

Vegetation Inspection Program - Frequently Asked Questions

Why do you do inspect so often?

Inspections for vegetation in High Severity Fire Hazard Zones are required to be completed annually per the Oakland Municipal Code.

Who is inspecting my property?

Firefighters and Fire Inspectors complete all initial improved lot parcel inspections. Vacant lots, special circumstance properties, and all re-inspections will be completed by a Fire Inspector from the Fire Prevention Bureau. Battalion Chiefs also conduct quality assurance inspections.

What are inspectors looking for during an Annual Inspection?

Please see <https://www.oaklandca.gov/topics/compliance-standards-for-vegetation-inspections> for all current codes applicable to these inspections.

What happens if I fail an inspection?

Properties found non-compliant will have 45 days to provide proof of abatement to the Vegetation Management Unit by emailing (wildfireprevention@oaklandca.gov), mailing (Fire Prevention Bureau - Vegetation Management Unit / 250 Frank H Ogawa Plaza #3341 / Oakland, CA 94612), or uploading photos to the Accela Citizen Access website with a registered account (<https://aca-prod.accela.com/OAKLAND/Default.aspx>). You MUST still email our office if you upload directly to the ACA.

If proof of abatement is not provided to the Vegetation Management Unit within 45 days, a follow-up in-field inspection will be performed. A third in-field re-inspection may occur after 14 days from a non-compliant re-inspection if proof of abatement still isn't provided to the Vegetation Management Unit. All in-field re-inspections will assess a fee per the City of Oakland's Master Fee Schedule.

What are inspection fees?

Inspection fees are issued when a parcel fails an initial inspection and requires any in-field re-inspections. All fees are set by the City of Oakland Master Fee Schedule and go into the City's General Fund. Fees are not received by the Fire Prevention Bureau.

How can I pay my inspection fees?

To pay on-line, go to the Accela Citizen Access website link: <https://aca.accela.com/oakland>.

No account is required to pay your Fire Prevention inspection fees.

Select "Pay Fee", then "Search & Pay Fire", then select "Payments", then "Fees", and "Pay Fees". You can select which items you want to pay with the "View Cart" option on the payment screen.

Note: If you searched by Record Number, there may be additional fees owed for your property under other Records.

To pay by check, please make checks payable to City of Oakland, 150 Frank H Ogawa Plaza, Suite 5342, Oakland, CA 94612. Remember to write the Record # and Inspection Reference # on your check.

How can I see my inspection records?

Inspection records can be viewed with a registered account on the Accela Citizen Access website: <https://aca-prod.accela.com/OAKLAND/Default.aspx>.

Non-registered users can see inspection results for their properties. For detailed inspection results, including photos, users will need to register. In order to register, you will need to provide proof ownership, usually a driver's license or ID card. Please see <https://aca-prod.accela.com/OAKLAND/Default.aspx> and click "Register" for more information.

Can I access a neighbor's inspection record?

Although, simple results are available on-line, the Vegetation Management Unit will not share details of any inspection to persons who don't own the property which is being asked about.

My neighbor has blatant vegetation violations, what is being done about it?

Each property in the VHFSHZ is inspected each year and everyone is given 45 days to correct a non-compliant inspection. The Vegetation Management Unit does not hire outside contractors to mitigate vegetation hazards on private property. The VMU will inspect parcels, assess fees if necessary, and as a last resort, place a lien on the property in the event of unpaid inspection fees.

Can the Vegetation Management Unit force someone to remove a tree?

The Oakland Fire Department does not have the authority to require anyone to remove a standing tree because the fire code doesn't consider most live or dead standing trees a fire hazard.

What about vegetation issues outside of the Very High Fire Severity Zone?

If you have a vegetation complaint outside of the VHFSHZ please call Oakland Code Enforcement at (510) 238-3381.

Other than to issue inspection fees and imposing liens on a property, what other methods of enforcement are used by the Vegetation Management Unit?

Continuous non-compliant properties may be referred to the City Attorney.

How can I remove large volumes of vegetation debris from my parcel?

If you have vegetation debris that needs pickup, please call Waste Management at (510) 613-8710.

Is Oakland a Fire Wise Community?

There are numerous Fire Wise Communities within Oakland but the city itself isn't a Fire Wise Community.

Can the Firefighters at the Fire Station help me with inspection findings or billing concerns?

No. Firefighters at Fire Stations do not have the authority to act on inspection findings or billing issues. All issues regarding inspection findings should be directed to the Fire Prevention Bureau. All billing matters should be handled with FPBilling@oaklandca.gov.

Why doesn't the door hanger tell me more about what I need to correct?

Please register with the Accela Citizen Access website to find out more information immediately following an inspection. This helps keep all information about your property private.

Can I schedule my annual inspection?

Sorry, not at this time. No access issues will be handled on a case-by-case basis and we will contact you if needed.