



**CITY COUNCIL  
COMMUNICATION:**

**ITEM \_\_\_\_\_**

**02-235**

**OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER  
CITY OF DES MOINES, IOWA**

**AGENDA:**

MAY 6, 2002

**SUBJECT:**

FIRE CODE  
CHANGES

**TYPE:**

RESOLUTION  
**ORDINANCE**  
RECEIVE/FILE

**SYNOPSIS -**

The series of code changes that are included with this item represent changes to Chapter 46 of the Des Moines Municipal Code (Fire Prevention and Protection), primarily intended to adopt an updated fire code (2000 International Fire Code), with some additions and deletions. This fire code, with revisions, represents the edition and fire code document that is intended to be adopted throughout the metro area by neighboring communities. This code is the preferred edition for such projects as the Polk County Events Center, the Allied Insurance Project, and the Wells Fargo Financial projects and has proven to function well for both the owner, designer, and the City. This code is a companion code to the International Building Code that has been presented to the Des Moines City Council for adoption by the Community Development Department (Roll Call No. 02-1048, final consideration on April 22, 2002).

**SUBMITTED BY:**

RONALD T.  
WAKEHAM  
FIRE CHIEF

**FISCAL IMPACT -**

None.

**RECOMMENDATION -**

**Approval.**

**BACKGROUND -**

Presently, the City of Des Moines uses the 1991 edition of the Uniform Fire Code (UFC), which was published by the International Conference of Building Officials, Western Fire Chiefs Association, Inc., and the International Association of Fire Chiefs.

The UFC was one of three model fire codes that was developed by similar code associations throughout the country, all of which are updated every three years. Historically, the City of Des Moines has

adopted updated versions of the UFC. In the early 1990's, the International Conference of Building Officials (ICBO) joined two other code associations, the Building Official and Code Administrators (BOCA) and the Southern Building Code Council International (SBCCI), along with the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), to develop a single set of building and fire codes that could be adopted and used throughout the United States and abroad. The objective was to develop a family of codes (Building, Fire, Mechanical, Plumbing, Residential, Electrical, Housing, etc.) that would have requirements that would be coordinated among each other and administered by a single organization.

During the development of these International Codes, ICBO, BOCA, and SBCCI agreed to abandon the development of their codes and support the development of the International Codes. NFPA, who was a participant early in the development stages, decided not to participate in this process. Nevertheless, the three building and fire code organizations moved forward to complete the development of the International Codes. As a result, the UFC, which is the fire code the City of Des Moines historically adopted, is no longer published in an updated version; however, the International Fire Code (IFC) is available.

The City of Des Moines Building Code Board of Appeals has suggested the adoption of these codes and has accepted these codes for use on two specific projects (Allied Insurance Building and Wells Fargo Financial Building) as alternative methods. The Cities of West Des Moines, Urbandale, and Ankeny expressed an interest in adopting these codes as well.

The following is a summary of the proposed changes to this ordinance as a result of the staff review process.

#### ARTICLE I : In General

46-1: These changes correlate the new sections of the IFC as they pertain to hazardous permits. It also adds required construction permits (automatic fire-extinguishing systems, fire alarm and detection systems, compressed gases, fire pumps, flammable and combustible liquids, and spraying and dipping).

#### Article II : Fire Department

46-33: The changes in this section increase the fee for copies or printouts of fire department records. It adds a fee for investigative photographs. These changes are consistent with existing code sections pertaining to police records.

Article III: Code

46-61: The change in this section adopts the 2000 edition of the IFC.

46-62: This section represents chapters and sections that should be deleted from the 2000 IFC.

These sections are as follows:

Section 307 - Open Burning - This section is deleted because Polk County regulates this.

Section 1106.5.4 - Aircraft Fuel Transfer Personnel - This section is deleted due to regulations already in place by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA).

Appendix (A) Board of Appeals - This appendix is deleted and is placed in section 46-64 which gives the fire chief the authority to hear appeals.

46-63: This section represents amendments and additions to requirements that are recommended and contained within the 2000 IFC. The deleted sections and the corresponding amendments and additions to those sections are as follows:

Section 108 - This section refers to appeals and is referenced under section 46-64 of this chapter, which gives the fire chief the authority to hear an appeal.

Section 105 - This section refers to annual permits and is referenced under section 46-1 of this chapter, which sets annual fees.

Section 2601.2 - This section refers to permits required for welding and cutting, calcium carbide and acetylene and is referenced under section 46-121 of this chapter.

Section 3308.2 - This section refers to permits for fireworks and pyrotechnic special effects material and is referenced under Article VII of this chapter.

Section 3401.4 - This section refers to permits required for the use and storage of flammable and combustible liquids and is referenced under section 46-246 of this chapter.

Section 2701.4 - This section refers to permits for hazardous materials and is referenced under section 46-1 of this chapter.

Section 2701.5 - This section refers to hazardous materials facility closure and is referenced under Article IV of this chapter.

Section 2701.5.1 - This section refers to hazardous material facilities temporarily placed out-of-service and is referenced under Article IV of this chapter.

Section 2701.5.2 - This section refers to hazardous material facilities permanently placed out-of-service and is referenced under Article IV of this chapter.

Section 2701.5.3 - This section refers to hazardous facility closure

plans and is referenced under Article IV of this chapter.

Section 2703.9.1 - This section refers to personnel training and written procedures for hazardous materials incidents and is referenced under Article IV of this chapter.

Section 2703.9.1.1 - This section refers to fire department liaison for hazardous material facility closures and is referenced under Article IV of this chapter.

Section 3804 - This section refers to the location of containers for liquid petroleum gases and is referenced under section 46-281 of this chapter.

46-65: If a facility is unable to comply with an order issued by the fire department, this section allows the fire chief to accept approved alternate materials and methods that may be used to comply with the intent of the International Fire Code.

46-176 thru 46-181: These sections refer to small arms primers, smokeless propellants, and black powder. Staff recommends that these sections be removed from this chapter. The language of the 2000 IFC is very similar to the existing language of this chapter and references NFPA (National Fire Protection Association) pamphlet 495, code for explosive material. With NFPA 495 and similar language in the IFC, the current chapter language serves no purpose.

46-216: This section refers to liability insurance covering the City during fireworks and/or pyrotechnic demonstrations. The recommendation by the City's Risk Manager is to increase the minimum liability insurance covering the City from \$1,000,000 to \$5,000,000.

46-246: This section is suggested to be modified to include regulations for flammable and combustible liquids stored, handled, or used inside a building in excess of five gallons. This has been an oversight in the past.

46-278: The suggested change in this section is to reduce confusion by the public and fire department personnel by removing the words water capacity to the requirement for permits for the installation of containers for liquefied petroleum gas.

46-279, 46-280 and 46-282 thru 46-287: These sections refer to liquefied petroleum gases. It is recommended to remove these sections from this chapter based on the fact that the existing language in this chapter is very similar to the language of the 2000 IFC. Therefore, the existing language is of little use.

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