



LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY & CORRECTIONS
PUBLIC SAFETY SERVICES



H. "BUTCH" BROWNING, JR.
STATE FIRE MARSHAL

OFFICE OF STATE FIRE MARSHAL

MEMORANDUM

DATE: April 1, 2020

TO: Louisiana Parish Presidents and Mayors

FROM: Fire Marshal H. "Butch" Browning, Jr. 

RE: LSUCC Building Code Reviews and Inspections by the Office of State Fire Marshal

First and foremost, I want to thank each of you for your leadership and partnership in this unprecedented medical event. As you know, on March 11, 2020, Governor John Bel Edwards declared a state of emergency due to the detection and spread of the COVID-19 virus in the state of Louisiana. As COVID-19 continued to spread, the Governor has issued additional orders, including requiring businesses to close or restrict activity and for citizens to "stay at home". As a result, parishes and municipalities may decide to close, limit public access to their buildings and personnel, or allow employees to work from home.

Many of your activities, which may be limited at this time for various reasons, involve the construction industry. As you would agree, the construction industry is a large and vital part of our economy and should be supported in moving forward during and after this emergency with as little interruption as possible.

As we move forward together, the Office of State Fire Marshal (OSFM) would like to make you aware of some of the services our office can provide. Currently, our office's plan review functions are paperless and operate virtually within our Information Management System. Personnel have been working remotely with no interruptions in plan review nor occupancy inspections. The OSFM has professionally trained, licensed and certified Architects, Engineers and Certified Building Officials on staff. We can provide building code plan reviews for commercial structures in a quick and expedited manner to help your economy continue to grow during the unprecedented time. We also have professionally trained inspectors who can assist your jurisdiction with commercial building code inspections if needed. Our agency embraces the one team, one focus philosophy with all of our jurisdictional partners.

Specifically, the OSFM, under R.S. 40:1730.24 and 40:1730.39, may contract with your jurisdiction to perform building code enforcement, to include plan reviews and inspections. However, due to the declared emergency, this process may be expedited and implemented quickly via the state's emergency plan. We then have the ability to assist your jurisdiction through recovery. Please let the OSFM know what services you require and we can assist.

You may also want to keep in mind that with the economic stimulus package and low interest rates being offered to your constituents, there may be an anticipated surge in permitting and plan submittals in the near future. Our office can assist or supplement your current inspection department staff to help expedite those projects. By expediting these important projects, we can partner to help our local and state economies continue to grow and heal.

To request assistance, please feel free to contact me at Butch@la.gov or by my cell phone 225-806-0803. Our Office looks forward to assisting you and your jurisdiction through this most challenging time. I sincerely hope you, and your employees and their families are staying safe and healthy. May God Bless you and the people of Louisiana.

CC: La. Design and Construction Industry