

CHAPTER 8 FIRE CODE

DIVISION I ADOPTION

Sec. 8.101. INTERNATIONAL FIRE CODE ADOPTED.

The 2015 Edition of the International Fire Code (IFC) as published by the International Code Council, including Appendix Chapters B, Fire Flow; D, Fire Apparatus Access Road; and E, Hazard Categories; is hereby adopted by the City of Ames, Iowa, for the purpose of prescribing regulations pertaining to conditions hazardous to life from fire and explosives, together with the deletion, additions and modifications hereinafter stated.

DIVISION II AMENDMENTS, ADDITIONS AND DELETIONS

Sec. 8.201. PERMITS.

Delete Section 105 of the International Fire Code relating to permits, except, add the following text:

Section 105.7.1 Automatic fire-extinguishing systems. A construction permit is required for installation of or modification to an automatic fire-extinguishing system. Maintenance performed in accordance with this code is not considered a modification and does not require a permit.

Section 105.7.6 Fire alarm and detection systems and related equipment. A construction permit is required for installations of or modification to fire alarm and detection systems and related equipment. Maintenance performed in accordance with this code is not considered a modification and does not require a permit.

Sec. 8.202. AMENDMENTS

(1) Amend **Section 104.8 Modifications**, by deleting the text and inserting the following in lieu thereof: Whenever there are practical difficulties involved in carrying out the provisions of this code, the *fire chief* shall have the authority to grant modifications for individual cases, provided the *fire chief* shall first find that special individual reason makes the strict letter of this code impractical and the modification is in compliance with the intent and purpose of this code and that such modification does not lessen health, life and fire safety requirements. The details of action granting modifications shall be recorded and entered in the files of the fire department.

(2) Amend **Section 307.4.3 Portable Outdoor Fireplaces**, by deleting the exception and inserting the following in lieu thereof: Recreational fires are permitted in approved containers, such as chimineas, contained fire pit/ring, screened devices. Such fires shall be located more than 15 feet from any structure, including decks, porches, roofs, garages, sheds, and fences. The immediate area within 15 feet of the fire shall be clear of combustible materials, such as weeds, shrubs, and furniture.

(3) Amend **Section 308.1.4 Open-flame cooking devices**, by deleting the text and inserting the following in lieu thereof: Charcoal burners and other open-flame cooking devices shall not be operated or located on combustible balconies or within 10 feet of combustible construction. Exceptions: Such devices are permitted in (1) one and two family dwellings; and (2) where buildings, balconies and decks are protected by an automatic sprinkler system.

(4) Amend **Section 503.2.4, Turning radius**, by deleting the text and inserting the following in lieu thereof: Radius. The inside turning radius of a 20 foot wide fire apparatus road shall be a minimum of 20 feet, and the outside turning radius of such road or lane shall be a minimum of 50 feet.

(5) Amend **Section 503.4, Obstruction of fire apparatus access roads**, by deleting the text and inserting the following in lieu thereof: Where fire apparatus access roads are established and are signed or marked as required by the fire chief, parking or obstructing in any manner of those roads shall be prohibited. The fire chief, traffic engineer and police chief or their representatives are authorized to enforce this subsection by the issuance of citations, or removal and impoundment of the obstructions, or both. Exception: Attended vehicles may be stopped in a fire apparatus access road for loading and unloading.

(6) Amend **Section 506.1, Where required**, by deleting the text and inserting the following in lieu thereof: Knox® brand key boxes are required for new buildings equipped with monitored fire alarms, sprinkler systems, or as otherwise ordered by the fire code official. Key boxes shall be installed in an approved location and shall contain keys to gain necessary access for life-saving or fire-fighting purposes.

(7) Amend **Section 903.4, Sprinkler system** supervision and alarms, by adding the following exception: Post indicator valves that are locked in the open position.

(8) Amend **Section 903.4.2, Alarms**, by deleting the existing text and inserting the following text: An approved audible/visual device, located on the exterior of the building in an approved location, shall be connected to every automatic sprinkler system. Additional notification devices may be required on the interior of the building. Such sprinkler water-flow alarm devices shall be activated by water flow equivalent to the flow of a single sprinkler of the smallest orifice size installed in the system. Where a fire alarm system is installed, activation of the automatic sprinkler system shall actuate the building fire alarm system.

(9) Amend **Section 907.2.9, Group R-2**, by adding the following text at the end of the subsection: Notwithstanding the exceptions noted herein, an automatic fire alarm system shall be installed throughout all interior corridors serving sleeping units.

(10) Amend **Chapter 11, Construction Requirements for Existing Buildings**, by adding the following to the end of this chapter: Compliance with the provisions of this Chapter shall be completed within a time schedule approved by the fire chief. The fire chief has approved an Ames City Council recommended completion date of July 1, 2020 for Section 1103.7.6, Group R-2, which states that a fire alarm system, in accordance with the City of Ames adopted fire code, shall be installed in existing Group R-2 occupancies more than three stories in height or with more than 16 dwelling or sleeping units.

(11) Add the following local provision:

The Fire Department is hereby authorized to perform periodic life safety inspections of Supervised Transitional Homes, as defined by Section 29 of the Ames Municipal Code. Fire Department personnel shall initially inspect applicable homes upon permit request and triennially thereafter, for compliance with basic life safety requirements including but not limited to operable windows, means of egress, egress windows/emergency escape openings, fire protection systems, smoke detectors, and portable fire extinguishers, for the duration of the use.

(12) Add the following local provision:

ZONING DISTRICTS IN WHICH STORAGE OF FLAMMABLE OR COMBUSTIBLE LIQUIDS IN BURIED OR UNDERGROUND TANKS IS PROHIBITED.

Installation of underground flammable or combustible liquid storage tanks is prohibited in the following zoning districts: RL, RM, RH, RLP, UCRM, FS-RL, FS-RM, F-PRD, S-SMD and S-HM Zoning Districts. The fire chief, or designees, will have the authority to alter or allow installations in prohibited zones after the consideration of special features including but not limited to topographical conditions, nature of occupancy and proximity to buildings, capacity of proposed tanks, and degree of fire protection to be provided and available. Any installation shall be in compliance with state and local codes. This section shall not apply to underground heating oil installations.

(13) Add the following local provision:

ZONING DISTRICTS IN WHICH STORAGE OF FLAMMABLE OR COMBUSTIBLE LIQUIDS IN OUTSIDE ABOVE GROUND TANKS IS PROHIBITED.

The limits in which the storage of flammable or combustible liquids is restricted are hereby established as follows: RL, RM, RH, RLP, UCRM, FS-RL, FS-RM, F-PRD, S-SMD and S-HM Zoning Districts. The fire chief, or

designees, will have the authority to alter or allow installations in prohibited zones after the consideration of special features including but not limited to topographical conditions, nature of occupancy, proximity to buildings, capacity of proposed tanks and degree of fire protection to be provided and available. Any installation shall be in compliance with state and local codes. This section shall not apply to heating oil installations.

(14) Add the following local provision:

ZONING DISTRICT RESTRICTIONS ON STORAGE OF MORE THAN 100LBS LIQUEFIED PETROLEUM GASES.

The limits in which storage of liquefied petroleum gas is restricted, are hereby established as follows: RL, RM, RH, RLP, UCRM, FS-RL, FS-RM, F-PRD, S-SMD and S-HM Zoning Districts. The fire chief, or designees, will have the authority to alter or allow installations in prohibited zones after the consideration of special features including but not limited to topographical conditions, nature of occupancy and proximity to buildings, capacity of proposed tanks, and degree of fire protection to be provided and available. Any installation shall be in compliance with state and local codes.

**DIVISION III
SPRINKLER SYSTEM RETROFIT**

Sec. 8.301 EXISTING BUILDINGS TO HAVE SPRINKLER SYSTEMS.

(1) The following terms as used in this article shall have the meaning respectively ascribed to them in this section. Automatic Sprinkler System. An automatic sprinkler system within the meaning of this section shall consist of piping designed in accordance with fire protection engineering standards, that includes a suitable water supply, and which is activated by heat or the products of combustion, to discharge water over the fire area.

Fire Chief means the Fire Chief of the Ames Fire Department or said Fire Chief's designee.

High-Rise buildings shall mean buildings having occupied floors located more than 75 feet above the lowest level of fire department vehicle access.

(2) Retrofit Requirements. The following existing buildings shall be retrofitted with an automatic sprinkler system in accordance with Section 403.2 of the 2003 International Building Code and Section 903 of the 2003 International Fire Code.

(a) Existing high-rise buildings having occupied floors located more than 75 feet above the lowest level of fire department vehicle access.

(b) Institutions. Buildings housing more than 16 persons on a twenty-four hour basis to be cared for or provided a supervised environment because of their physical or mental condition, including hospitals, nursing homes, and assisted living facilities.

(c) Dormitories. A building in which sleeping accommodations are provided for more than 16 persons, who are not related by marriage or consanguinity, in one room or a series of closely associated rooms, with or without meals, including fraternity and sorority houses, barracks, and dormitories.

(3) Each and every existing building that comes within the scope of this section shall be retrofitted as aforesaid not later than October 1, 2011.

(4) Should a facility be unable to meet the prescribed date of October 1, 2011, the owners can request up to two extensions. Requests for extension will be heard by the Building Board of Appeals.

(a) A first request for extension must be brought to the Building Board of Appeals prior to October 1, 2010. If granted an extension for three years, the implementation period would end on October 1, 2014.

(b) Should a facility be unable to meet the extended compliance date of October 1, 2014, a second request for extension must be brought to the Building Board of Appeals prior to October 1, 2013. If granted an extension for two years, the implementation period would end on October 1, 2016.

(5) In order to grant an extension, the Board must find all of the following five criteria have been met:

(a) The owners have made a compelling case that they cannot be Code compliant by the prescribed ordinance date.

- (b) The owner's request for extension is based upon financial need.
- (c) The owners have made substantial and unsuccessful efforts to acquire necessary funds.
- (d) Complete and thorough cost estimates, construction plans, and Code compliant sprinkler system designs have been developed.
- (e) The owners have a viable plan for compliance if an extension is granted.

DIVISION IV OPEN BURNING

Sec. 8.401 OPEN BURNING.

(1) Prohibition.

The burning of garbage, refuse, leaves, landscape waste and all other combustible materials is prohibited except as specifically permitted by the fire chief as provided in the following exceptions.

EXCEPTIONS:

(a) Landscape waste.

Landscape waste produced in clearing, grubbing and construction operations may be burned on site at such locations and under such conditions as are granted advance written approval of the fire chief or designee. No building materials, trade wastes, rubber tires, material left from demolition of any structure, landscape waste originating from a different location nor any other material may be mixed with the landscape waste when burned. Gasoline shall not be used to ignite landscape waste

(b) Open burning on public or private property.

Open burning of prairies, pastures, fields, yards and road ditches may occur at such locations and under such conditions as are granted advance written approval of the fire chief or designee.

(c) Training Fires.

Fires set for the purpose of training of public or industrial employees in firefighting methods are permitted at such locations and under such conditions as are granted in advance written approval of the fire chief or designee. When structures are to be burned as part of the training, advance written approval must also be obtained from the State of Iowa Department of Natural Resources.

(d) Storm damaged trees.

Downed and damaged trees, limbs, and brush may be burned, immediately following severe storm events, at such locations and under such conditions as are granted advance approval by the fire chief, public works director, and City Manager, as part of a declared public emergency. The site authorized and designated for such burning shall not be located in a residential area.

(2) General Conditions for Open Burning.

(a) Fire Chief may prohibit. The Fire Chief may prohibit any or all open burning when atmospheric conditions or local circumstances make such fires hazardous or a nuisance.

(b) Attendance of Open Fires. Open fires shall be constantly attended by an adult person until such fire is extinguished. This person shall have a hose connected to the water supply, or other fire extinguishing equipment readily available for use.

(c) Offensive Smoke and Odors. Upon receipt of a complaint regarding the smoke or odors from open fires, the fire chief's designee shall investigate and have the discretion to have the fire extinguished.

DIVISION V
BUILDING CODE BOARD OF APPEALS

Sec. 8.501. BUILDING BOARD OF APPEALS HAS JURISDICTION.

The provisions of Section 108.1 of the IFC notwithstanding, the Ames Building Board of Appeals as established and constituted under the ordinances of the City of Ames shall have jurisdiction to determine the suitability of alternative materials and types of construction and to provide for reasonable interpretations of the provisions of this Fire Code, except those relating to open burning.

The Ames Building Board of Appeals is authorized to grant two year extensions for the implementation period for sprinkler systems as defined in Section 8.301.

When so acting, the Fire Chief may designate an individual knowledgeable in fire safety to render professional advice to the Board on matters related to the Fire Code.

The Building Board of Appeals, when acting pursuant to this subsection, shall have authority to review and make recommendations on any and all proposed changes to this chapter of the Code. Recommendations shall be forwarded to the City Council for final action.

DIVISION VI
PENALTY

Sec. 8.601 PENALTIES FOR OFFENSES PERTAINING TO THE FIRE CODE.

A violation of any provision of Chapter 8, Fire Code, shall be a municipal infraction punishable by a penalty of \$500 for a person's first violation thereof, and a penalty of \$750 for each repeat violation.

(Ord. No. 3196, Sec. 1, 8-24-92; Ord. No. 3497, Sec. 5, 8-25-98; Ord. No. 3196, Sec. 1, 8-24-92; Ord. No. 3218, Sec. 2, 3-23-93; Ord. No. 3491, Sec. 1, 7-14-98; Ord. No. 3789, 7-27-04; Ord. No. 3924, 06-26-07; Ord. No. 4045, 9-28-10, Ord. 4310, 6-13-17).