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Fire Alarm Inspection Unit
Bureau of Fire Prevention

Fire Alarm Inspection Unit Bulletin # 11-20-2020 Remote Video Inspections

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Purpose: Remote Video Inspection (RVI) Guidelines

Fire Alarm Inspection Unit is implementing a pilot program to perform inspections remotely. This will minimize potential COVID19 exposure and create a more efficient inspection procedure. Remote Video Inspections (RVI) will use digital video technology, so the inspector will not have to be physically present to conduct the inspection. RVI is the same as an in-person inspection and shall be deemed identical for inspection policies and procedures. Please see below for a list of guidelines in addition to those already in place for an on-site re-inspection:

1. Requirements for Remote Video Inspection (RVI):
 - A. Only available for re-inspections of Letters of Defect.
 - B. Requests for inspections on applications with active violation orders will not be accepted
 - C. Scheduling supervisor will determine if the inspection can be performed remotely and how many cameras (cell phone, tablet, etc.) may be necessary

2. On-site Requirements
 - A. The facility must provide live camera feeds wherever the Inspector deems necessary. This would include the following:
 1. View of the display on the control unit at all times (possibly on a tripod).
 2. View from the individual performing the test.
 3. View from a point 10 – 15 feet behind the individual performing the test.
 4. An earpiece for at least one of the individuals.
 - B. The facility must have reliable and adequate internet connectivity to maintain the connection throughout the entire premises and inspection.
 - C. The contractors must have all testing equipment necessary to conduct the inspection.
 - D. There must be adequate lighting necessary for a quality picture throughout the inspection. A separate source of light (possibly a flashlight) shall be available for dark spaces.
 - E. There must be the capability to take pictures and email them during the inspection when a clear video of a specific item cannot be viewed.

- F. Approved plans and any associated documents must be available on-site for reference purposes.
- G. The devices utilized for transmitting video must have a backup power source (additional battery or power bank).

3. Conducting the Inspection

- A. The inspection will begin outdoors at the nearest intersection. The view must begin at a street sign and move toward the entrance of the facility displaying the address. If this is not available, geolocation from a mapping tool can be utilized and shown on camera.
- B. The individuals involved in the inspection must have a valid photo identification and may be required to show it on the camera.
- C. The attendees connected to the video bridge shall be limited to only required personnel and must be on mute when joining the conference unless directed to unmute.
- D. The individuals transmitting the footage must be able to hear and follow directions. They must respond to all questions from the Inspector.
- E. An owner's representative or authorized General Contractor must be on-site and available for authorizations.
- F. Billing for the inspection will include the length of the inspection as well as any time processing of paperwork for the inspection.
- G. Any reference material requested during the inspection shall be emailed to bfp.remote@fdny.nyc.gov

4. Training and knowledge of utilizing the software for RVI

- A. Someone must be chosen as the lead participant.
The lead participant is required to:
 - Forward meeting details to all required on-site personnel (certified vendor, technician, etc).
 - Coordinate all attendees
 - Start the discussion with the inspector.
- B. The first time utilizing the software and setting up for an RVI may require up to 30 minutes. Once the lead participant is trained, future inspections should not require additional setup time.

5. Upon completion of the RVI, one of the following will occur:

- A. System accepted and Letter of Approval will be released.
- B. An amended Letter of Defect for administrative items only.
- C. A Violation Order for non-compliance of the Letter of Defect.
- D. Incomplete inspection due to inadequate inspection procedures. This could be due to unsatisfactory RVI and the need for an on-site inspection.

6. Procedure to request a RVI:

- A. Email a B-45 to fire.alarmschedules@fdny.nyc.gov with RVI box checked and included in the subject.
- B. Upon approval you will:
 - be advised how many cameras will be required.
 - be required to sign and return the RVI consent form FA-25, a copy of the letter of defect, and a digital version of the approved plans;
 - receive date and time of inspection; prepare accordingly.
- C. On the day prior to the inspection, an email will be sent with the meeting links and details