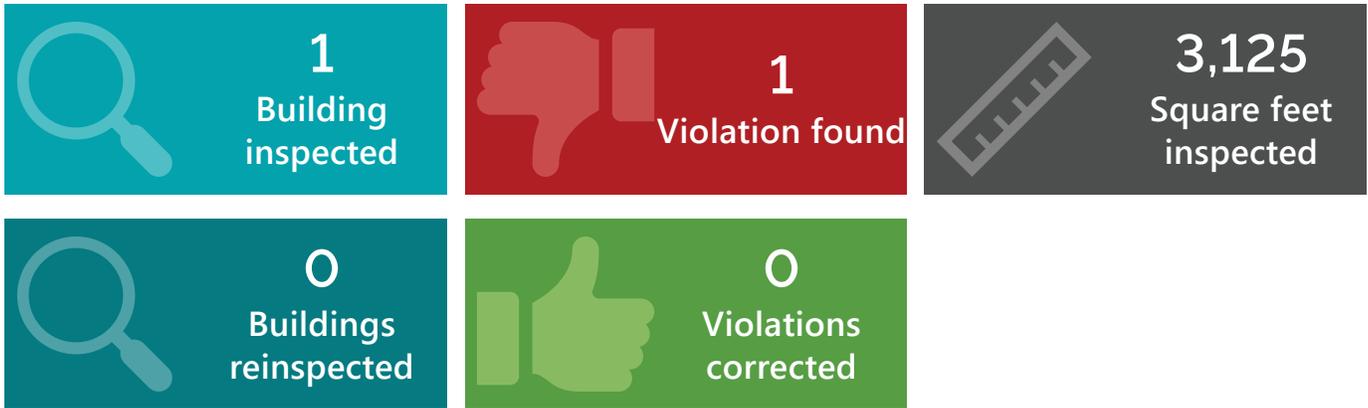
Violation corrected

Red-tagged fire alarm panel violation was corrected in fiscal year 2024.

Agency goal

Continue to work with SFMO on property inspections.

Health and Human Services Commission leased spaces



Violation found

Portable fire extinguishers missing monthly and annual inspections.

Agency goals

- Perform more routine fire and life safety inspections.
- Report fires through proper state fire reporting procedures.

State Bar of Texas



Violations found

- Portable fire extinguishers missing annual inspection.
- Missing electrical cover plates.
- Unsealed penetrations in rated barriers.
- Exit doors swung in instead of out.
- Damaged ceiling tiles.

Violations corrected

Worked to correct violations promptly.

Agency goals

- Perform more routine fire and life safety inspections.
- Report fires through proper state fire reporting procedures.

State hospitals



Violations found

- Appliances, such as refrigerators and microwaves, were plugged into power strips.
- Multiplug adapters used as permanent wiring.
- Fire alarms showed trouble signals.
- Photoluminescent exit signs were installed where they don't get enough light to recharge.
- Exposed electrical wiring and no circuit identification.

Violations corrected

- Corrected several violations during the inspections.
- Corrected noted violations promptly.

Agency goals

- Perform more routine fire and life safety inspections.
- Correct violations promptly.
- Report fires through proper state fire reporting procedures.

State-supported living centers



Violations found

- Appliances, such as refrigerators and microwaves, were plugged into power strips.
- Multiplug adapters used as permanent wiring.
- Power strips not plugged directly into a wall outlet.
- Red and yellow tagged fire alarms.
- Missing generator fuel testing logs.

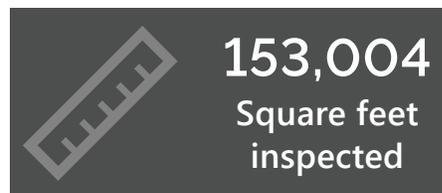
Violations corrected

- Corrected several violations, including electrical violations, during the inspections.
- Added portable fire extinguishers where required.

Agency goals

- Perform more routine fire and life safety inspections.
- Correct violations promptly.
- Report fires through proper state fire reporting procedures.
- Work with SFMO to decrease the number of false fire alarms.

Texas Adjutant General Office



Violations found

- Portable fire extinguishers lacked annual inspection.
- Blocked fire exits.
- UL300 hood suppression system didn't work.
- Unapproved door locks.

Violation corrected

Corrected a violation during inspection.

Agency goals

- Increase communication and cooperation with SFMO.
- Continue to work with SFMO on property inspections.

Texas Department of Criminal Justice



Violations found

- Fire alarm systems were missing or weren't functioning properly.
- Kitchen hood suppression systems weren't maintained or inspected. SFMO developed a temporary fire watch policy for kitchen staff to keep kitchens open.
- Required gas pipeline pressure tests weren't performed.
- Buildings lacked required annual inspection, testing, and maintenance of the:
 - Fire sprinkler systems.
 - Standpipe systems.
 - Collapsible hose systems.
 - Fire doors.
 - Fire and smoke dampers.
 - Fire department connections.
- Buildings lacked:
 - Portable fire extinguishers.
 - Required smoke detection in inmate sleeping areas.
 - Code-required smoke evacuation systems, or they were disabled.
 - Correctly performed fire watches.
- Electrical violations in each building. Violations included:
 - Unlabeled breaker panels.
 - Unused openings.
 - Breakers tied with copper wire.
 - Missing cover plates.
 - Extension cords used as permanent wiring.

Violations corrected

- Installed battery-operated smoke alarms in employee housing before SFMO left.
- Met regularly with SFMO to discuss inspection concerns and corrections.
- Requested reviews and code requirements before renovations and new construction.
- Met with SFMO to create a timeline for meeting fire protection systems codes.
- Consulted with SFMO to confirm code compliance before correcting certain violations.

Agency goals

- Perform more routine fire and life safety inspections.
- Correct violations promptly.
- Report fires through proper state fire reporting procedures.
- Buildings where fire protection systems weren't maintained or not working are considered high risk and will be inspected more frequently.

Texas Department of Family and Protective Services



Violations found

- Missing smoke alarms.
- Emergency lighting didn't work.
- Unsealed penetrations in technology closets and mechanical/electrical rooms.

Violations corrected

Corrected violations promptly and requested a reinspection.

Agency goal

Continue to work with SFMO on property inspections.



Violations found

- Portable fire extinguishers were missing or weren't correctly mounted, maintained, or inspected.
- Emergency lighting and lighted exit signs didn't work.
- Unused openings in the breaker panel, exposed electrical wiring, missing GFCI outlets, obstructed breaker panels, missing electrical cover plates, and no circuit identification.
- Missing fire department key access boxes.
- Blocked sprinkler heads in a forensic lab.
- Missing generator fuel testing and maintenance logs.
- Missing fire door inspections.

Violations corrected

Corrected several violations during inspections.

Agency goals

- Perform more routine fire and life safety inspections.
- Correct violations promptly.
- Report fires through proper state fire reporting procedures.

Texas Department of Transportation



Violations found

- Unapproved door locks.
- Missing No Smoking and National Fire Protection Association 704 signs.
- One building missing water supply to the fire sprinkler system.
- One building had fire exit issues.
- Missing required fire rated separations.
- Fire alarm systems missing annual inspections.
- Lighted exit signs didn't work.
- Combustible materials stored in mechanical and electrical rooms.
- Combustible materials stored incorrectly.
- Missing fire door inspections.
- Appliances, such as refrigerators and microwaves, were plugged into power strips.
- Unused breaker panel openings.
- Missing generator fuel testing logs.
- Roll-up doors used as an exit weren't secured in the open position when occupied.

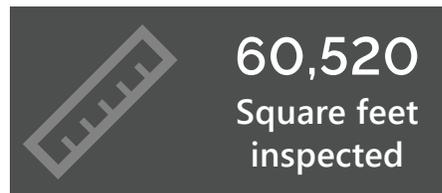
Violations corrected

- Installed key access box systems in buildings where the local fire department uses the access key system.
- Consulted with SFMO before installing fire walls to split-up different building areas.
- Repaired emergency lighting and lighted exit signs.
- Corrected portable fire extinguisher violations.
- Corrected many electrical violations.
- Continued to correct violations found in prior SFMO inspections.

Agency goals

- Work with SFMO to continue fire and life safety inspection staff training.
- Make sure SFMO inspection reports are sent to personnel at each inspected building.
- Perform more routine fire and life safety inspections.
- Correct violations promptly.
- Report fires through proper state fire reporting procedures.

Texas Department of Transportation safety rest areas and travel information centers



Violations found

- No marked fire lanes.
- Flammable liquids stored incorrectly.
- Unapproved door locks.
- Fuel-fired equipment stored incorrectly.

Violations corrected

- Installed key access box systems in buildings where the local fire department uses the access key system.
- Installed 911 address signs.

Agency goals

- Work with SFMO to continue fire and life safety inspection staff training.
- Make sure SFMO inspection reports are sent to personnel at each inspected building.
- Perform more routine fire and life safety inspections.
- Correct violations promptly.
- Report fires through proper state fire reporting procedures.

Texas Facilities Commission state-leased spaces



Violations found

- Storage stacked too high, obstructing sprinkler heads.
- Appliances were plugged into extension cords.
- Emergency lighting and lighted exit signs didn't work.
- Damaged ceiling tiles.
- Fire alarm and fire sprinkler systems weren't maintained or inspected annually.
- Portable fire extinguishers lacked monthly and annual inspections.
- Fire doors were propped open, weren't maintained, and didn't work.
- Decorations on fire doors exceeded the code allowance.

Violations corrected

Some locations corrected violations promptly and requested a reinspection.

Agency goals

- Better communication among the Texas Facilities Commission, lessors, lessees, and SFMO.
- Work with the lessor to find who is responsible for correcting each violation based on the lease agreement.
- Correct violations promptly.

Texas Facilities Commission state-owned properties



Violations found

- Yellow-tagged fire protection systems.
- Missing generator fuel testing logs.
- Missing fire door inspections.
- Damaged fire doors.
- Emergency lighting didn't work.

Violations corrected

- Communicated with SFMO on issues at state-owned properties.
- Corrected many violations during inspections.

Agency goals

- Continue to work with SFMO on property inspections.
- Perform more routine fire and life safety inspections.
- Correct violations promptly.
- Report fires through proper state fire reporting procedures.



Violations found

- Outlets near water dispensers weren't GFCI outlets.
- Unapproved door locks.

Violation corrected

Corrected violations promptly.

Agency goals

- Communicate regularly with SFMO.
- Continue correcting violations.
- Report fires through proper state fire reporting procedures.



Violations found

- Unused openings in the breaker panel, missing electrical cover plates, and no circuit identification.
- Portable fire extinguishers were missing, weren't mounted, or lacked annual inspection.
- Compressed gas cylinders not secured correctly.
- Missing required GFCI outlets.

Violations corrected

Working with SFMO to correct violations at several locations while keeping the historical quality of buildings.

Agency goals

- Communicates regularly with SFMO.
- Report fires through proper state fire reporting procedures.

Texas Juvenile Justice Department



33
Buildings
inspected



52
Violations
found



352,312
Square feet
inspected



5
Buildings
reinspected



42
Violations
corrected

Violations found

- Fire alarms showed trouble signals.
- Missing fire door inspections.
- Fire sprinkler systems not maintained to code.
- Missing and damaged ceiling tiles.

Violations corrected

- Requested reviews of projects and code requirements before renovations and construction.
- Corrected violations promptly.

Agency goals

- Perform more routine fire and life safety inspections.
- Correct violations promptly.
- Report fires through proper state fire reporting procedures.
- Maintain open communication with SFMO.
- Buildings where fire protection systems weren't maintained or not working are considered high risk and will be inspected more frequently.

Texas Parks and Wildlife Department



Violations found

- Portable fire extinguishers were missing, mounted incorrectly, or not maintained.
- Unused openings in the breaker panel, exposed electrical wiring, missing GFCI outlets, missing electrical cover plates, and no circuit identification.
- Smoke alarms older than 10 years in cabins.
- Open-flame barbecue pits within 10 feet of a cabin.
- Missing No Smoking and National Fire Protection Association 704 signs.
- Community kitchens lacked hood suppression systems.
- Fire alarm breakers not properly marked.

Violations corrected

- Requested reviews and code requirements before renovations and new construction.
- Corrected the open-flame barbecue pits.
- Replaced the smoke alarms.
- Corrected the electrical violations.

Agency goals

- Perform more routine fire and life safety inspections.
- Correct violations promptly.
- Report fires through proper state fire reporting procedures.

Texas State Preservation Board



Violations found

Rack storage with solid shelving at the Capitol Furnishings Warehouse continues to violate fire sprinkler requirements. Solid shelving prevents sprinklers from controlling or extinguishing a fire on shelving.

Violations corrected

Corrected several violations found in prior inspections.

Agency goals

- Work with SFMO on annual inspections and monthly reinspections.
- Perform more routine fire and life safety inspections.
- Correct violations promptly.

Texas Workforce Commission and Texas Workforce Solutions



Violations found

- Fire alarm and fire sprinkler systems weren't maintained.
- Electrical appliances not used within manufacturer recommendations.
- Portable fire extinguishers were mounted incorrectly or not maintained.
- Emergency lighting and lighted exit signs didn't work.
- Fire wall penetrations weren't sealed.
- Fire door inspections weren't being conducted.
- Fire doors propped open.
- Extension cords used as permanent wiring.
- Obstructed electrical panels.

Violations corrected

Worked to correct violations quickly.

Agency goal

Report fires through proper state fire reporting procedures.



Other inspection reports

Ammonium nitrate storage facilities



Violation found

Wood storage bin walls showed signs of ammonium nitrate soaking into walls.

Violation corrected

Local fire departments were made aware of the facilities and provided knowledge on responding with proper staff, equipment, and tactics.

Facility goal

Continue to work with SFMO to make sure facilities follow fire codes.

Fee-based, complaint, and firework retail site inspections and consultations



Violations found

- Fire alarms, fire sprinkler systems, and hood suppression systems weren't maintained.
- Portable fire extinguishers lacked monthly and annual inspections.
- Blocked exits.
- Unapproved combustible storage locations.
- Holes in fire- or smoke-rated walls.
- Electrical wiring not installed to code specifications.
- Exposed electrical wiring, missing GFCI outlets, obstructed breaker panels, missing electrical cover plates, and no circuit identification.
- Emergency lighting and lighted exit signs didn't work or weren't inspected monthly.
- Day cares missing required fire alarms.
- Foster homes and day cares only had one fire exit.
- Appliances plugged into power strips and extension cords.
- Missing ceiling tiles.

Violations corrected

Most violations were corrected within 30 days, allowing buildings to keep their license.

Facility goals

- Perform more routine fire and life safety inspections.
- Continue to work with SFMO on property inspections.



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