



Disaster Safety Assessment and the Posting of Placards

This guidance directive is intended to provide basic information to building owners or tenants that have experienced damage in a disaster or flood. The goal of Safety Assessment Program and the posting of placards is to help perform accurate, initial building safety assessments as quickly as possible to prevent death or injury. This system will allow people to safely re-enter homes and businesses and ensure that people do not enter unsafe structures after a disaster or flood.

Teams of Fire Marshals/Inspectors are dispatched to evaluate and survey damaged buildings to determine if there were safety hazards that would directly affect building occupants or the general public. The teams will also provide and post the building with colored placards that denote the condition of each structure evaluated.

What are the procedures for posting and what do the placards (tags) colors represent?

the colored placards (tags) are posted on “rapid assessed” structures to easily identify building damage assessment results from a distance. They are normally posted at all building entrances. The following describes the circumstances by which inspectors should post each type/color of placard.

INSPECTED: (Green Placard) Buildings can be damaged yet remain safe. If the safety of a building was not significantly changed by the disaster/flood, it should be posted with a green placard reading INSPECTED. However, building systems should still be evaluated for negative impact from the event.

LIMITED ENTRY: (Yellow Placard) When there is some risk of entry in all or part of the building that does not warrant a RED PLACARD, a yellow placard should be used. The placard should indicate the specific restriction (i.e., entry, duration of occupancy, use, etc.).

When the extent of damage is uncertain or cannot be ascertained within the time and resources available to a Rapid Evaluation team, the building should be posted with a yellow placard reading RESTRICTED USE in the notes section and indicating additional inspection requirements, and any additional restrictions regarding building use or occupancy should be clearly noted on the placard.

DANGER UNSAFE: (Red Placard) Buildings damaged by a disaster/flood that pose an imminent threat to life or safety should be posted with a red placard reading DANGER UNSAFE. **These are not demolition orders.**

This placard indicates it is unsafe to occupy or enter the building for any reason. Even when a building can be entered for inspection it is still possible that internal damage could pose dangers requiring an Unsafe posting. It is also possible that an otherwise safe building must be posted Unsafe because it is threatened by falling hazards from a nearby building.

Placards on single family homes are for notification purposes only and may include specific recommended evaluations that need to be completed prior to re-entry. The homeowner can remove the placard at their discretion but are encouraged to heed the listed warnings.

Placards placed on rental properties and commercial buildings must not be removed or replaced, except by authorized representatives of the Division of Fire Safety.