



# Seattle Fire Department

## 2009 Seattle Fire Code Adoption Update

The 2009 Seattle Fire Code will take effect on October 30, 2010. The last date on which SFD will accept permit applications or plans using the 2006 Seattle Fire Code will be October 29, 2010. If you would like more information, please contact Lynne M. Kilpatrick at [lynne.kilpatrick@seattle.gov](mailto:lynne.kilpatrick@seattle.gov).

The proposed legislation can be viewed on the [Seattle Fire Department](#) website

Some of the significant changes that are found in the 2009 Seattle Fire Code include:

- **Notification of biosafety level 3 (BSL-3) and biosafety level 4 (BSL-4) laboratory operations.** A new local amendment has been added requiring annual notification to the Seattle Fire Department of the location of BSL-3 and BSL-4 containment operations within laboratory buildings. Also required is an annual certification that such operations are in compliance with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidelines. (Ordinance pages 173 and 175; SFC 2701.1, 2701.7)
- **School shelter in-place and lockdown plans.** A shelter-in-place and lockdown plan must be prepared and annually updated for all educational (daycare -12<sup>th</sup> grade) occupancies. No requirements for approval of plans but plans must be available on site. (Ordinance pages 54-55; SFC 404.3)
- **School alerting systems (retroactive).** Washington state amendments require an approved alerting system in all educational (daycare -12<sup>th</sup> grade) occupancies. This is not a fire alarm system but is a separate signal used to initiate shelter-in-place and/or lockdowns. (Ordinance pages 109-110; SFC 915)
- **Carbon monoxide alarms.**
  - By January 1, 2011 carbon monoxide alarms must be installed in all new residential occupancies.
  - By July 1, 2011 carbon monoxide alarms must be installed in existing dwelling and sleeping units in all residential occupancies except owner-occupied one and two- family residences legally occupied before July 1, 2010. (Ordinance pages 94-95, SFC 907.2.8, 907.2.9, 907.2.10)
- **Emergency responder radio coverage in new and existing buildings.** New provisions require that all buildings (new and existing) have approved radio coverage for emergency responders. New Seattle amendment added requiring that the radio system meet the provisions of Appendix J. (Ordinance pages 66 and 249-254; SFC 510, 4603.8, Appendix J)
- **Fire service access elevator.** Newly constructed high-rise buildings more than 120 feet above the lowest level of fire department vehicle access are now required to have a dedicated elevator for use by the fire service. No local amendments proposed. (Not in ordinance; SFC 607.3)
- **Protection of fire pump rooms.** New fire pump rooms are required to be separated using either fire-resistive barriers or horizontal assemblies when the pump is located inside a building or by using physical separation when the pump is located outside the building it serves. The new requirements are based on National Fire Protection Association Standard 20. (Not in ordinance; SFC 913.2)
- **Sprinklers for enclosed parking garages.** Except for basement garages, enclosed parking garages with a fire area less than 12,000 square feet no longer require automatic sprinkler protection. Previously the fire code required sprinklers in enclosed parking garages regardless of their area. (Not in ordinance; SFC 903.2.10)

- **Sprinklers in new retail furniture stores.** Automatic sprinkler protection is now required in any new mercantile occupancy that displays or sells upholstered furniture or mattresses in a display area exceeding 5,000 square feet. The new requirement is based strictly on the use of the occupancy. (Ordinance page 82; SFC 903.2.7)
- **Sprinklers in new and existing Institutional (Group I-2) occupancies.** Automatic sprinklers are required retroactively in all unsprinklered occupancies where medical, surgical, psychiatric, nursing or custodial care is provided on a 24-hour basis. The sprinkler system must be provided throughout the floor where the occupancy is located and in all floors between the occupancy and the level of exit discharge. (Not in ordinance; SFC 903.6.2, 4603.4.2)
- **Luminous Egress Path Markings in new and existing high-rise buildings.** New and existing high-rise buildings of Groups A (assembly), B (business), E (educational), I (institutional) , M (mercantile) and R-1 (hotels, motels and transient boarding homes) having occupied floors located more than 75 feet above the lowest level of fire department vehicle access shall be provided with luminous egress path markings. The photo-luminescent or self-luminous markings are required on steps, landings, handrails, and around the perimeter of exit enclosures to delineate the exit path in the dark. No local amendments proposed. No specific compliance deadline established. (Not in ordinance; SFC 1024, 4604.23)
- **Luminous stairway floor number signs.** In new and existing high-rise buildings, stairs connecting more than three stories must be provided with a sign at each floor landing designating the floor level and identifying the stairs. The sign must state the story of, and the direction to, the exit discharge, whether there is roof access for the fire department and whether the roof access is accessed by roof hatch. For high-rise buildings the signs are required to be luminous. (Not in ordinance; SFC 4604.22, 1022.8, 1024)
- **Ambulatory health care facilities.** New minimum code requirements that exceed those found in other Group B occupancies are required for new ambulatory health care facilities. Controls include:
  - Fire resistive separations.
  - Protection of the patients from a fire's products of combustion.
  - Means of egress that improves ability to relocate incapacitated patients to a safe place
  - Use of automatic sprinklers, fire detection and signaling systems to provide early notification and control of fires.
 (Not in ordinance; SFC 202, 903.2.2, 907.2.2, 914.11, 422)
- **Crowd managers.** New requirement to assign 1 crowd manager for each 250 individuals at indoor and outdoor events where the total number of occupants or attendees is greater than 1000. No details on the responsibilities of the crowd manager or what actions to take in the event of a fire or emergency are provided and the provision is not intended to require dedicated staff as crowd managers. (Not in ordinance; SFC 403.3)
- **Elimination of treatment system for ammonia exhaust.** The fire code previously required the discharge from ammonia refrigeration machinery rooms to be directed to a treatment system to reduce the discharge concentration to 50% of the Immediately Dangerous to Life and Health (IDLH) value. (Not in ordinance; 606.13)
- **New Format for high rise building fire emergency plans.** The previous high rise Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) is being replaced by a fire safety and evacuation plan. Criteria for plan contents is slightly different from the previous emergency operations plan format. No requirements for approval of plans but plans must be available on site. SFC 404.2.1