

CHAPTER 15.06 AUTOMATIC FIRE SPRINKLER AND ALARM SYSTEMS

Section

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15.06.010 PURPOSE.

A. The California Fire Code, California Code of Regulations, Title 24, Part 9, 2019 Edition, as modified and amended from time to time, establishes certain standards for automatic fire extinguishing systems. A copy of the code, in its latest form, is on file in the office of the Fire Chief.

B. The purpose of this chapter is to provide regulations establishing minimum standards for automatic fire sprinkler systems where the standards are not specifically covered by the California Fire Code. Where specific standards are provided by the California Fire Code and provide a greater degree of fire protection than the provisions of this chapter, those standards shall apply. In those cases where the California Fire Code does not provide specific standards, the terms of this chapter shall apply.

C. The intent of this chapter is to apply those fire protection standards which will provide the residents and property owners of the City the greatest degree of fire protection which is reasonable under the circumstances. All buildings are subject to the provisions of this chapter.

15.06.020 DEFINITIONS IN GENERAL.

Definitions contained in the California Fire Code, California Code of Regulations, Title 24, Part 9, 2019 Edition, shall apply to this chapter unless specifically amended. Whenever any of the following names or terms are used in any of the compilations adopted by reference by this chapter such names or terms shall have the following meanings:

APPEAL AUTHORITY. As defined in Chapter 1.06.

BUILDING. Any building or group of buildings that requires a sprinkler under this chapter or the California Fire Code, California Code of Regulations, Title 24, Part 9, 2019 Edition.

BUILDING PERMIT VALUATION. The value of repairs, maintenance and remodel work as determined by the Mendocino County Planning and Building Department through their plan review process. The building permit valuation will include the total of all active building permits for the building at the same location, excluding separate permits to install automatic fire sprinkler systems.

(Ord. 957, § 2, passed 01-13-2020)

15.06.030 AUTOMATIC FIRE SPRINKLER SYSTEMS – REQUIRED.

- A. All new buildings shall have an automatic fire sprinkler system installed, unless specifically exempted in accordance with § 15.06.050.
- B. Buildings in existence prior to the adoption of this code shall be subject to the requirements for automatic fire sprinkler systems upon the change of occupancy to a higher hazard level as defined by the Fire Marshal.
- C. Existing commercial and multifamily buildings which are remodeled, added to, or altered, including maintenance and repair activities, when the building permit valuation cost of such exceeds \$75,000, shall have an automatic fire sprinkler system installed. The sprinkler system shall be connected with water service as determined by the Director of Public Works. Roof replacement costs will not be calculated into the \$75,000 limit. Determination of the building permit valuation of work completed shall proceed as follows:
 1. As determined by the Mendocino County Planning and Building Department through their plan review process and completed on the application for any building permit.

2. The Fire Marshal shall: (a) review the building permit, plans and building permit valuation at the time of the building permit application submittal; and (b) review the building permit, any applicable building permit application and plans upon any change in scope of work or modification to the building permit application to determine if the building permit valuation of the proposed work and all work completed on the building for all active building permits exceeds the \$75,000 threshold.

3. If the building permit valuation exceeds the threshold, the Fire Marshal shall require installation of fire sprinklers per this chapter prior to approval of the building permit or final inspection.

(Ord. 957, § 2, passed 01-13-2020)

15.06.050 EXEMPTIONS AND WAIVERS.

A. All 1- and 2-family dwellings and detached utility (“U” occupancy) buildings are exempted from the requirement to install automatic fire sprinkler systems.

B. The Fire Chief may grant exemptions for the automatic fire sprinkler system requirements for new construction by placing such conditions upon construction and/or use of the building so as to reduce the fire risk to a diminished level and by making a finding that the use of structure would present low or no fire risk. Examples:

1. Portable fire extinguisher or Class 2 standpipe installation;
2. Providing 1-hour resistive occupancy separation for equipment rooms;
3. Sprinklers undesirable because of nature of the contents in the room/area, the items being noncombustible or not exposed to other rooms/areas.

(Ord. 957, § 2, passed 01-13-2020)

15.06.060 ANNUAL INSPECTION AND MAINTENANCE.

The owner of any building in which automatic fire alarm systems or fire sprinkler systems have been installed shall have the systems inspected and maintained per NFPA 25 and shall provide a report of the inspection to the Fire Chief.

(Ord. 957, § 2, passed 01-13-2020)

15.06.070 [RESERVED].

15.06.080 FIRE ALARM SYSTEMS DEFINED AND REQUIRED.

- A. *FIRE ALARM SYSTEM* means all devices, controls, and circuits, together with the energy necessary to sound the alarm, electrically supervise the system, and activate the alarm bells, trouble bells or trouble signals.
- B. Every new building shall have installed an approved, automatically operated fire alarm system designed to warn all occupants simultaneously. In addition, the Fire Chief may require that this system be monitored in the manager's quarters and/or by a supervising station as defined in NFPA 72. The Fire Chief may also require the installation of a manually operated fire alarm system.
- C. All required fire alarm systems shall be installed in accordance with NFPA 72.
- D. Exceptions to this section are all "U" occupancies. These exceptions do not apply to 1- and 2-family dwellings within a building that otherwise requires an alarm system (i.e., commercial occupancy below a dwelling).

15.06.090 VIOLATIONS.

Failure to comply with the requirements of this chapter is hereby declared to be unlawful and a public nuisance, and shall be subject to the remedies and penalties established by Chapter 6.12.