

 <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Council Communication</b> Office of the City Manager</p>	<b>Date:</b> December 20, 2010
	<b>Agenda Item No.</b> 41 <b>Roll Call No.</b> <u>10-2100</u> <b>Communication No.</b> <u>10-764</u> <b>Submitted by:</b> Phillip Delafield, Director Community Development

**AGENDA HEADING:**

Third reading to amend the residential fire sprinkler requirements.

**SYNOPSIS:**

Approval of this action incorporates residential fire sprinkler amendments into Chapter 26 of the City Municipal Code. During the November 22, 2010 Council meeting, staff from the Permit & Development Center and Fire Department were asked to work with Des Moines area home builders to produce a building code amendment for residential fire sprinklers that would be acceptable to all parties. An agreement was reached and the code language adjusted for the third reading of the ordinance.

**FISCAL IMPACT: NONE**

Amount: N/A

Funding Source: N/A

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:**

At Council’s request, Permit & Development Center and Fire Department staff met with representatives from Hubbell Realty Company, Rottlund Homes and the Home Builders’ Association of Greater Des Moines to reach an agreement on residential fire sprinkler requirements. In the first reading of the ordinance, the proposed code amendment would have required all residential structures greater than 8,000 square feet in gross floor area to be provided with fire sprinklers. This included single family dwellings, duplexes and townhomes. The home builders were opposed to the implementation of this requirement as it applied to multi-family structures.

The applicability of this requirement to multi-unit structures was removed for the second reading. This left any single residential unit with more than 8,000 square feet of gross floor area to be sprinkler protected. The home builders agreed with this requirement.

For the third reading, the language has been further adjusted to reflect the agreement reached between home builders and City staff. It will require fire sprinklers in the following structures:

1. Any single residential unit that exceeds 8,000 square feet in gross floor area. This includes attached garages and unfinished basement areas. It will apply to any single unit whether it is a single family dwelling or part of a duplex/townhome structure. Therefore, a duplex or townhome that has 2-6,000

square foot units would not require fire sprinklers. If either unit exceeds 8,000 square feet, then that unit would require sprinklers.

2. Any townhome building that contains more than 8 units. For example, a row house structure with more than 8 units would require sprinklers throughout, regardless of square footage.

3. Any townhome building that exceeds 18,000 square feet in gross floor area. This requirement is independent of the number of units. As a result, a townhome structure with 8 or fewer units that exceeds 18,000 square feet in gross floor area would require sprinkler protection throughout.

The fire rating reductions allowed in a fully sprinkled building still apply. For example, the fire separation walls in a fully sprinkled townhome structure can be reduced from a 2 hour to 1 hour fire rating.

### **PREVIOUS COUNCIL ACTION(S):**

Date: December 6, 2010

Roll Call Number: [10-2014](#)

Action: [Amending](#) Chapter 26 of the Municipal Code to adopt the 2009 editions of the International Building Code; International Residential Code; International Existing Building Code; International Mechanical Code; International Fuel Gas Code; International Energy Conservation Code and Uniform Plumbing Code – as amended by changing Section 26-328 and 26-329 to address concerns raised by local homebuilders. Moved by Hensley that this ordinance be considered and given second vote for passage. Motion Carried 6-1. Nays: Moore.

Date: November 22, 2010

Roll Call Number: [10-1959](#)

Action: [On](#) Amendment of Chapter 26 of the Municipal Code to adopt the 2009 editions of the International Building Code; International Residential Code; International Existing Building Code; International Mechanical Code; International Fuel Gas Code; International Energy Conservation Code and the Uniform Plumbing Code. ([Council Communication No. 10-704](#)) Moved by Hensley to adopt. Motion Carried 6-1. Nays: Moore.

Date: July 23, 2007

Roll Call Number: [07-1433](#)

Action: Amending Chapter 26 of the Municipal Code regarding the following:([Council Communication No. 07-461](#)) [Building](#) and Building regulations. Moved by Vlassis that this ordinance be considered and given first vote for passage. Motion Carried 7-0.

### **BOARD/COMMISSION ACTION(S):**

Board: Building and Fire Code Board of Appeals

Date: October 14, 2010

Resolution Number: N/A

Action: These recommended changes to the Municipal Code of the City of Des Moines and adoption of the 2009 Codes were unanimously approved by the Building and Fire Code Board of Appeals.

**ANTICIPATED ACTIONS AND FUTURE COMMITMENTS:**

New editions of the building codes are published every three years. The Community Development Department anticipates future code adoptions to occur on a three year cycle.

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