

Significant Changes to Chapter 46, Fire Protection and Prevention

- **Section 46-1. Arson conviction reward**
 - Increased from \$1000 to \$2500 for information leading to the arrest and conviction of an individual for the crime of arson or other offences associated with the crime of arson.
 - The increasing of this reward would incentivize individuals to bring forth evidence to assist in the conviction for the crime of arson, or other offense associated with the crime of arson. This ordinance also creates a reward committee and would allow for the rewards to be scalable based on the information provided and the offense.
- **Section 46-5. Burning of grass, trash, garbage, junk, rubble, or rubbish.**
 - Clarified that this ordinance will follow the regulations of the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality under the provisions of the Texas Clean Air Act for land clearing operations. This ordinance also clarified the use of recreational fires and the permitted purposes.
- **Section 46-6. Fire and Smoke Alarms**
 - Requires that all non-commercial smoke detectors be hard wired to electrical power, with battery backup, and interconnected so if one smoke detector is activated all the smoke detectors will alarm. This section will also require commercial fire alarm systems to be in a loop system to prevent the ability of a single point of failure in the system.
- **Section 46-7. Fire Sprinkler Systems**
 - All commercial structures over two stories or greater than 12,000 square feet would require a fire sprinkler system. This ordinance also proposes that fire walls are not considered acceptable means of protection for the exemption of a fire sprinkler system.
 - Several surrounding municipalities were contacted in regard to their fire sprinkler system requirements and below are their square footage requirements
 - **Baytown** – Follows 2015 IBC/IFC Chapter 9; no amendments. 12,000sqft.
 - **Webster** - I.F.C. Section 903.2 is amended to read as follows: 903.2 Where required. Approved automatic sprinkler systems in new buildings and structures shall be provided in the locations described in this section, when the gross square footage of the building or structure exceeds 11,999 square feet, or when the area under one roof is capable of having two or more floors above or below grade with any one floor exceeding 5,999 square feet.
 - **Pearland** – Follows 2018 IBC/IFC Chapter 9; no amendments. 12,000sqft.
 - **Friendswood** - Section 903.2 is hereby amended to read as follows: 903.2. Where required. Approved automatic sprinkler systems in new buildings and structures

shall be provided in the locations described in this section, when the gross square footage of the building or structure exceeds 11,999 square feet, or when the area under one roof is capable of having two or more floors above or below grade with any one floor exceeding 5,999 square feet.

- **Texas City** - Follows 2015 IBC/IFC Chapter 9; no amendments. 12,000sqft.
- **Galveston** – Follows 2012 IBC/IFC Chapter 9; no amendments. 12,000sqft.
- **Alvin** – Section 903 amended to as follows:
 - 903.1.2. An approved automatic fire sprinkler system meeting the requirements of section 903 shall be installed in buildings as follows:
 - (a) All buildings having a fire area exceeding 12,000 sq. ft.
 - Exception: If there is a conflict between this section and other sections of this code, the most restrictive requirement shall apply.
 - (b) Any building constructed after October 20, 2005, that exceeds 20,000 sq. ft. or any attached construction, alteration, or addition to an existing structure of any group that causes the structure to exceed 20,000 sq. ft. For purposes of this section, an automatic fire sprinkler system shall be installed in the non-conforming or existing structure in addition to the new construction area. (28)Section 903.2 is amended to read as follows:
 - 903.2 Where required. Approved automatic sprinkler systems in new buildings and structures shall be provided in the locations described in this section or when the gross square footage of the building or structure exceeds twelve thousand (12,000) square feet.
 - (29)Section 903.2.1.5.1 is amended by adding the following:
 - 903.2.1.5.1 Spaces under grandstands and bleachers. Enclosed spaces under grandstands and bleachers shall be, equipped with an automatic sprinkler system in accordance with Section 903.1.1.
 - (30)Section 903.2.6 is amended by adding the following:
 - 903.2.6.1 Facilities housing individual's incapable of self-preservation. Any facility, other than a foster home that houses individuals that are incapable of self-preservation, as defined by the Life Safety Code, N.F.P.A. 72 fire alarm and N.F.P.A. 13 automatic sprinkler.
 - Exception:
 - 1. In the case of a personal care facility, child-care, group home or in-home residential child care that houses fewer than six clients, including a person who is incapable of self-preservation, a 13 R or 13 D automatic sprinkler shall be acceptable.
 - 2. In the case of a personal care facility, child-care, group home, or in-home residential child care that houses fewer than six clients, including a person who is incapable of self-preservation, a residential automatic fire alarm system with smoke detection shall be acceptable.

- Section 903.2.8 is amended to read as follows:
 - 903.2.8 Group R. An automatic sprinkler system shall be provided throughout all buildings with a Group R occupancy fire area, including attached balconies, storage closets, patios, porches, breezeways, car ports, and porta caches, regardless of fire separations.
- **Section 46-71 International Fire Code Adoption**
 - Adoption of the 2021 International Fire Code. As an ISO requirement, the adoption of the current code will be valued highest, older editions progressively less, and editions more than three publications old will receive no value. A period of one year is allowed from date of publication until adoption to review and amend the appropriate codes and still receive full credit.
- **Section 46-72. Life Safety Code Adoption**
 - In 2015, the Life Safety Code was inadvertently left off as an amendment to the International Fire Code. The benefit of the 2021 Life Safety Code is that it addresses new, along with existing construction for life safety requirements.
- **Section. 46-101 Elevators**
 - Provides elevator requirements for all commercial structures three stories or more in height so that an ambulance stretcher and crew can fit into the elevator without manipulating the size of the ambulance stretcher (EMS Stretcher Size: 22" x 78")
 - According to ADA requirements, any building three stories or more are required to have an elevator. Furthermore, according to ADA the elevators have to be, at a minimum, 51 inches deep and at least 68 inches wide with a door width of at least 36 inches.
 - This ordinance proposes that at least one elevator, that provides access to all floors, be a minimum of 51 inches x 82 inches with a minimum door opening of at least 42 inches. This sizing would allow for the ambulance stretcher and crew to fit into an elevator and continue patient care while in the elevator. This elevator dimension is the same size elevator as what was installed in Fire Station # 6.
- **Section 46-102 Electronic gates and emergency access**
 - The "Click2Enter" system will allow for rapid entry into gated facilities utilizing our current radio system. This ordinance also proposes the retrofitting of existing complexes to install the Click2Enter access system within 12 months of the ordinance being approved.
 - This system would replace the Knox system for gate access that is currently in place due to frequent issues, failures, and down time resulting in gates not being able to be secured for complexes.
- **Section 46-107 Hazardous Materials recover and response charges**

- Provides clarification for responsible party and cost recovery for Hazardous Materials response based on the most current FEMA equipment rate schedule.
- This ordinance also requires that the responsible party of a hazardous materials leak, release, spill, or abandonment of any hazardous material to notify the Fire Department immediately upon the discovery, or as soon thereafter as possible.
- **Section 46-108 Palapas and similar construction**
 - Prohibits the use of natural thatch material as building material
- **Section 46-152-153 Fireworks and Transport**
 - Adds definitions of commercial grade fireworks (1.3G fireworks) and personal-grade firework (1.4G fireworks).
 - Clarifies that personal grade fireworks (1.4G) can be transported through the City without creating criminal liability.
 - Clarifies that commercial grade fireworks (1.3G) must only be transported through the City using approved hazardous materials routes, as approved by TxDOT.