

# **GRAYSON COUNTY FIRE CODE**



**AS**

**ADOPTED: July 18, 2023**

**EFFECTIVE: September 1, 2023**

**GRAYSON COUNTY FIRE MARSHAL'S OFFICE**

**JOHN WEDA, GRAYSON COUNTY FIRE MARSHAL**

Now, therefore, the Commissioners Court hereby adopts the following version of the Grayson County Fire Code and the rules and regulations necessary for administration and enforcement, pursuant to Local Government Code Section 233.061 and so orders the following to be in effect September 1, 2023

## **PREFACE**

It is hereby found by the Commissioners Court of Grayson County that fires have occurred in the past within its jurisdiction and are likely to occur in the future, and that damage to property and loss of life occurs for many reasons including fires that could have been prevented or minimized by providing additional safeguards to provide adequate egress time and protection for people exposed to fire.

Texas Local Government Code, Chapter 233, Section 233.061 authorizes certain counties to adopt a fire code and the regulations necessary to administer and enforce the fire code. As the governing body of Grayson County, Texas, the Commissioners Court finds that adopting a fire code and requiring permits for the construction of commercial establishments, public buildings and multi-family residences in the unincorporated areas of Grayson County will impose standards to protect the health, safety and welfare of life and property of the general public.

The fire code requires periodic inspection of new and existing structures to ensure safety standards are being maintained for the continued practice of life safety and property conservation.

From time to time the standards and regulations referenced in this code are revised and amended to enhance and improve life safety and property conservation. This court recognizes the need of forethought and progress for the County and its citizens and so orders the adoption of the Grayson County Fire Code.

This order includes the *International Fire Code*, and all references as the standard in regulating and governing the safe-guarding of life and property from fire and explosion hazards arising from the storage, handling and use of hazardous substances, materials and devices, and from conditions hazardous to life or property in the occupancy of buildings and premises in the County of Grayson. In addition, this order contains amendments to the *International Fire Code* to enhance its application to the unincorporated areas of Grayson County.

The Commissioner's Court of the County of Grayson does ordain as follows:

## **THE GRAYSON COUNTY FIRE CODE**

### **SECTION 100 GENERAL PROVISIONS**

#### **100.1 AUTHORITY**

The Grayson County Commissioners Court is the governing body for the County and orders herein:

- a) Under Chapter 233 of the Texas Local Government Code the Commissioners Court is authorized to adopt a fire code and rules necessary to administer and enforce the fire code, and
- b) These regulations adopted by the Commissioners Court shall be known as the Grayson County Fire Code, hereinafter referred to as "this code" and,

- c) The Fire Marshal shall have the powers and duties to direct and enforce this code and,
- d) The Grayson County Fire Marshal shall be known as the Fire Code Official and, The Authority Having Jurisdiction and,
- e) This code establishes the Department of Fire Prevention and this department will be a division of the Grayson County Fire Marshal's Office.

Therefore, in the interest of the public this code applies to the County of Grayson and the jurisdiction will be the unincorporated areas of Grayson County, Texas after the effective date of this code.

## **100.2 SCOPE**

This code is intended to provide minimum requirements, with due regard to function, for the design and construction or substantial improvements of public buildings, commercial establishments, and multi-family residential dwellings consisting of four or more units to reduce the risk to life and property from fire and other hazards.

## **100.3 PURPOSE**

The purpose of this code is to promote and protect buildings constructed in the unincorporated area of the county from fire and other hazards so by this order:

- a) This code establishes the minimum standards for construction to provide for the health, safety and welfare of the residents of those establishments.
- b) This code recognizes fire safety in regard to operation and use of buildings and structures after construction, whether or not their construction was subject to this code, and shall be enforced independent of this code by the County Fire Marshal in accordance with applicable law, including but not limited to his independent authority to inspect for the presence of fire and life safety hazards and order their correction under Chapter 352 of the Texas Local Government Code.
- c) This code is not intended in any way to limit the statutory authority of the Fire Marshal, and it is intended that such authority be retained to the fullest extent that the law would authorize.
- d) This code is not intended to repeal, abrogate or impair any existing laws, regulations, easements, covenants or deed restrictions. In provisions of this code where this code and other legal requirements conflict or overlap, whichever imposes the more stringent restriction shall prevail.

#### **100.4 REGULATION**

The Grayson County Fire Code shall conform to a fire code as published by the International Code Council (ICC) as the code existed on May 1, 2005; and establish protective measures that exceed the standards of the code describe herein. The current publication from the ICC is the International Fire Code, 2021 Edition. The Commissioner's Court may adopt later editions of a fire code published by the International Code Council as revisions are released from time to time.

#### **100.5 REFERENCED CODES AND STANDARDS**

The design and construction of new structures shall comply with this code, and other codes as applicable when referenced in this code. Any alterations, additions, changes in use, or changes in structures are required to comply with this code which is within the scope of this and other referenced codes and shall be made in accordance therewith.

This code means this document, the codes and standards in the referenced document known as the *International Fire Code*, 2021 Edition, including Chapter 47 Referenced Standards, and Appendices B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I, J, and K as published by the International Code Council (ICC), except for the portions that have been made as additions, insertions, deletions or changes in the Amendments to the *International Fire Code* and any other referenced codes and standards. The authority having jurisdiction shall have final say over alternative methods to meet the intent of the Grayson County Fire Code.

The codes and standards referenced in this code shall be those that are listed in the *International Fire Code*, 2021 Edition Chapter 47 and such codes and standards, when specified in this code, shall be considered part of the requirements of this code to the prescribed extent of each such reference. Where differences occur between the provisions of this code and the referenced standards, the provisions of this code shall apply. Whenever this code or the referenced codes and standards have been adopted each reference to said code and standard shall be considered to reference any adopted amendments as well.

The North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) publishes a Recommendation to the latest version of the International Fire Code®; and the latest editions of the model codes from the International Code Council® (ICC). The latest recommended amendments from the North Central Texas Council of Governments are incorporated and made a part of this code. Any additions, insertions, deletions, or changes to the recommendations are included in the amendments to the Grayson County Fire Code.

This code may refer to the standards specified in the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), *NFPA 101 Life Safety Code*. The current publication recognized by the State is the 2021 Edition, and this code recognizes the current edition as part of this code and any subsequent editions published by the National Fire Protection Association that may be released after the adoption of this code.

Where the *International Fire Code*, current edition, references the International Code Council (ICC), *International Electric Code*, this code shall replace those references with the National Fire Protection Association, *NFPA 70 National Electric Code*® 2011 Edition and any subsequent editions that are published by the National Fire Protection Association.

This code may refer to standards from any publications in this section for an alternative method of obtaining the desired level of fire protection to ensure life safety and property conservation on new construction, or the regulation of buildings constructed prior to the effective date of this code.

Development and construction that occurs in an extraterritorial jurisdiction of a municipality is subject to comply with that municipalities' adopted fire codes and standards in addition to this code, adopted codes and standards, and the most stringent rules and regulations shall apply.

#### **100.6 DUTIES OF THE FIRE MARSHAL**

The Fire Marshal's Office shall enforce this code and,

- a) The Fire Marshal shall be known as the Chief of Grayson County Fire Marshal's Office and,
- b) The Chief and their designees shall have the authority of and function as the Fire Code Officials for the unincorporated areas of Grayson County and
- c) The Fire Marshal shall be authority having jurisdiction.

#### **100.7 DISCLAIMER OF LIABILITY**

This code does not imply that any building or the uses permitted within any building will be free from a fire or other hazards. This code shall not create liability on the part of Grayson County or any officer or employee thereof for any damages that result from reliance on this code or any administrative decision lawfully made based on this code. The granting of a permit or issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy does not imply that the building can be insured for fire coverage.

If any section, subsection, sentence, clause or phrase of this ordinance is, for any reason, held to be unconstitutional, such decision shall not affect the validity of the remaining portions of this ordinance.

The Commissioner's Court of Grayson County hereby declares that it would have passed this ordinance, and each section, subsection, clause or phrase thereof, irrespective of the fact that any one or more sections, subsections, sentences, clauses and phrases be declared unconstitutional.

#### **100.8 APPLICATIONS AND PERMITS**

The code official or their designees, is authorized to receive applications, review construction documents and issue permits for construction regulated by this code, issue permits for operations regulated by this code, inspect the premises for which such permits have been issued and enforce compliance with the provisions of this code and therefore:

- a) A person may not construct or substantially improve a building in the unincorporated area of the county unless the person obtains a building permit issued in accordance with this code.
- b) A person may apply for a building permit by providing to the fire code official:
  - (1) A plan of the proposed building containing information required by this code; and
  - (2) An application fee in an amount set by the fee schedule of this code.

- c) Within 30 days after the date the fire code official receives an application and fee in accordance with this Subsection, the fire code official shall:
  - (1) Issue the permit if the plan complies with the fire code; or
  - (2) Deny the permit if the plan does not comply with the fire code.
- d) If the fire code official receives an application and fee in accordance with Subsection (b) and the fire code official does not issue the permit or deny the application within 30 days after receiving the application and fee, the construction or substantial improvement of the building that is the subject of the application is approved for the purposes of this code.

## **100.9 CONSTRUCTION PROVISIONS**

This code applies only to the following buildings constructed in the unincorporated area of Grayson County:

- a) A commercial establishment;
- b) A public building; and
- c) A multi-family residential dwelling consisting of four or more units.

This code does not apply to an industrial facility having a fire brigade that conforms to requirements of the Occupational Health and Safety Administration.

This code recognizes:

- a) "Substantial Improvement" as meaning:
  - 1) The repair, restoration, reconstruction, improvement, or remodeling of a building for which the cost exceeds 50 percent of the building's value according to the certified tax appraisal roll for the county for the year preceding the year in which the work was begun; or
  - 2) Any structure that undergoes any alteration, movement or enlargement due to construction or renovation, horizontal or vertical, that increases the size of the structure in net square footage from the original construction of the structure.
  - 3) A change in occupancy classification involving a change in the purpose or level of activity in a building, including the renovation of a warehouse into a loft apartment.
- b) For purposes of this code, substantial improvement begins on the date that the repair, restoration, reconstruction, improvement, or remodeling or the change in occupancy classification begins or on the date materials are first delivered for that purpose.
- c) For purposes of this code, construction begins on the date that ground is broken for a building, or if no ground is broken, on the date that:
  - 1) The first materials are added to the original property;
  - 2) Foundation pilings are installed on the original property; or
  - 3) A manufactured building or relocated structure is placed on a foundation on the original property.

Construction documents for proposed fire apparatus access, location of fire lanes, types of construction, fire-resistance rated construction, location of fire hydrants, fire protection systems, hydraulic calculations for fire hydrant systems and fire protection systems, fire hazards and means of egress shall be submitted to the fire code official for review and approval.

Construction documents may be submitted to a third party for review that is licensed in the State of Texas, specializing in fire protection plan review services that are not associated with the applying company or their designer, architect or contractor. One (1) copy that has been reviewed by a third party will be submitted to the fire code official for final review and approval prior to construction. This part does not waive or exempt any fees or charges that are associated with the

Fee Schedule of this code. This option shall have prior approval by the Fire Marshal and/or be requested to be conducted by said third party for a review in which the applicable codes and Grayson County Fire Code amendments will be the minimum standards.

#### **100.10 INSPECTIONS**

The fire code official shall inspect a building subject to this code to determine whether the building complies with the fire code. The fire code official may appoint a designee to perform the inspection of a building.

The fire code official or his designee may enter and perform the inspection of a building at a reasonable time at any stage of the building's construction or substantial improvement and after completion of the building:

- a) On or before the date that construction or substantial improvement of a building subject to this subchapter is completed, the owner of the building shall request in writing that the fire code official inspect the building for compliance with the fire code.
- b) The fire code official shall begin the inspection of the building within five business days after the date of the receipt of the written inspection request. If the fire code official is properly requested and the fire code official does not begin the inspection within the time permitted by this subsection, the building that is the subject of the request is considered approved for the purposes of this subchapter.
- c) The fire code official shall issue a final certificate of compliance to the owner of a building inspected under this section if the inspector determines, after an inspection of the completed building, that the building complies with the fire code.
- d) If the fire code official determines, after an inspection of the completed building, that the building does not comply with the fire code:
  - 1) The fire code official shall deny the certificate of compliance; and
  - 2) The building may not be occupied.

Buildings constructed prior to the effective date of this code and buildings constructed after the effective date of this code may be inspected for fire and life safety hazards. The inspections of structures will be for any conditions that endanger the safety of the structure or its occupants and promote or causes fire or combustion, which shall include:

- a) The presence of a flammable substance;
- b) A dangerous or dilapidated wall, ceiling, or other structural element;
- c) Improper electrical components, heating or other building services or facilities;
- d) The presence of a dangerous chimney, flue, pipe, main, or stove, or of dangerous wiring;
- e) Dangerous storage, including storage or use of hazardous substances; or
- f) Inappropriate means of egress, fire protection, or other fire-related safeguards.



The inspection of these buildings will be subject to a fee as prescribed by the fee schedule that is a part of this code.

The buildings constructed prior to the effective date of this code shall be subject to the requirements of the *International Fire Code*, any references per Chapter 47, and any adopted amendments of this code when:

- a) There is a change in the occupancy status, or
- b) There is a change in the design or construction of the structure due to restoration, reconstruction, improvements, or remodeling for which the cost exceeds 50 percent of the buildings value according to the certified tax appraisal roll for the county for the year preceding the year in which the work was begun, or
- c) Any structure that undergoes any alteration, movement or enlargement due to construction or renovation, horizontal or vertical, that increases the size of the structure in net square footage from the original construction of the structure, or
- d) There is a condition that constitutes a hazard to life safety or danger to property.

#### **100.11 ESTABLISHMENT OF BOARD OF REVIEW AND ITS DUTIES AND POWERS**

The Commissioner's Court will serve as the Board of Review. The Board of Review will have final authority on recommendations, decisions, or determinations made by the Fire Code Official about the application and interpretation of this code in reviewing building permit applications for modifications of the requirements of this code.

The Commissioner's Court may appoint a board of Review for interpretation and application of this code relating to commercial development in the County.

The County will provide general legal counsel to the Board of Review for matters that are presented to the Board for consideration. The legal counsel will be at the expense of the County for all matters presented to the Board for review.

Upon creation of a Board of Review, this Board will review the recommendations, decisions or determinations made by the fire code official about the application and interpretation of this code in reviewing building permit applications for modifications of the requirements of this code.

The Commissioners Court appoints the members of the Board of Review. The members of the Board of Review must be qualified by experience and training to pass on matters pertaining to hazards of fire, explosions, hazardous condition or fire protections systems and are not employees of the County. The members of the board shall consist of five members having one or more of the following qualifications:

- a) One member shall be a practicing design professional registered in the practice of engineering or architecture in Texas.
- b) One member shall be a qualified engineer, technologist, technician or safety professional trained in fire protection engineering, fire science or fire technology. This representative may be fire protection contractors and certified technicians engaged in fire protections system design.

- c) One member shall be a registered industrial or chemical engineer, certified hygienist, certified safety professional, certified hazardous materials manager or comparably qualified specialist experienced in chemical process safety or industrial safety.
- d) One member shall be a contractor regularly engaged in the construction, alteration, maintenance, repair or remodeling of buildings or building services and systems regulated by this code.
- e) One member shall be a representative of business or industry not represented by a member from the other categories of board members described in this section.

The members of this committee appointed by the commissioner's court shall be subject to the following terms and conditions:

- a) Members serve without remuneration or compensation, and may be removed from office before the end of their appointed terms only for cause.
- b) Members are appointed for terms of four years. Members shall not be reappointed to serve more than two consecutive full terms. Of the first members appointed, two shall be appointed for a one-year term, two shall be appointed for a two-year term, and one shall be appointed for a three-year term.
- c) Commissioners Court fills vacancies for the remainder of the unexpired term in the categories in which original appointments are to be made. Members appointed to fill a vacancy in an unexpired term are eligible for reappointment to two full terms.
- d) Members may be removed from the board of review before the end of their terms only for cause.

Continued absence of any member from meetings of the board, at the discretion of the Commissioners Court, may render that member liable to immediate removal from the board.

- e) Members with a material financial interest in a matter before the board shall declare that interest and refrain from participating in discussions, deliberations, and voting on these matters.

#### **100.12 FEES**

A portion of this code, the Fee Schedule, is recognized by the Commissioners Court as the Fee Schedule for the purposes of this section and reflect the approximate cost of the inspection personnel, materials used, and administrative overhead to enforce this code and;

- a) The fee schedule is based on building type and include plans review, inspections and the issuance of a building permit and final certificate of compliance and,
- b) The county shall deposit fees received under this code in a special fund in the county treasury, and money in that fund may be used only for the administration and enforcement of this code.

### **100.13 VIOLATIONS**

Persons who shall violate a provision of this code or shall fail to comply with any of the requirements of this code or who shall erect, install, alter, repair or do work in violation of the approved construction documents or directive of the code official, or of a permit or certificate used under provisions of this code shall be subject to punishment. Each day that a violation continues after due notice has been served shall be deemed a separate offense.

Any person, firm, or corporation operating or maintaining any occupancy, premises or vehicle subject to this code who shall permit any life safety or fire hazard to exist on the premises under their control or who shall fail to take immediate action to abate a life safety or fire hazard when ordered or notified to do so by the code official or his duly authorized representative shall be guilty of a separate offense for each and every day or portion thereof which any violation of any of the provisions of this code is committed or continued.

### **100.14 PENALTIES**

The appropriate attorney representing the county in the district court may seek injunctive relief to prevent the violation or threatened violation of the fire code. The county shall deposit amounts collected under this section in a fund and for the purposes described by Texas Local Government Code 233.065(c). The appropriate attorney representing the county in civil cases may file a civil action in a court of competent jurisdiction to recover from a person who violates the fire code or fails to abate an order by the fire code official. The penalty may be in an amount not to exceed \$200.00 for each day on which the violation exists. In determining the amount of the penalty, the court shall consider the seriousness of the violation.

# Additions, Insertions, Deletions, And Changes to the International Fire Code 2021 Edition Know As

## The Grayson County Fire Code

The Grayson County Fire Code herein makes reference to the International Fire Code. A copy of the International Fire Code is available for viewing at the Office of the Grayson County Fire Marshal by appointment during regular business hours. The International Fire Code is hereby incorporated by reference as if it were set forth at length herein.

The following sections, paragraphs, and sentences of the *2021 International Fire Code* (IFC) are hereby amended as follows: Standard type is text from the IFC. Underlined type is text inserted. ~~Lined through type is deleted text from IFC.~~ A double asterisk (\*\*) at the beginning of a section identifies an amendment carried over from the 2018 edition of the code and a triple asterisk (\*\*\*) identifies a new or revised amendment with the 2021 code.

**\*\*Section 102.1; change #3 to read as follows:**

3. Existing structures, facilities, and conditions when required in Chapter 11 or in specific sections of this code.

*(Reason: To clarify that there are other provisions in the fire code applicable to existing buildings that are not located in Chapter 11, including but not limited to Section 505 Premises Identification.)*

**\*\*Section 105.3.3; change to read as follows:**

**105.3.3 Occupancy Prohibited before Approval.** The building or structure shall not be occupied prior to the fire code official issuing a permit when required and conducting associated inspections indicating the applicable provisions of this code have been met.

*(Reason: For clarity to allow for better understanding in areas not requiring such permits, such as unincorporated areas of counties. This amendment may be struck by a city.)*

**\*\*Section 105.6.25; add to read as follows:**

**105.6.25 Electronic access control systems.** Construction permits are required to install or modify an electronic access control system, as specified in Chapter 10. A separate construction permit is required for to install or modify a fire alarm system that may be connected to the access control system. Maintenance performed in accordance with this code is not considered to be a modification and does not require a permit.

*(Reason: Adds construction permit requirements for electronic access control systems affecting access and/or egress to ensure proper design and installation of such systems. These changes reflect local practices of municipalities in this region.)*

**\*\*\* Section 107.3; delete this section in its entirety:**

**107.3 Permit valuations.** ~~The applicant for a permit shall provide an estimated permit value at the time of application. Permit valuations shall include the total value of work, including materials and labor, for which the permit is being issued, such as electrical, gas, mechanical, plumbing equipment and permanent systems. If, in the opinion of the fire code official, the valuation is underestimated on the application, the permit shall be denied unless the applicant can show detailed estimates to meet the approval of the fire code official. Final permit valuation shall be set by the fire code official.~~

*(Different jurisdictions establish permit fee requirements in different ways, and the majority in this region do*

not utilize this methodology for establishing Fire Code-required permit fees, as well as have already established and proposed applicable permit fee requirements.)

**\*\*Section 202; amend and add definitions to read as follows:**

**\*\* [B] AMBULATORY CARE FACILITY.** Buildings or portions thereof used to provide medical, surgical, psychiatric, nursing, or similar care on a less than 24-hour basis to persons who are rendered incapable of self-preservation by the services provided or staff has accepted responsibility for care recipients already incapable. This group may include but not be limited to the following:

- Dialysis centers
- Procedures involving sedation
- Sedation dentistry
- Surgery centers
- Colonic centers
- Psychiatric centers

*(Reason: to clarify the range of uses included in the definition)*

**\*\* [B] ATRIUM.** An opening connecting ~~two~~ three or more stories... *{remaining text unchanged}*

*(Reason: Accepted practice in the region based on legacy codes. IBC Section 1009 permits unenclosed two story stairways under certain circumstances.)*

**\*\* [B] DEFEND IN PLACE.** A method of emergency response that engages building components and trained staff to provide occupant safety during an emergency. Emergency response involves remaining in place, relocating within the building, or both, without evacuating the building.

*(Reason: Added from International Building Code (IBC) definitions for consistency in interpretation of the subject requirements pertaining to such occupancies.)*

**\*\*FIRE WATCH.** A temporary measure intended to ensure continuous and systematic surveillance of a building or portion thereof by one or more qualified individuals or standby personnel when required by the fire code official, for the purposes of identifying and controlling fire hazards, detecting early signs of unwanted fire, raising an alarm of fire and notifying the fire department.

*(Reason: Clearly defines options to the fire department for providing a fire watch.)*

**\*\*FIREWORKS.** Any composition or device for the purpose of producing a visible or an audible effect for entertainment purposes by combustion, deflagration, ~~or~~ detonation, and/or activated by ignition with a match or other heat producing device that meets the definition of 1.3G fireworks or 1.4G fireworks. ... *{Remainder of text unchanged}*...

*(Reason: Increased safety from fireworks related injuries.)*

**\*\*REPAIR GARAGE.** A building, structure or portion thereof used for servicing or repairing motor vehicles. This occupancy shall also include garages involved in minor repair, modification and servicing of motor vehicles for items such as lube changes, inspections, windshield repair or replacement, shocks, minor part replacement, and other such minor repairs.

*(Reason: To further clarify types of service work allowed in a repair garage, as well as to correspond with definition in the IBC.)*

**\*\*SELF-SERVICE STORAGE FACILITY.** Real property designed and used for the purpose of renting or leasing individual storage spaces to customers for the purpose of storing and removing personal property on a self-service basis.

*(Reason: To provide a definition that does not exist in the code.)*

**\*\*STANDBY PERSONNEL.** Qualified fire service personnel, approved by the Fire Chief. When utilized, the number required shall be as directed by the Fire Chief. Charges for utilization shall be as normally calculated by the jurisdiction.

*(Reason: To provide a definition that does not exist in the code for fire watch accommodations as required by the jurisdiction.)*

**\*\*UPGRADED OR REPLACED FIRE ALARM SYSTEM.** A fire alarm system that is upgraded or replaced includes, but is not limited to the following:

- Replacing one single board or fire alarm control unit component with a newer model
- Installing a new fire alarm control unit in addition to or in place of an existing one
- Conversion from a horn system to an emergency voice/alarm communication system
- Conversion from a conventional system to one that utilizes addressable or analog devices

The following are not considered an upgrade or replacement:

- Firmware updates
- Software updates
- Replacing boards of the same model with chips utilizing the same or newer firmware

*(Reason: This is referenced in several places, but the wording of “upgraded or replaced” is somewhat ambiguous and open to interpretation. Defining it here allows for consistent application across the region.)*

**\*\*Section 307.1.1; change to read as follows:**

**\*\*Section 307.1.1; change to read as follows:**

**307.1.1 Prohibited Open Burning.** Open burning shall be prohibited that is offensive or objectionable because of smoke emissions or when atmospheric conditions or local circumstances make such fires hazardous shall be prohibited.

**Exception:** {No change.}

*(Reason: To further protect adjacent property owners/occupants from open burning and/or smoke emissions from open burning.)*

**\*\*Section 307.2; change to read as follows:**

**307.2 Permit Required.** ~~A permit shall be obtained from the fire code official in accordance with Section 105.6 prior to kindling a fire for recognized silvicultural or range or wildlife management practices, prevention or control of disease or pests, or open burning a bonfire. Application for such approval shall only be presented by and permits issued to the owner of the land upon which the fire is to be kindled.~~

Examples of state or local law, or regulations referenced elsewhere in this section may include but not be limited to the following:

1. Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) guidelines and/or restrictions.
2. State, County, or Local temporary or permanent bans on open burning.
3. Local written policies as established by the fire code official.

*(Reason: Amendments to 307.2, 307.4, 307.4.3, and 307.5 better explain current requirements and recognize that jurisdictions have local established policies that best fit their environments.)*

**\*\*Section 307.3; change to read as follows:**

**307.3 Extinguishment Authority.** ~~When open burning creates or adds to a hazardous situation, or a required permit for open burning has not been obtained, the fire code official is authorized to order the~~

~~extinguishment of the open burning operation. The fire code official is authorized to order the extinguishment by the permit holder, another person responsible or the fire department of open burning that creates or adds to a hazardous or objectionable situation.~~

*(Reason: Provides direction as to responsible parties relative to extinguishment of the subject open burning.)*

**\*\*Section 307.4.4 and 5; add section 307.4.4**

**\*\*\*Section 307.4 and 307.4.1; change to read as follows:**

**307.4 Location.** The location for open burning shall not be less than ~~50 300~~ feet (~~15-240 91 440~~ mm) from any structure, and provisions shall be made to prevent the fire from spreading to within ~~50 300~~ feet (~~15-240 91 440~~ mm) of any structure.

**Exceptions:** {No change.}

**307.4.1 Bonfires.** A bonfire shall not be conducted within ~~50 feet~~ (15 240 mm), or greater distance as determined by the fire code official, of a structure or combustible material, unless the fire is contained in a barbecue pit. Conditions that could cause a fire to spread within the required setback ~~50 feet (15-240 mm)~~ of a structure shall be eliminated prior to ignition.

*(Reason: To increase the separation distance thereby increasing the safety to adjacent properties, as per applicable TCEQ rules and regulations regarding outdoor burning. Bonfires were added to this requirement to allow the AHJ the ability to match the increased setback utilized for open burning as necessary. Size of bonfire will help to determine needed setback, fire equipment and apparatus as per permit requirements.)*

**307.4.4 Permanent Outdoor Firepit.** Permanently installed outdoor firepits for recreational fire purposes shall not be installed within 10 feet of a structure or combustible material.

**Exception:** Permanently installed outdoor fireplaces constructed in accordance with the International Residential Code or International Building Code.

**\*\*Section 308.1.6.3; change to read as follows:**

**308.1.6.3 Sky Lanterns.** A person shall not release or cause to be released an ~~untethered~~ unmanned free-floating device containing an open flame or other heat source, such as but not limited to a sky lantern.

*(Reason: Eliminates the potential fire hazard presented by utilization of such devices and the potential accidental release of such devices.)*

**\*\*Section 311.5; change to read as follows:**

**311.5 Placards.** ~~Any~~ The fire code official is authorized to require marking of any vacant or abandoned buildings or structures determined to be unsafe pursuant to Section 114 of this code relating to structural or interior hazards, ~~shall be marked~~ as required by Section 311.5.1 through 311.5.5.

*(Reason: There may be situations where placarding is not desired or necessary; also clarifies intent that it is not the fire code official's responsibility to provide the placard.)*

**\*\*Section 501.4; change to read as follows:**

**501.4 Timing of Installation.** When fire apparatus access roads or a water supply for fire protection is required to be installed for any structure or development, they shall be installed, tested, and approved prior to the time of which construction has progressed beyond completion of the foundation of any structure. , such protection shall be installed and made serviceable prior to and during the time of construction except

~~when approved alternative methods of protection are provided. Temporary street signs shall be installed at each street intersection when construction of new roadways allows passage by vehicles in accordance with Section 505.2.~~

*(Reason: Reflects current practice in the region relative to ensuring fire department and EMS access during construction, which can be a time of increased frequency for emergency incidents.)*

**\*\*Section 503.2.1; change to read as follows:**

**503.2.1 Dimensions.** Fire apparatus access roads shall have an unobstructed width of not less than 20 ~~24~~ feet (~~6096 mm~~ 7315 mm), exclusive of shoulders, except for approved security gates in accordance with Section 503.6, and an unobstructed vertical clearance of not less than ~~13 feet 6 inches (4115 mm)~~ 14 feet (4267 mm).

**Exception:** Vertical clearance may be reduced; provided such reduction does not impair access by fire apparatus and approved signs are installed and maintained indicating the established vertical clearance when approved.

*(Reason: Amendments to 503.2.1 and 503.2.2 recognize that the equipment now used in firefighting is increasing in size. The code already recognizes that larger dimensions may be required under Section 503.2.2. The amendments are to standardize the dimensions for this area. With the increase in fire apparatus size, this will allow for the passage of two fire apparatus during a fire or EMS emergency.)*

**\*\*Section 503.2.2; change to read as follows:**

**503.2.2 Authority.** The fire code official shall have the authority to require ~~or permit modifications to the required~~ an increase in the minimum access widths and vertical clearances where they are inadequate for fire or rescue operations or where necessary to meet the public safety objectives of the jurisdiction.

*(Reason: Amendments to 503.2.1 and 503.2.2 recognize that the equipment now used in firefighting is increasing in size. The code already recognizes that larger dimensions may be required under Section 503.2.2. The amendments are to standardize the dimensions for this area. With the increase in fire apparatus size, this will allow for the passage of two fire apparatus during a fire or EMS emergency.)*

**\*\*\*Section 503.2.3; change Section 503.2.3 to read as follows:**

**503.2.3 Surface.** Fire apparatus access roads shall be designed and maintained to support imposed loads of 85,000 Lbs. for fire apparatus and shall be surfaced so as to provide all-weather driving capabilities.

*(Reason: To address the current size of fire trucks in use – figure derived from DOT requirements for waiver of vehicle exceeding such weight and from current maximum weights of fire trucks being purchased by jurisdictions in North Texas.)*

**\*\*Section 503.3; change to read as follows:**

**503.3 Marking.** ~~Where required by the fire code official, approved signs or other approved notices or markings that include the words NO PARKING – FIRE LANE~~ Striping, signs, or other markings, when approved by the fire code official, shall be provided for fire apparatus access roads to identify such roads or prohibit the obstruction thereof. ~~The means by which fire lanes are designated~~ Striping, signs and other markings shall be maintained in a clean and legible condition at all times and be replaced or repaired when necessary to provide adequate visibility.

**(1) Striping** – Fire apparatus access roads shall be continuously marked by painted lines of red traffic paint six inches (6") in width to show the boundaries of the lane. The words "NO PARKING FIRE LANE" or "FIRE LANE NO PARKING" shall appear in four inch (4") white letters at 25 feet intervals on the red



border markings along both sides of the fire lanes. Where a curb is available, the striping shall be on the vertical face of the curb.

(2) Signs – Signs shall read “NO PARKING FIRE LANE” or “FIRE LANE NO PARKING” and shall be 12” wide and 18” high. Signs shall be painted on a white background with letters and borders in red, using not less than 2” lettering. Signs shall be permanently affixed to a stationary post and the bottom of the sign shall be six feet, six inches (6’6”) above finished grade. Signs shall be spaced not more than fifty feet (50’) apart along both sides of the fire lane. Signs may be installed on permanent buildings or walls or as approved by the Fire Chief.

*(Reason: Establishes a standard method of marking and reflects regional long-standing practices.)*

**\*\*Section 503.4; change to read as follows:**

**503.4 Obstruction of Fire Apparatus Access Roads.** Fire apparatus access roads shall not be obstructed in any manner, including the parking of vehicles. The minimum widths and clearances established in Section 503.2.1 and 503.2.2 and any area marked as a fire lane as described in Section 503.3 shall be maintained at all times.

*(Reason: As originally worded, the section implied that vehicles could be parked in the marked fire lane and not be in violation if the minimum width is still maintained. Current accepted enforcement practice is to require the entire marked fire lane to be maintained clear and unobstructed.)*

**\*\*Section 505.1; change to read as follows:**

**505.1 Address Identification.** New and existing buildings shall be provided with approved address identification. The address identification shall be legible and placed in a position that is visible from the street or road fronting the property. Address identification characters shall contrast with their background. Address numbers shall be Arabic numbers or alphabetical letters. Numbers shall not be spelled out. Each character shall be not less than ~~4 inches (102 mm)~~ 6 inches (152.4 mm) high with a minimum stroke width of 1/2 inch (12.7 mm). Where required by the fire code official, address numbers shall be provided in additional approved locations to facilitate emergency response. Where access is by means of a private road, ~~buildings do not immediately front a street, and/or~~ the building cannot be viewed from the public way, a monument, pole or other sign with approved 6 inch (152.4 mm) height building numerals or addresses and 4 inch (101.6 mm) height suite/apartment numerals of a color contrasting with the background of the building or other approved means shall be used to identify the structure. Numerals or addresses shall be posted on a minimum 20 inch (508 mm) by 30 inch (762 mm) background on border. Address identification shall be maintained.

**Exception:** R-3 Single Family occupancies shall have approved numerals of a minimum 3 ½ inches (88.9 mm) in height and a color contrasting with the background clearly visible and legible from the street fronting the property and rear alleyway where such alleyway exists.

*(Reason: To increase the minimum addressing requirements for commercial properties and establish a minimum for single-family residential properties. Such improves legibility of these signs which are critical to emergency response in a more timely manner.)*

**\*\*SECTION 507 FIRE PROTECTION WATER SUPPLIES**

**507.1 Required water supply.** Where an adequate public water system is not available within 2,600 feet (792.48 m), an approved water supply capable of supplying the required fire flow for fire protection shall be provided to premises on which facilities, buildings or portions of buildings are hereafter constructed or moved into or within the jurisdiction.

When a fire protection system is required and an adequate public water system is not available within 2600 feet (792.48 m), fire pumps and water storage tanks may be utilized when approved by the fire code official.

**507.1.1 Fire protection water supplies for Rental Communities.** An approved pressurized water supply system capable of supplying a minimum fire flow of 1,000 gallons per minute for a 1-hour duration shall be required for all rental communities.

**507.1.2 Developments exceeding 62,000 square feet in area.** Whenever a commercial or industrial development has a gross building area exceeding 62,000 square feet, whether through a single or sum of square footages of multiple buildings, an approved fire protection water supply conforming to Section 507 shall be required.

**507.2 Type of water supply.** A water supply shall consist of ~~reservoirs~~ ground storage tanks, pressure tanks, elevated tanks, water mains or other fixed systems capable of providing the required fire flow.

**\*\*Section 509.1.2; add to read as follows:**

**509.1.2 Sign Requirements.** Unless more stringent requirements apply, lettering for signs required by this section shall have a minimum height of 2 inches (50.8 mm) when located inside a building and 4 inches (101.6 mm) when located outside, or as approved by the fire code official. The letters shall be of a color that contrasts with the background.

*(Reason: Provides direction as to appropriate sign criteria to develop local and regional consistency in this regard.)*

**\*\*Section 901.6.4; add to read as follows:**

**901.6.4 False Alarms and Nuisance Alarms.** False alarms and nuisance alarms shall not be given, signaled or transmitted or caused or permitted to be given, signaled or transmitted in any manner.

*(Reason: Places the responsibility on the business or property owner to maintain their fire alarm systems in approved condition. Allows the enforcement of "prohibition of false alarms". Replaces text lost from the legacy codes that helps to ensure the maintenance of life safety systems.)*

**\*\*Section 901.7; change to read as follows:**

**901.7 Systems Out of Service.** Where a required fire protection system is out of service or in the event of an excessive number of activations, the fire department and the fire code official shall be notified immediately and, where required by the fire code official, the building shall either be evacuated or an approved fire watch shall be provided for all occupants left unprotected by the shut down until the fire protection system has been returned to service. ... {Remaining text unchanged}

*(Reason: Gives fire code official more discretion with regards to enforcement of facilities experiencing nuisance alarm or fire protection system activations necessitating correction/repair/replacement. The intent of the amendment is to allow local jurisdictions to enforce fire watches, etc., where needed to ensure safety of occupants where fire protection systems are experiencing multiple nuisance activations.)*

**\*\*Section 903.2; add paragraph to read as follows and delete the Exception for telecommunications buildings:**

Automatic Sprinklers shall not be installed in elevator machine rooms, elevator machine spaces, and elevator hoistways, other than pits where such sprinklers would not necessitate shunt trip requirements

under any circumstances. Storage shall not be allowed within the elevator machine room. Signage shall be provided at the entry doors to the elevator machine room indicating "ELEVATOR MACHINERY – NO STORAGE ALLOWED."

*(Reason: Firefighter and public safety. This amendment eliminates the shunt trip requirement of the International Building Code Section 3005.5 for the purpose of elevator passenger and firefighter safety. This amendment is contingent on the Building Code amendment eliminating the Exceptions to Section 3005.4, such that passive fire barriers for these areas are maintained. The exception deletion is due to the fact that such telecom areas pose an undue fire risk to the structural integrity of the building.)*

**\*\*903.2.4.2; change to read as follows:**

**903.2.4.2 Group F-1 distilled spirits.** An automatic sprinkler system shall be provided throughout a Group F-1 fire area used for the manufacture of distilled spirits involving more than 120 gallons of distilled spirits (>16% alcohol) in the fire area at any one time.

**\*\*Section 903.3.1.1.1; change to read as follows:**

**903.3.1.1.1 Exempt Locations.** When approved by the fire code official, automatic sprinklers shall not be required in the following rooms or areas where such ... *{text unchanged}*... because it is damp, of fire-resistance-rated construction or contains electrical equipment.

1. Any room where the application of water, or flame and water, constitutes a serious life or fire hazard.
2. Any room or space where sprinklers are considered undesirable because of the nature of the contents, where approved by the fire code official.
3. Generator and transformer rooms, under the direct control of a public utility, separated from the remainder of the building by walls and floor/ceiling or roof/ceiling assemblies having a fire-resistance rating of not less than 2 hours.
- ~~4. Rooms or areas that are of noncombustible construction with wholly noncombustible contents.~~
5. ~~Fire service access~~ Elevator machine rooms, and machinery spaces, and hoistways, other than pits where such sprinklers would not necessitate shunt trip requirements under any circumstances.
6. {Delete.}

*(Reason: Gives more direction to code official. Exception 4 deleted to provide protection where fire risks are poorly addressed. Amendment 903.2 addresses Exception 5 above relative to the elimination of sprinkler protection in these areas to avoid the shunt trip requirement.)*

**\*\*\*Section 903.3.1.2; change to read as follows:**

**903.3.1.2 NFPA 13R sprinkler systems.** Automatic sprinkler systems in Group R occupancies shall be permitted to be installed throughout in accordance with NFPA 13R where the Group R occupancy meets all of the following conditions:

1. Four stories or less above grade plane.
2. The floor level of the highest story is ~~30~~ 35 feet (9144 10668 mm) or less above the lowest level of fire department vehicle access.
3. The floor level of the lowest story is ~~30~~ 35 feet (9144 10668 mm) or less below the lowest level of fire department vehicle access.

{No change to remainder of section.}

*(Reason: The change to the 2021 IFC over-reached to limit 13R systems to 30 ft. high at topmost floor level, which basically results in limiting 13R systems to 3 story buildings in reality. This change to 35 ft. would still allow 13R systems in 4 story apartment buildings, as has been allowed historically and as intended by 13R's scope.)*

**\*\*\*Section 903.3.1.2.2; change to read as follows:**

**903.3.1.2.2 Corridors and balconies in the means of egress.** Sprinkler protection shall be provided in all corridors and for all balconies. ~~in the means of egress where any of the following conditions apply:~~  
{Delete the rest of this section.}

*(Reason: Corridor protection is critical to the means of egress, and corridors are regularly utilized for miscellaneous storage, fixtures, artwork, food kiosks and beverage dispensers, and furnishings. Balcony protection is required due to issues with fire exposure via soffit vents and the potential for significant combustible loading.)*

**\*\*Section 903.3.1.3; change to read as follows:**

**903.3.1.3 NFPA 13D Sprinkler Systems.** Automatic sprinkler systems installed in one- and two-family dwellings; Group R-3; Group R-4, Condition 1; and townhouses shall be permitted to be installed throughout in accordance with NFPA 13D or in accordance with state law.

*(Reason: To allow the use of the Plumbing section of the International Residential Code (IRC) and recognize current state stipulations in this regard.)*

**\*\*Section 903.4.2; add second paragraph to read as follows:**

The alarm device required on the exterior of the building shall be a weatherproof horn/strobe notification appliance with a minimum 75 candela strobe rating, installed as close as practicable to the fire department connection.

*(Reason: Fire department connections are not always located at the riser; this allows the fire department faster access and ease of recognition of the FDC location, especially at night.)*

**\*\*Section 907.1.4; add to read as follows:**

**907.1.4 Design Standards.** Where a new fire alarm system is installed, the devices shall be addressable. Fire alarm systems utilizing more than 20 smoke detectors shall have analog initiating devices.

*(Reason: Provides for the ability of descriptive identification of alarms, and reduces need for panel replacement in the future. Change of terminology allows for reference back to definitions of NFPA 72.)*

**\*\*Section 5601.1.3; change to read as follows:**

**5601.1.3 Fireworks.** The possession, manufacture, storage, sale, handling, and use of fireworks are prohibited.

**Exceptions:**

1. Only when approved for fireworks displays, storage, and handling of fireworks as allowed in Section 5604 and 5608.
2. Manufacture, assembly and testing of fireworks as allowed in Section 5605.
3. The use of fireworks for approved fireworks displays as allowed in Section 5608.
4. The possession, storage, sale, and use as allowed by State Law in the unincorporated areas of the County.

## APPENDIX D FIRE APPARATUS ACCESS ROADS

D102.1 Access and loading. Facilities, buildings or portions of buildings hereafter constructed shall be accessible to fire department apparatus by way of an approved fire apparatus access road with an asphalt, concrete or other all-weather driving surface capable of supporting the imposed load of fire apparatus weighing up to 85,000 pounds (38 556 kg).

D103.4 Dead ends. Dead-end fire apparatus access roads in excess of 150 feet (45 720 mm) shall be provided with width and turnaround provisions in accordance with Table D103.4.

**TABLE D103.4**  
**REQUIREMENTS FOR DEAD-END FIRE APPARATUS ACCESS ROADS**

LENGTH (feet)	WIDTH (feet)	TURNAROUNDS REQUIRED
0–150	<u>24</u>	None required
151–500	<u>24</u>	120-foot Hammerhead, 60-foot “Y” or 96-foot diameter cul-de-sac in accordance with <u>Figure D103.1</u>
501–750	26	120-foot Hammerhead, 60-foot “Y” or 96-foot diameter cul-de-sac in accordance with <u>Figure D103.1</u>
Over 750	Special approval required	

For SI: 1 foot = 304.8 mm.

**D103.5 Fire apparatus access road gates.** Gates securing the fire apparatus access roads shall comply with all of the following criteria:

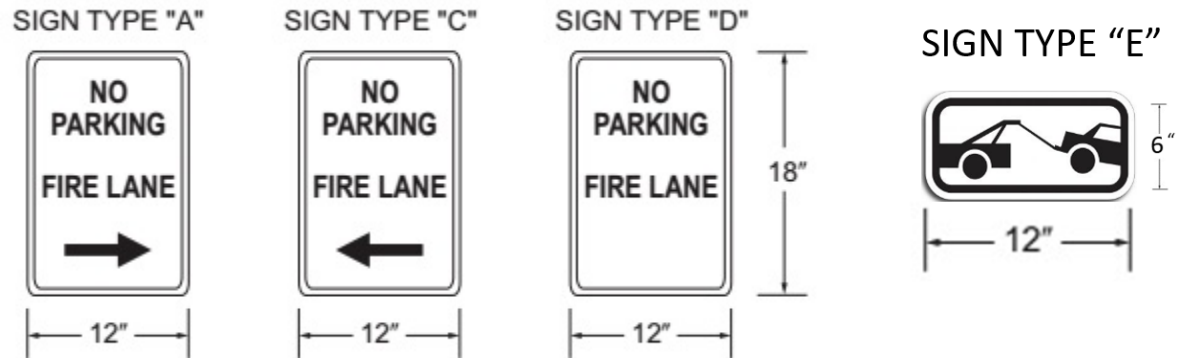
1. Where a single gate is provided, the gate width shall be not less than 24 feet (7315.2 mm).  
Where a fire apparatus road consists of a divided roadway, the gate width shall be not less than 12 feet (3658 mm).  
{2 through 8 unchanged}

D103.6 Marking. Striping, signs, or other markings, when approved by the fire code official, shall be provided for fire apparatus access roads to identify such roads or prohibit the obstruction thereof. Striping, signs and other markings shall be maintained in a clean and legible condition at all times and be replaced or repaired when necessary to provide adequate visibility.

1. Striping – Fire apparatus access roads shall be continuously marked by painted lines of red traffic paint six inches (6”) in width to show the boundaries of the lane. The words “FIRE FIRE LANE NO PARKING OR FIRE LANE NO PARKING TOW AWAY ZONE” shall appear in four inch (4”) white letters at 25 feet intervals on the red border markings along both sides of the fire lanes. Where a curb is available, the striping shall be on the vertical face of the curb.
2. Signs – Signs shall read “NO PARKING FIRE LANE” or “FIRE LANE NO PARKING” and shall be 12” wide and 18” high (See Figure D103.6). Signs shall have red letters on a white reflective background, using not less than 2” lettering. Signs shall be permanently affixed to a stationary post and the bottom of the sign shall be six feet, six inches (6’6”) above finished grade. A TxDOT R7-201P tow away zone sign measuring 12” wide and 6” high shall be provided below each fire lane sign. Signs shall be spaced not more than fifty feet (50’) apart along both sides of the fire lane. Signs may be installed on permanent buildings or walls or as approved by the Fire Chief.

Where required by the fire code official, fire apparatus access roads shall be marked with permanent “NO PARKING—FIRE LANE” signs complying with Figure D103.6, or other approved method. Signs shall have a minimum dimension of 12 inches (305 mm) wide by 18 inches (457 mm) high and have red letters on a white reflective background. Signs shall be posted on one or both sides of the fire

apparatus road as required by Section D103.6.1 or D103.6.2.



**FIGURE D103.6**  
**FIRE LANE SIGNS**

**D104.3 Remoteness.** Where two fire apparatus access roads are required, they shall be placed a distance apart equal to not less than one half of the length of the maximum overall diagonal dimension of the lot or area to be served, measured in a straight line between accesses, or as approved by the fire code official.

**D105.3 Proximity to building.** Unless otherwise approved by the fire code official, one or more of the required access routes meeting this condition shall be located not less than 15 feet (4572 mm) and not greater than 30 feet (9144 mm) from the building, and shall be positioned parallel to one entire side of the building. The side of the building on which the aerial fire apparatus access road is positioned shall be approved by the fire code official.

**D106.3 Remoteness.** Where two fire apparatus access roads are required, they shall be placed a distance apart equal to not less than one-half of the length of the maximum overall diagonal dimension of the property or area to be served, measured in a straight line between accesses, or as approved by the fire code official.

**D107.2 Remoteness.** Where two fire apparatus access roads are required, they shall be placed a distance apart equal to not less than one-half of the length of the maximum overall diagonal dimension of the property or area to be served, measured in a straight line between accesses, or as approved by the fire code official.

***\*\*Local Government Code 352.113 & 352.1145 added to read as worded in state law:***

Acts 2005, 79th Leg., Ch. 681 (S.B. [200](#)), Sec. 3, eff. June 17, 2005.

**Sec. 352.113. COUNTY AUTHORITY TO REGULATE VEHICULAR OR PEDESTRIAN GATES TO GATED COMMUNITIES AND MULTI-UNIT HOUSING PROJECTS.**

To assure reasonable access for fire-fighting vehicles and equipment, emergency medical services vehicles, and law enforcement officers, a county may require the owner or the owners association of a gated community or multi-unit housing project to comply with this subchapter.

Added by Acts 2001, 77th Leg., ch. 111, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 2001.

**Sec. 352.1145. SIREN-OPERATED SENSOR SYSTEMS FOR ELECTRIC GATES.**

The commissioners court of a county by order may require that each electric gate to a gated community or multiunit housing project be equipped with a gate-operating device that:

(1) is approved by the county fire marshal or other similar authority having jurisdiction over fire prevention; and (2) will activate the electric gate on the sounding of an emergency vehicle siren.