

City of South San Francisco
Human Resources Department

Safety Inspector I

Class Description

Definition

Under general supervision, learns to and actually does inspect and investigate for fire prevention-related activities; inspects fire protection systems, construction sites, structures, buildings, and occupancies to ensure an appropriate level of fire protection and compliance with applicable state and local ordinances, and with nationally recognized fire and building-related codes and other aspects of the municipal code relating to construction, code enforcement, and building inspection; conducts field inspections for compliance protection standards; investigates and reviews a variety of fire-related issues; enforces fire and life safety standards; investigates incidents for cause and origin; presents education to the public on fire prevention, code enforcement; and does related work as assigned.

Distinguishing Characteristics

This is dual-role, safety class within the safety inspector series that specializes in fire prevention and municipal code enforcement. It is distinguished from the lower-level classification by the requirement to perform fire prevention, inspection, and investigations, in addition to municipal code field investigations and code enforcement. It is further distinguished from the higher classifications by the degree of independence and technical expertise the incumbent is expected to develop. Employees at this level receive frequent instruction and are expected to gain increased knowledge and expertise of the more complex fire prevention, inspection, and investigation practices and procedures. Positions in this class are flexibly staffed and are normally filled by advancement from the lower class after demonstrating the higher-level knowledge and skills; or when filled from outside the City, incumbents must have prior fire investigation and inspection experience.

Typical and Important Duties

1. Interprets, applies, and ensures compliance with all applicable codes, ordinances, and regulations.
2. Investigates emergency incidents and fires for cause and origin; investigates fire hazard complaints, violations of laws and ordinances, arson fires, and all other fires requiring investigation for cause and origin; interviews witnesses and suspects; may search and seize, as appropriate; participates in the County fire investigation unit and fire prevention officers' association.
3. Conducts field inspections to ensure compliance with state and local fire codes and ordinances of businesses, schools, rest homes, residences, multi-family dwellings; hotels, hospitals, churches, structures, industrial and commercial buildings, general buildings; and premises to enforce compliance with fire codes and regulations; inspects and tests fire alarms, sprinkler systems, heat and smoke detection devices, and any other fire protection and control devices.

4. Investigates code enforcement complaints and violations received from others, including City departments and divisions, contractors, business owners, property owners, and the public.
5. Conducts basic plan checks for industrial, commercial, public, and residential structures and buildings for compliance with fire-related codes and ordinances.
6. Interprets fire codes and other building- and construction-related code requirements for builders, subcontractors, designers, owners, and the public; resolves disagreements and problems concerning inspections and code compliance.
7. Participates in fire prevention activities, including combustible vegetation management, public education, and community outreach programs.
8. Conducts code enforcement field investigations and enforcement of applicable national, state, and local ordinances.
9. Issues abatement orders and administrative citations in the enforcement of national, state, and local ordinances.
10. Writes reports, attends, and makes presentations or responds to Planning Commission, City Council, or other official bodies, as necessary.
11. Writes fire incident reports.
12. Operates a variety of machines and equipment, such as automobile, camera, measuring tape and wheel, calculator, investigative and drafting equipment, and computers and related applications.
13. May participate or assist in the mitigation of emergency incidents.
14. Performs all other duties as assigned.

Job-related Qualifications

Knowledge of:

- Basic national, state, and local fire prevention codes, ordinances, and standards.
- Principles and techniques of effective customer service.
- Fire prevention and code enforcement principles, methods, practices, programs, equipment, and techniques.
- Learn basic plan check methods and procedures.

Ability to:

- Learn fire protection equipment, such as fire extinguishers, extinguishing/suppression systems, and alarm systems.
- Read and interpret basic building and fire plans; review basic plan-check drawings and specifications, recognizing fire safety standards and deviations from plans.
- Perform simple fire inspections.
- Apply technical knowledge and follow proper inspection techniques.
- Enforce a variety of codes, ordinances, and regulations relating to fire prevention, building, code enforcement, and housing.
- Learn and apply principles, procedures, equipment, techniques, and methods of fire scene investigation and other incidents to determine cause and origin.
- Learn and perform search and seizure methods.

- Learn and perform fire hazard identification to require corrective actions; analyze, interpret, and explain fire prevention codes and regulations.
- Learn to effectively interview witnesses and suspects.
- Recognize, identify, and preserve evidence.
- Understand and comply with national, state, local, City, departmental and divisional rules and regulations.
- Communicate effectively in writing, orally, and with others to assimilate, understand, and convey information, in a manner consistent with job functions.
- Maintain comprehensive records; prepare clear, concise, and complete oral and written reports.
- Establish and maintain cooperative and collaborative working relationships with those contacted in the course of work; represent the City, the department, and the division effectively in contacts with others, including agencies, City departments, and the public.
- Interact with the public in routine and sensitive situations with tact and diplomacy.
- Understand, comply, and enforce safety policies, rules, and regulations; properly use safety equipment; work in a safe manner, following City safety practices and procedures.
- Use initiative and independent judgment within established policy and procedural guidelines.
- Organize own work, set priorities, and meet critical deadlines.
- Take a leadership role in addressing customer service issues.
- Recommend process improvement changes to streamline procedures.
- Utilize job-related computer applications.
- Perform assignments and maintain equipment in a safe manner; understand and carry out safety policies, rules, and regulations; properly uses safety equipment.
- Maintain confidentiality regarding sensitive information.

Skill to:

- Accurately taking and transcribing own notes.
- Using a personal computer and associated applications, including word processing, databases, calendar, and e-mail systems.
- Entering and retrieving data from a computer with sufficient speed and accuracy sufficient to perform assigned work.
- Utilize gas detector and decibel meters.

Experience and Training

Any combination of experience and training that would provide the required knowledge, skills, and abilities would be qualifying. A typical way to obtain knowledge, skills, and abilities would be:

Experience:

- Two years of progressively more responsible fire prevention or firefighting experience in a comparable department or state agency and experience working with the public in dealing with basic fire prevention standards, techniques, systems, and enforcement practices.

- Or one year of progressively more responsible experience as a Safety Inspector with the City of South San Francisco performing basic fire prevention inspections and municipal code enforcement.

Training:

- Equivalent to graduation from high school, supplemented by courses in fire engineering, fire safety, or a closely related field. An associate's degree from an accredited college in fire engineering, fire safety, fire science, or a related field is highly desirable.
- Certificate of completion of Fire Prevention 1A certified by the State of California Board of Fire Services.
- State Fire Marshal Office certified Fire Prevention Officer I, or equivalent education and experience.

Licenses and Certificates

The following licenses and certificates must be maintained as a condition of employment.

- Possession of an appropriate valid California driver's license.
- Possession of Section 832 Penal Code, State of California – non-firearm Certification.
- Possession of one of the following is highly desirable:
 - Sixteen quarter units or 12 semester units in Fire Science.
 - California Association of Code Enforcement, Code Enforcement Officer certification.

Special Requirements

Essential duties require the following:

Physical Skills:

Able to use standard office equipment, including a computer; sit, stand, walk, kneel, crouch, stoop, squat, crawl, twist; climb ladders, stairs, and scaffolding; walk on rooftops; lift and carry 35 pounds; vision to read a computer screen and printed materials, including maps and plans; hearing and speech to communicate in person and over the telephone.

Work Environment:

Work in standard office environment or field setting; exposure to cold, heat, noise, outdoors, vibration, confined workspace, chemicals, explosive materials, vibration, mechanical hazards, electrical hazards, traffic, and work in attics and crawlspaces; walk on pitched and flat roofs.

Ability to:

Travel to different sites and locations; locations; drive safely to different sites and locations; maintain a safe driving record; maintain a neat and clean appearance; work extended hours or off-shift work for meeting attendance or participation in specific projects or programs, and take call during non-business hours.

Additional Information:

- Approved:

- Revised Date: March 2001, November 2002, April 2003
- Former Titles: Fire Inspector I
- Abolished:
- Bargaining Unit: IAFF
- DOT: No
- Status: Classified/Non-exempt
- Job Code: B200