

SFD Citations

Providing a Safer Seattle for All Who Live, Visit, and Do
Business in Our City

Date
09/19/2019

Seattle Fire
Department



City of Seattle

Background

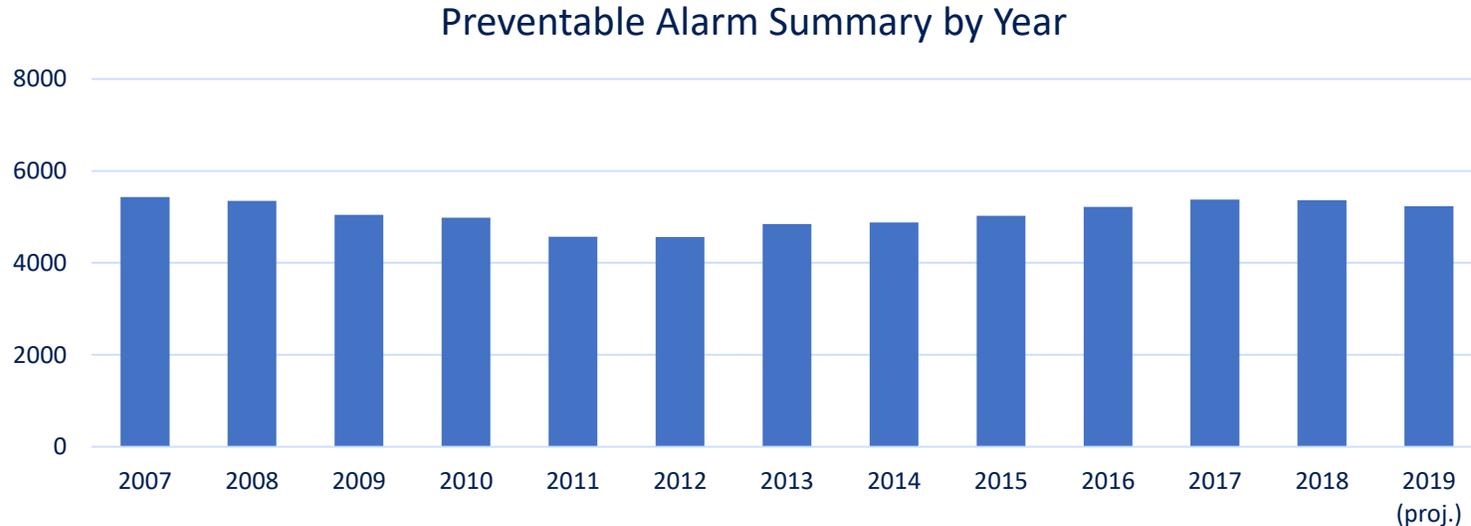
- SFD inspects all businesses, buildings, and multi-family properties
- Fire prevention building inspections: key to Seattle's success in reducing fire loss and fire deaths
- SFD prefers voluntary compliance, and this works in 98.5% of inspections
- When compliance is not achieved, SFD needs more tools
 - Fire Code allows fines of up to \$1,000/day and prosecution in court
 - Prefer less punitive tool
 - Focused on top priority issues

What the Ordinance Does

- Creates a citation authority in the Seattle Fire Code for small number of Fire Prevention officers
- 8 violation types: significant public safety risk, resolved immediately/short time frame
- Penalty amount: low-medium compared to other City departments, other fire jurisdictions
- Appeals through Hearing Examiner (overturn or mitigate penalty)

Nuisance Alarms – SFD Priority

- 5,000+ each year (1 in 3 fire calls). Firefighters are sent to the location but there is no fire emergency
- Create dangerous behavior patterns. Failure to evacuate → more occupant fatalities, more high risk rescue operations as opposed to suppression
- Reduce SFD's ability to respond to a real medical or fire emergency
- Systems Testing program is helping, problem remains large



Nuisance Alarms – Failure to Evacuate in Belltown



king5.com

BELL TOWER
2215 FIRST AVENUE

More Videos

00:38 / 02:23

LOCAL

Safety tips after fire on top floor of high-rise in Seattle's Belltown neighborhood

The image shows a video player interface. The video content displays a dark sign with white text that reads "BELL TOWER" and "2215 FIRST AVENUE". To the right of the sign, a fire truck is partially visible. The video player includes a progress bar at 00:38 / 02:23 and various control icons. Below the video, the word "LOCAL" is written in orange, followed by a bold black headline: "Safety tips after fire on top floor of high-rise in Seattle's Belltown neighborhood".

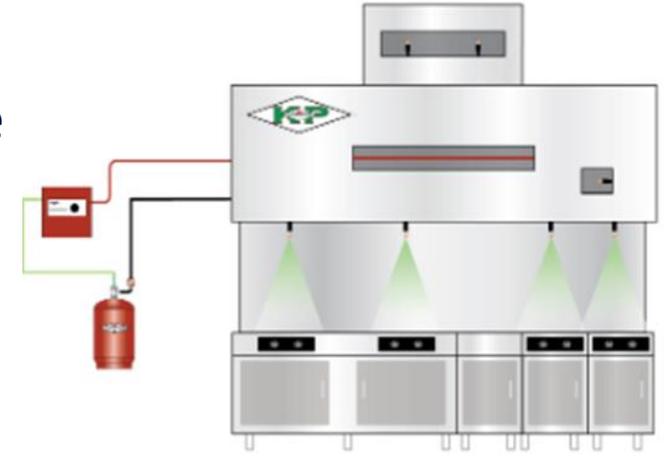
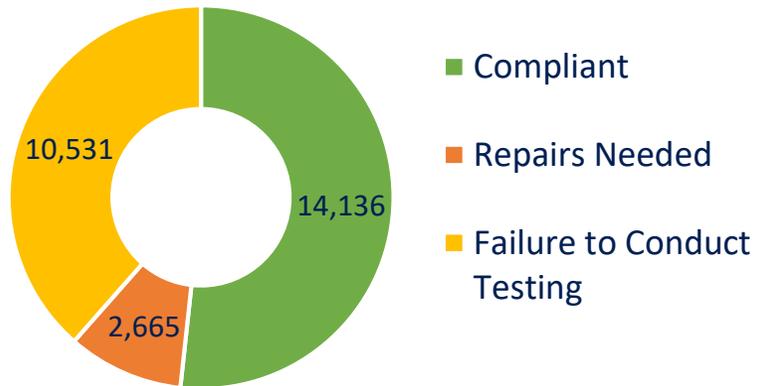
Assembly Occupancies Including Nightclubs

- Major safety issues – immediate action required: overcrowded buildings, blocked exits, unsafe conditions
- Part of City's Joint Enforcement Team (JET) with SDOT, SPD, SDCI, KC Health
- SFD will now have equivalent tools as other JET inspectors



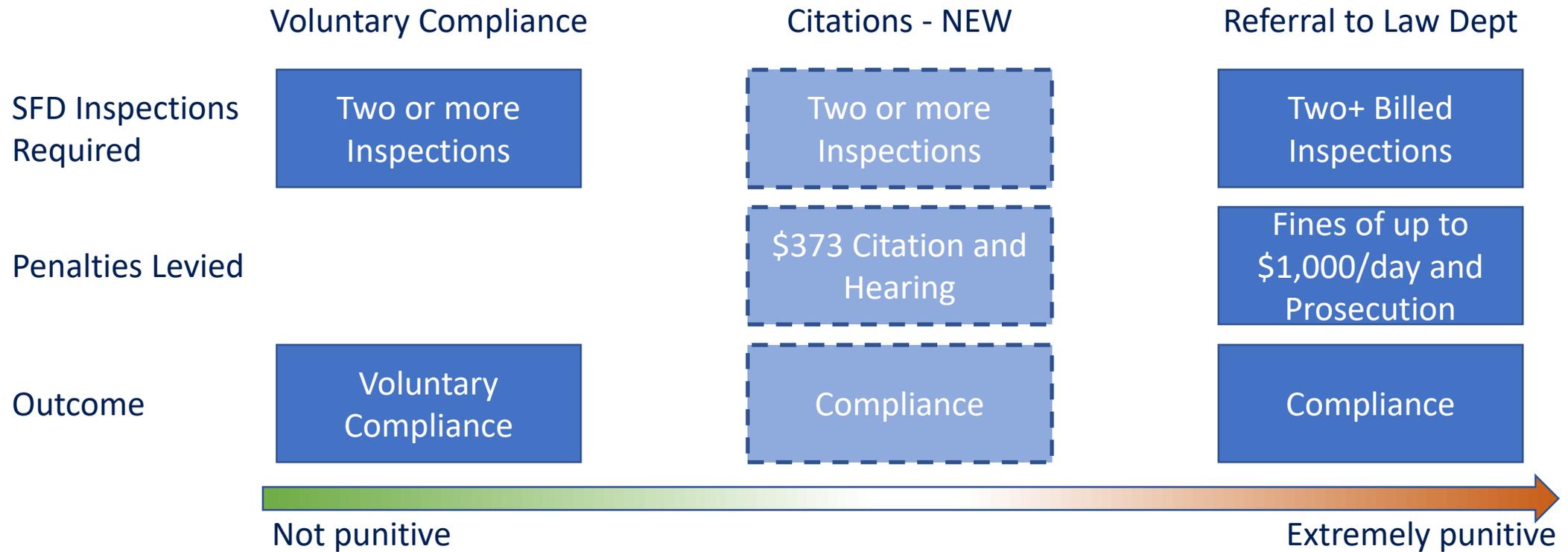
Fire Protection Systems - Essential

- Alarms, sprinklers, hoods need yearly maintenance to ensure function in emergency
- SFD proactive communications: 55,000 calls and letters to building owners in the last year
- 27,000 systems in Seattle



SFD Compliance Tools

SFD's current compliance toolkit lacks a moderate tool for achieving safety



Citation Types

- Nuisance Alarms
 - Two or more preventable fire alarms in the same quarter (#1)
- Assembly Occupancies Safety Hazards
 - Overcrowding (#2)
 - Reliability (Exits) (#3)
 - Removal of or tampering with equipment (#4)
 - Unsafe conditions (#5)
 - Failure to comply with a stop work or use order (#6)
- Fire Protection System inspection, testing and maintenance
 - Building owners – failure to test or repair (#7)
 - ITM companies – failure to file test or repair reports (#8)

Citations as Part of SFD Compliance Activity

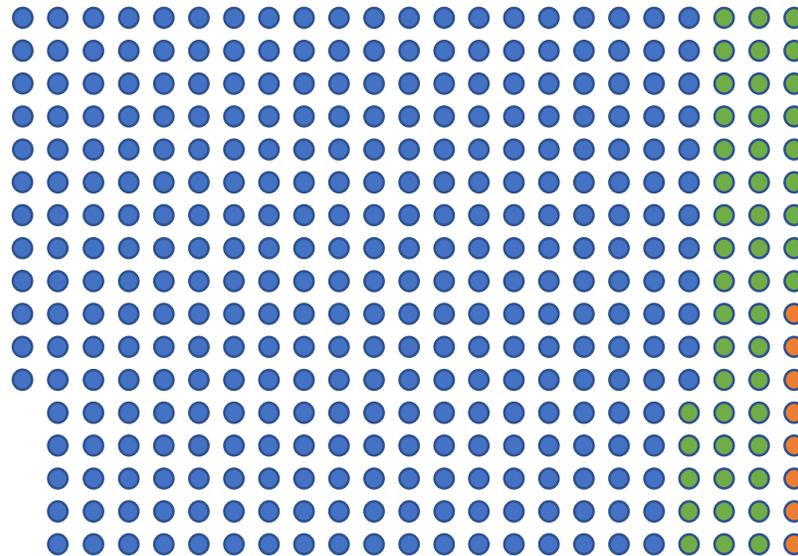
Annual Fire Safety Inspections

○ = 50 safety inspections

● Resolved by Operations

● Resolved by Fire Prevention

● Result in Citation



Proposed Penalty Amount – Other City Departments

Code	SMC Section	First Violation	Second	Third +	Period
Nightlife/Noise Ord	25.08.960	\$1,000	\$2,000	\$2,000	1 day
Nightlife/Noise Ord	25.08.960	\$325	\$650	\$1,300	1 day
Nightlife/Noise Ord	25.08.960	\$150	\$300	\$600	1 day
Marijuana Business	6.500.170	\$1,000	\$1,500	\$1,500	1 year
Marijuana Business	6.500.170	\$500	\$1,000	\$1,000	1 year
Land Use	23.91.016	\$150	\$500	\$500	5 years
Street Use	15.91.016	\$500	\$1,000	\$1,000	5 years
Street Use	15.91.016	\$250	\$500	\$500	5 years
Street Use	15.91.016	\$300	\$600	\$1,200	1 year
Street Use	15.91.016	\$150	\$300	\$600, 1200	5 years
Fire Code	Proposed - Nuisance Alarms	Free	\$373	Free	3 months
Fire Code	Proposed - All Others	\$373	\$746	\$746	1 year

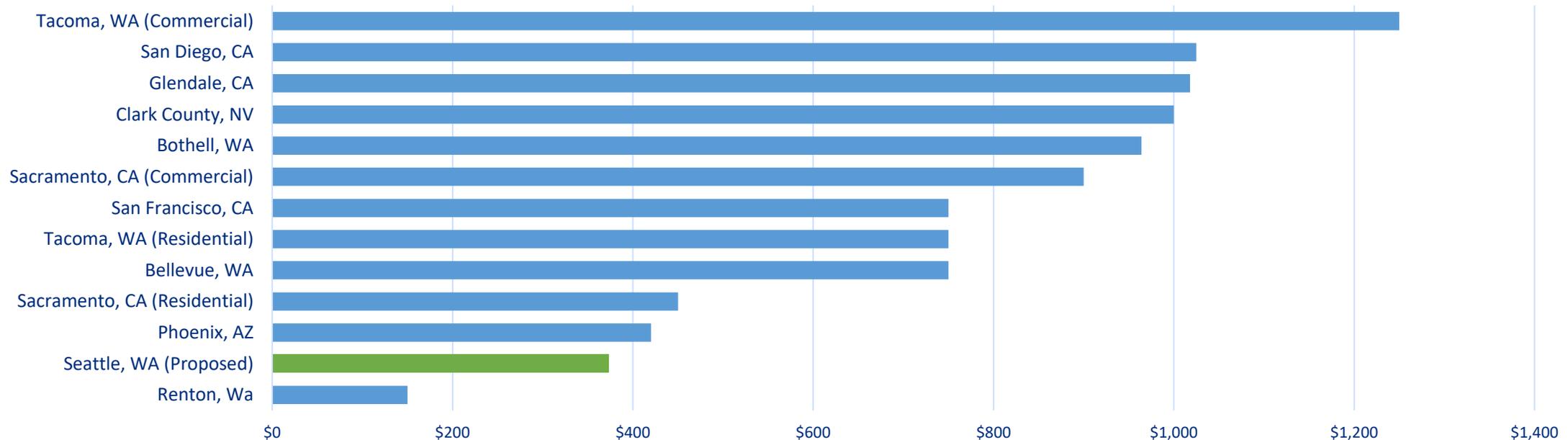


Proposed Penalty Amounts – Preventable Alarms

Seattle Proposed Ordinance – Maximum 1 cite per quarter

First violation in a quarter (Q1, Q2, Q3, Q4)	\$0
2-5 violations/same quarter – 1 cite	\$373
6-8 violations/same quarter – 1 cite	\$746
9 or more violations/same quarter – 1 cite	\$900

Cost for 5 Preventable Alarms in 12 Months



Working with Communities

- SFD building safety/compliance approach: education, engineering, enforcement
- Outreach design with OED, OIRA, OCR



Building Owners and Business Outreach

- Outreach sessions with organizations/industry associations
 - Building Owners and Managers' Association
 - Community Fire Safety Advocates (CFSA)
 - Homeless Services (with Low Acuity)
 - Inspection, Testing and Maintenance Companies
 - Long-Term Care Facilities (with Low Acuity)
 - Nightclubs and Nightlife (with OED)
 - Restaurants and WA Hospitality Group (with OED)
 - Seattle Chamber of Commerce (with OED)
- Feedback: understood the safety concerns, support for SFD efforts to reduce...and...
- Requested: help to achieve building safety, tips, data, time to adjust

high utilizers provide data
help us be ready
not aware that there is a problem
sensible
appropriate
provide notice
how can you help me?
enhance your online forms
what is a preventable alarm?
ensure we avoid citations
educational materials

RSJI and Language Outreach

- Everyone deserves safety and access to SFD information and best practices.
 - Citation legal form + translated
 - Citation form “plain-talk” explanation + translated
 - Client Assistance Memo (CAM) on building inspection program, most frequent violations, and tips for avoiding violations/staying safe + translated
 - Community events and outreach plan in development with SFD CFSAs, DON Community Liaisons, OIRA, OCR
 - RET in 2019/2020
 - Additional workplan in development to focus our program supports and education with race at center and accessible in multiple languages

Implementation Plan

- Traditional notifications start October 2019: website, social media, newsletters, USPS and email
- Language-based outreach and community support through partnership with community liaisons, organizations, faith institutions
- Gather data about impacts by race to inform education/outreach efforts in 2019 and 2020
- Create new educational materials specific to community requests (tenant information, night club information, tips to avoid false alarms)
- Provide building-specific data so responsible parties can take action to improve safety, pass inspections and avoid violations
- Provide onsite technical advice by SFD experts for buildings with high numbers of preventable alarms
- Citations issuance January 2020 with initial waivers during “grace period”

Questions?

“Every great dream begins with a dreamer. Always remember, you have within you the strength, the patience, and the passion to reach for the stars to change the world.”

- Harriet Tubman

