

Williamson County Fire Code Second Edition



Williamson County Fire Marshal's Office
Williamson County Fire Marshal: Hank Jones

Adopted: June 26, 2018

Effective: June 26, 2018

Amended: November 17, 2020

PREFACE

Tex. Local Gov't § 233 .061. authorizes certain counties to adopt a *Fire Code* and the regulations necessary to administer and enforce the *Fire Code*. As the governing body of Williamson County, Texas, the Commissioners Court finds that adopting a *Fire Code* and requiring permits for the *construction* of commercial establishments, public buildings and multi-family residences in the unincorporated areas of Williamson County will protect the health, safety and welfare of life and property of the general public. The *Fire Code* requires periodic inspection of new and existing structures to ensure safety standards are being maintained for the continued practice of life safety and property conservation.

WILLIAMSON COUNTY FIRE CODE

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EXHIBITS

- EXHIBIT A: Additions, Insertions, Deletions, and Changes to International Fire Code, 2018 Edition
- EXHIBIT B: Certificate of Compliance
- EXHIBIT C: Williamson County Fire Marshal's Office Fire Code Review Process
- EXHIBIT D: Fee Schedule

1.0 GENERAL PROVISIONS

- 1.1 Purpose:** The purpose of the Williamson County Fire Code is the safe-guarding of life and property from fire and explosion hazards arising from the storage, handling and use of hazardous substances, materials and devices, and from conditions hazardous to life or property in the occupancy of buildings and premises in Williamson County.
- A. The Williamson County Fire Code is intended to provide minimum requirements for fire safety, with due regard to function, for the design and *construction* or *substantial improvements* to any public buildings, commercial establishments, and multi-family dwellings with four or more units, as determined by the current property designation identified by the Williamson Central Appraisal District.
 - B. The Williamson County Fire Code **is not** intended to be a building code as described in the Tex. Local Gov't § 214. and does not evaluate structural, plumbing, electrical, and mechanical suitability, unless it is specifically referenced by the fire code.
 - C. The Williamson County Fire Code is not intended in any way to limit the statutory authority of the Fire Marshal, and it is intended that such authority be retained to the fullest extent that the law would authorize.
- 1.2 Authority:** The Williamson County Fire Code is adopted by the Williamson County Commissioners Court pursuant to Tex. Local Gov't § 233.061. which authorizes certain counties to adopt a Fire Code and the regulations necessary to administer and enforce the *fire code*.

2.0 ADOPTION AND ADMINISTRATION

- 2.1** Except for the additions, deletions and insertions identified in EXHIBIT "A", Williamson County hereby adopts the International Fire Code 2018 edition (hereinafter known as "IFC"), as the Williamson County Fire Code. A complete copy of the IFC is on file in the Williamson County Fire Marshal's Office.
- 2.2** The *Williamson County Fire Marshal* is responsible for the administration of this *Fire Code*, issuance of permits required by this *Fire Code*, enforcement of this *Fire Code* and maintenance of proper records.
- 2.3** The County Fire Marshal or the County Fire Marshal's designee may conduct inspections provided for in this Fire Code or by Tex. Local Gov't § 233.064.
- 2.4** Below shall identify the scope of Williamson County Fire Code:
- A. The Williamson County Fire Code shall apply to all new *construction* or *substantial improvement* of all public buildings, commercial establishments, and multi-family dwellings with four or more units, as determined by the current property designation identified by the Williamson Central Appraisal District.
 - B. The Williamson County Fire Code does not apply to any industrial facility with a fire brigade that the *Williamson County Fire Marshal* determines qualifies for the exception specified in Tex. Local Gov't § 233.062. (b). The *Williamson County Fire Marshal* shall have the authority to seek the assistance of the Occupational Health and Safety Administration

in making a determination regarding an industrial facility.

- C. Any construction that occurred before the effective date of the amended Williamson County Fire Code will be governed by the preceding fire code that was effective as of June 26, 2018; unless and until *substantial improvement* is made to the property.
- D. Disclaimer of Liability- The degree of fire protection required by the Williamson County Fire Code is considered reasonable for regulatory purposes and is based on scientific and engineering considerations. Compliance with the Williamson County Fire Code does not imply that any building or the operations permitted within any building will be free from a fire hazard. The Williamson County Fire Code shall not create liability on the part of Williamson County, any officer, or employee thereof for any damages that may result from reliance on this *Fire Code* or any administrative decision lawfully made there under. The granting of a permit or issuance of a *Certificate of Compliance* does not imply that the building can be insured for fire coverage.

3.0 TERMS

- 3.1 **Certificate of Compliance:** A "Certificate of Compliance" means a certificate issued by the County Fire Marshal indicating construction or *substantial improvement* has been completed in compliance with the Williamson County Fire Code as of a specific date and for a specific occupancy.
- 3.2 **Construction:** *Construction* begins on the date that ground is broken for a building as determined by the *Williamson County Fire Marshal*, or if no ground is broken, on the date that:
 - A. The first materials are added to the original property; or
 - B. Foundation pilings are installed on the original property; or
 - C. A manufactured building or relocated structure is placed on a foundation on the original property
- 3.3 **Williamson County Fire Marshal:** means the holder of the statutory office of County Fire Marshal for Williamson County, Texas or the employee(s) designated by the *Williamson County Fire Marshal* to perform a task required by this *Fire Code*.
- 3.4 **Fire Code:** "Fire Code" means the Williamson County Fire Code as adopted in Section 2.1 of this Code.
- 3.5 **Fire Code Official:** The term "Fire Code Official" as it appears in the IFC is synonymous with the term "*Williamson County Fire Marshal*" or a designee of such individual; however, only the *Williamson County Fire Marshal* has the authority to overrule his or her subordinates or grant variances before applicants for permits or variances may request review by the Williamson County Board of Appeals.
- 3.6 **Fire Chief:** The term "Fire Chief" as it appears in the IFC is synonymous with the term "*Williamson County Fire Marshal*".
- 3.7 **Substantial Improvement:** *Substantial improvement* occurs when:
 - A. The repair, restoration, reconstruction, improvement, or remodeling of a public building, commercial establishment, or a multi-family residential dwelling consisting of four or more units for which the cost exceeds 50% of the building's value according to the certified tax appraisal roll for the county for the year preceding the year in which the work was begun; or

- B. A change in occupancy classification involving a change in the purpose or level of activity in a building, including the renovation of a warehouse into a loft apartment. For purposes of determining if an improvement is a *substantial improvement*, the applicant for a permit must submit data reflecting cost of the restoration, reconstruction, improvement, or remodeling. Costs shall include the value of all labor and materials. A permit is required prior to the start of any *substantial improvement*. For purposes of this Fire Code, *substantial improvement* begins on the date that the repair, restoration, reconstruction, improvement, remodeling, the change in occupancy classification begins, or on the date materials are first delivered for that purpose; or
- C. The installation or significant modification of a fire protection system or feature that requires acceptance testing or inspection per the standards of the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA).

3.8 Unincorporated Area: *Unincorporated Area* means any real property in Williamson County, Texas, which is not within the city limits of a municipality.

4.0 PERMITS

4.1 Permit Required: No person shall start or authorize construction or *substantial improvement* of a building or facility as defined by 2018 IFC within an unincorporated area of Williamson County without first securing a permit under the Williamson County Fire Code.

4.2 Application for Permit: The application for a permit will be on an electronic form prescribed by the *Williamson County Fire Marshal* and must be supported by the following:

- A. A completed Fire Code Design and Compliance Review Sheet provided by the *Williamson County Fire Marshal* and signed and sealed by a duly licensed architect or engineer authorized to practice in the State of Texas;
- B. A non-refundable permit review fee; and
- C. One (1) set of site/civil architectural, and fire protection systems plans, or other required set of plans submitted by electronic source (PDF) OR One (1) set of site/civil, architectural, and fire protection systems plans, or other required set of plans in a hard copy format AND one (1) set of site/civil architectural, fire protection systems plans, or other required set of plans must be submitted by electronic source (PDF). The plans must be on a readable format and handed in at time of permit submittal :
 - i. types of construction materials and class of interior finish;
 - ii. location of all exits with distances between exits called out – exit width, type and any special requirement shall be stated; and the location of any fire alarm equipment, automatic sprinklers, emergency lighting, etc. required to meet this *Fire Code*.

4.3 The *Williamson County Fire Marshal* may require the submission of additional information, drawings, specifications, or documents if needed to determine whether a permit should be issued.

- 4.4** Determination of Permit Eligibility: After the application is filed, the *Williamson County Fire Marshal* shall determine if the proposed construction or *substantial improvement* meets the requirements of the *Williamson County Fire Code*.
- A. If it is determined that the proposed construction or *substantial improvement* meets the requirements, then a permit will be issued after the collection of the appropriate fees as outlined in Section 4.5 – Fees, of the *Fire Code*, and as referred to in EXHIBIT "D"- *Fee Schedule*.
 - B. If it is determined that the proposed construction or *substantial improvement* does not comply with the requirements of this *Fire Code*, then the application package shall be returned to the applicant with an explanation of why it was not approved.
- 4.5** Fees: Fees for permits and inspections are to be set by Commissioner’s Court. Fees shall be paid by online payment, cashier's check, money order, or personal check. Should the check be returned for insufficient funds, the permit(s) issued becomes null and void. Fees shall be paid at the time plans are submitted for review unless other arrangements have been made and approved by the County Auditor. The County shall deposit all fees received under this section in a special fund in the County treasury, pursuant to Tex. Local Gov’t § 233.065. (c), and money in that fund shall be used only for the administration and enforcement of the *Fire Code*. Fee Schedule is shown in EXHIBIT “D”.
- 4.6** Fees for Retail Fireworks Permits: Inspections conducted under the authority of Tex. Local Gov’t § 352.016. for fire and life safety hazards at a fireworks retailer are subject to fees in accordance with Tex. OCC § 2154.2025. and Exhibit “D”. Payment of fees may be collected from the person who obtained a Retail Fireworks Permit under Tex. Occ. § 2154.202. to sell fireworks directly to the public. The permit fee shall only be collected once per calendar year for each site and address listed on the permit, however the number of inspections at each site is not limited to once per calendar year:
- A. \$100, Firework stand/building less than 25,000 square feet.
 - B. \$200, Firework stand/building 25,000 square feet or more.
 - C. \$300, Firework stand/building 100,000 square feet or more.
- 4.7** Condition of Permit: *Construction* of a building or a *substantial improvement* must be started within 180 calendar days of the date the permit is issued or the permit shall be null and void. Upon written request to the *Williamson County Fire Marshal*, two (2) six-month extensions of the permit may be obtained.
- 4.8** Lock Box Permit: The owner or owners association of a gated community or multi-unit housing project must comply with the provisions set forth by Tex. Local Gov’t Code § 352, Subchapter E. The owner or owner’s association of a gated community or multi-unit housing project must obtain a Lockbox Permit from the *Fire Code Official*.

5.0 PERMIT HOLDER RESPONSIBILITIES

- 5.1** All permit holders must post a copy of the permit on the jobsite in a place clearly visible from the

nearest road or street and in a manner meeting the requirements of the standards for permanent numbers set forth in the IFC § 505.1.

- 5.2 The *Williamson County Fire Marshal* is authorized to make as many scheduled or unscheduled inspections to the worksite as deemed necessary to enforce this *Fire Code* and the conditions of the Permit.
- 5.3 Any permit holder that wishes to make a change to the proposed building or *substantial improvement*, or to construct any building or *substantial improvement* other than that authorized by the permit, must submit supplemental drawings and/or specifications to the *Williamson County Fire Marshal* for review and approval. If a change complies with this *Fire Code* and is approved, a copy of the supplemental drawings and/or specifications shall be added to the Permit Holder's file, and the *Williamson County Fire Marshal* shall amend the permit accordingly.

6.0 CERTIFICATE OF COMPLIANCE

- 6.1 A building or facility may not be occupied until a conditional or partial *Certificate of Compliance* for the building or facility is issued by the *Fire Marshal*. The *Fire Marshal* shall notify the permit applicant in writing of any limitations or restrictions necessary to keep the permit area safe.
- 6.2 The holder of a conditional or partial *Certificate of Compliance* shall proceed only to the point for which approval has been given, at the permit holder's own risk and without assurance that approval for the occupancy or the utilization of the entire premises, equipment, or operation will be granted.
- 6.3 A "*Certificate of Compliance*" under this *Fire Code* shall not be construed as authorizing the owner or operator of any building or facility to afterward operate or maintain such building in such a way as to create, cause or allow the existence of a fire or life safety condition, which condition shall be subject to the independent enforcement authority of the County Fire Marshal.

7.0 APPEALS AND HEARING PROCEDURE

- 7.1 By applying for a permit, an Applicant waives the right to challenge this *Fire Code* in a court of law without first timely exhausting the Williamson County Fire Code's Appeals and Hearing Procedure.
- 7.2 If a permit applicant is denied a permit, the applicant may appeal the denial as provided in this section. The term "Appellant" is used to refer to the appealing party.
 - i. To appeal the denial of a permit application by the Fire Marshal's designee, Appellant must submit a written statement to the *Williamson County Fire Marshal* setting forth the reasons why the permit application should be approved. If the *Williamson County Fire Marshal* sustains the original denial of the permit, the appellant may seek review of the decision by the established Board of Appeals pursuant to Section 7.3 below.
 - ii. To appeal the denial of a permit application by the *Williamson County Fire Marshal*, Appellant may request that the established Board of Appeals review of the denial, as described in Section 7.3.
- 7.3 Review by established Board of Appeals:
 - i. An Appellant may request that the Board of Appeals review the County Fire Marshal's denial of a permit application by sending a written request to the County Fire Marshal's

Office by certified mail.

- ii. The request to review must be received by the County Fire Marshal's Office no later than the tenth business day after the County Fire Marshal (not an appointee) issues the written denial of the permit application.
- iii. Filing a request to review does not stay the Fire Marshal's denial of the application. The denial remains in effect unless and until the Board of Appeals reverses the decision of the Fire Marshal.
- iv. The Fire Marshals' denial will be reviewed by the Board of Appeals at a special scheduled meeting, no later than thirty calendar days of receiving the written request for review. The Board of Appeals may either uphold or reverse the decision of the County Fire Marshal.
- v. The Fire Marshal will send written notification of the Board of Appeals meeting date to Appellant by certified mail to address application unless Appellant specifies a different address in the written request for review. This notice shall be sent no later than seven calendar days prior to the Board of Appeals meeting date.

8.0 ENFORCEMENT AND VARIANCE

- 8.1** Violation of Conditions of Regulations: Any person having knowledge of a violation of this *Fire Code* may file a written, sworn complaint with the County Fire Marshal.
- 8.2** Civil Enforcement: If any person violates any provisions of the Williamson County Fire Code, the County Fire Marshal may request that the County Attorney file a civil action in a court of competent jurisdiction to recover from a person who violates the *Fire Code* a civil penalty in an amount of up to \$200 (or the maximum amount allowed by statute) for each day on which the violation exists as allowed in Tex. Local Gov't § 233.067.
- 8.3** Criminal Enforcement: If a building or facility subject to the Williamson County Fire Code is occupied without a *Certificate of Compliance*, the County Fire Marshal may file a complaint with the District Attorney's Office under Tex. Local Gov't § 352.016 and § 352.022. An offense under this section is a Class B misdemeanor unless it is shown on the trial of the offense that the defendant has been previously convicted two or more times under this section, in which event the offense is a state jail felony.
- 8.4** Variances: A request for a Variance to the *Williamson County Fire Code* can be made in writing to the *Williamson County Fire Marshal*.
- A. The Fire Marshal shall review the request and deny or grant request for variance.
 - B. A variance may be granted only if the following are met:
 - i. The applicant has shown good and sufficient cause;
 - ii. It has been determined that failure to grant the variance would result in an exceptional hardship to the applicant; and
 - iii. The granting of a variance will not result in an increased risk of fire, additional threats to public safety, extraordinary public expense, or create nuisances, cause fraud or victimization of the public; and
 - C. Economic hardship shall not constitute the sole basis for granting a variance.
 - D. The Fire Marshal's decision on a variance request may be appealed as described in Section 7

of the Williamson County Fire Code.

9.0 FORMS AND RECORDS

- 9.1** Forms: Forms to be used in the administration of this *Fire Code* shall be promulgated by the *Williamson County Fire Marshal*.
- 9.2** Maintenance of Records: The *Williamson County Fire Marshal* must maintain all applications for, and file copies of, permits for a retention period of three (3) years. Drawings and specifications on file with the *Williamson County Fire Marshal* may be destroyed after completion of the structure, unless otherwise required by law.

SEVERABILITY AND CONSTRUCTION

The provisions of this *Fire Code* are severable. If any word, phrase, clause, sentence, section, provision, or part of this *Fire Code* should be invalid or unconstitutional, it shall not affect the validity of the remaining portions and it is hereby declared to be the intent of the Commissioners Court that this *Fire Code* would have been adopted as to the remaining portions, regardless of the invalidity of any part. In the event that any provision of this *Fire Code* might be interpreted in such a way as exceeding the County's authority, such provision should be construed to apply only to the extent authorized by law. In the event of conflict, the Williamson County Fire Code approved on this date shall supersede any conflicting fire regulations of the County, except for as provided in Section 2.4.

PASSED AND APPROVED BY COMMISSIONERS COURT this ____ day of November, 2020

Bill Gravell Jr., County Judge

Terry Cook, Precinct 1

Cynthia Long, Precinct 2

Valerie Covey, Precinct 3

Russ Boles, Precinct 4

Attest:

Nancy Rister, County Clerk

EXHIBIT A

ADDITIONS, INSERTIONS, DELETION AND CHANGES TO INTERNATIONAL FIRE CODE 2018 EDITION

The International Fire Code is adopted by Williamson County except as noted below:

CHAPTER 1 SCOPE AND ADMINISTRATION

SECTION 101.1 is amended to read as follows: **SECTION 101.2.1** is added to read as follows:

101.1 Title. These regulations shall be known as the *Fire Code* of Williamson County, hereinafter referred to as "this code."

101.2.1 Appendices. Appendices, A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I, J, K, L, M and N are adopted as part of the Williamson County Fire Code.

SECTION 104.7.3 is added to read as follows:

104.7.3 Plan Review. The *Fire Code Official* is authorized to require the owner or agent to provide, without charge to the county and at the sole cost and expense of the owner or agent, a third party review for permits, approvals, inspections, or plans submitted to the county for approval. Any third-party review required by the county shall be conducted by an individual or entity of the *fire code official's* choice.

SECTION 105.3.3 is amended to read as follows:

105.3.3 Occupancy prohibited before approval. The building or structure shall not be occupied prior to the *fire code official* issuing a certificate of compliance and conducting associated inspections indicating the applicable provisions of this code have been met.

CHAPTER 2 DEFINITIONS

SECTION 202 is amended to include the following revised or additional definitions:

24-HOUR CARE. The actual time that a person is an occupant within a facility for the purpose of receiving care. It shall not include a facility that is open for 24 hours and is capable of providing care to someone visiting the facility during any segment of the 24 hours. See definitions for Group I occupancies as adopted by Williamson County.

ADULT CARE FACILITY. See Institutional-2 occupancy definition.

AMBULATORY CARE FACILITY. Buildings or portions thereof used to provide medical, surgical, psychiatric, nursing

or similar care on a less-than-24-hour basis to persons who are rendered incapable of self-preservation by the services provided or staff has accepted responsibility for care recipients already incapable. This group may include but not be limited to the following:

1. Dialysis centers, sedation dentistry, surgery centers, colonic centers, psychiatric centers.

APPROVED. Acceptable to the fire code official.

CHILD CARE FACILITY. See Institutional Group I-2 occupancy definition.

CRITICAL FACILITIES. Those facilities essential to the preservation of life and property, including, but not limited to: schools, nursing homes, hospitals, police, fire and emergency response installations, facilities used for the storage of critical records, and commercial installations which produce, use or store hazardous materials or hazardous waste (Group H occupancies).

DEDICATED FUNCTION FIRE ALARM CONTROL UNIT. A protected premises fire alarm control unit intended to provide operation of a specifically identified fire safety function, such as a fire sprinkler alarm and supervisory control unit or an elevator recall control and supervisory control unit.

FIRE ALARM CONTROL PANEL REPLACEMENT AND MAINTENANCE. Any maintenance to an existing fire alarm control panel that involves replacement or upgrade that requires a new installation tag and certification shall be considered a new system and shall meet the requirements of Section 907.2.

FIRE CODE OFFICIAL. The fire code official shall be the person appointed by Commissioners Court as the County Fire Marshal or the employee(s) designated by the County Fire Marshal to perform a task required by this code. The Fire Marshal shall have enforcement authority for this code and shall conduct all required inspections for compliance with this code.

FOSTER GROUP HOME. A child-care facility that provides care for 7 to 12 children for 24 hours a day.

FOSTER HOME. A child-care facility that provides care for not more than six children for 24 hours a day.

GENERAL RESIDENTIAL OPERATION. A child-care facility that provides care for more than 12 children for 24 hours a day, including facilities known as children's homes, halfway houses, residential treatment centers, emergency shelters, and therapeutic camps.

GROUP HOME. A residential board and care facility with at least four and no more than sixteen clients for social rehabilitation, substance abuse or mental health problems containing a group housing arrangement that provides custodial care but does not provide acute care.

MID-RISE BUILDING. A building with an occupied floor located more than 2 stories and less than 75 feet (22 860 mm) above the lowest level of fire department vehicle access.

MOBILE FOOD VEHICLE. Vehicles which are used for the preparation and sale of consumable items.

Institutional Group I-1. Institutional Group I-1 occupancy shall include buildings, structures, or portions thereof for more than 16 persons, excluding staff, who reside on a 24-hour basis in a supervised environment and receive custodial care. Buildings of Group I-1 shall be classified as one of the occupancy conditions indicated below. This group shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

- Alcohol and drug centers
- Assisted living facilities
- Congregate care facilities
- Convalescent facilities
- Group homes
- General residential operation
- Halfway houses
- Residential Board and Care- Large A
- Social rehabilitation facilities

Condition 1. This occupancy condition shall include buildings in which all persons receiving custodial care who, without any assistance, are capable of responding to an emergency situation to complete building evacuation.

Condition 2. This occupancy condition shall include buildings in which there are any persons receiving custodial care who require limited verbal or physical assistance while responding to an emergency situation to complete building evacuation.

Four to sixteen persons receiving care. A facility such as the above, housing at least four and not more than sixteen persons receiving such care, shall be classified as a Residential Board and Care-Small.

Institutional Group I-2. Institutional Group I-2 occupancy shall include buildings and structures used for medical care on a 24-hour basis for more than five persons who are not capable of self-preservation, and not otherwise classified as a Residential Board and Care- Small, This group shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

- Foster care facilities
- Detoxification facilities
- Hospitals
- Nursing homes
- Psychiatric hospital
- Child and Adult day care facilities (in operation for more than 24 hours)
- Residential Board and Care- Large B

Condition 1. This occupancy condition shall include facilities that provide nursing and medical care but do not provide emergency care, surgery, obstetrics, or in-patient stabilization units for psychiatric or

detoxification, including, but not limited to, nursing homes and foster care facilities.

Condition 2. This occupancy condition shall include facilities that provide nursing and medical care and could provide emergency care, surgery, obstetrics, or inpatient stabilization units for psychiatric or detoxification, including, but not limited to, hospitals. Four to sixteen persons receiving care. A facility such as the above, housing at least four and not more than sixteen persons receiving such care, shall be classified as a Residential Board and Care-Small.

Residential Board and Care Occupancy. An existing residential occupancy, converted to be used for lodging and boarding of at least four but not more than 16 residents, not related by blood or marriage to the directors, owners, or operators, for the purpose of providing personal care services. A Residential Board and Care Occupancy includes, but is not limited to:

- Alcohol and drug centers
- Assisted living facilities
- Boarding homes, housing at least four but not more than ten residents
- Community homes
- Congregate care facilities
- Convalescent facilities
- Detoxification facilities
- Emergency shelters
- Family home
- Foster family homes
- Group homes
- Halfway houses
- Hospices
- Limited care facilities
- Personal care facilities
- Residential AIDS hospices
- Residential treatment home
- Social rehabilitation facilities
- Special residential care facility

For the purposes of this Code, a facility such as the above in a residential setting, housing at least four and **not more than 16 persons** shall be classified as a Commercial Establishment: **Residential Board and Care, Small** and shall comply with the provisions of the current State adopted editions of Section 20.5 of the Uniform Fire Code, NFPA 1 Chapter 33 of NFPA 101 Life Safety Code, or applicable State and Federal requirements. If there is a conflict between the provisions of this section and the State or the purposes of this Code, a facility such as the above, housing **more than 16 persons** shall be classified as a Commercial Establishment: **Residential Board and Care, large** and shall comply with the provisions of the current edition of the Williamson County Fire Code, or applicable State and Federal requirements. If there is a conflict between the provisions of this section and the State or Federal requirements, rules, and regulations, the more stringent of the provisions shall apply.

Residential Group R-4. Omitted. Refer to Residential Board and Care.

READILY ACCESSIBLE. Accessible without any special tools, key, knowledge, or equipment to operate.

SPECIAL EVENT. Any organized, temporary event with an estimated number of participants and spectators of 100 or more people set up outdoors in a parking lot, side of the roadway, open land, or involves using a building for an assembly of 50 or more people in a building not equipped or intended to be utilized for this purpose.

START OF CONSTRUCTION. Construction begins on the date that ground is broken for a building, or if no ground is broken, on the date that:

1. The first materials are added to the original property;
2. Foundation pilings are installed on the original property;
3. A manufactured building or relocated structure is placed on a foundation on the original property.

SUBSTANTIAL IMPROVEMENT. A "Substantial Improvement" is

- a) the repair, restoration, reconstruction, improvement, or remodeling of a public building, a commercial establishment, or a multifamily residential dwelling consisting of four or more units for which the cost exceeds 50% of the building's value according to the certified tax appraisal roll for the county for the year preceding the year in which the work was begun; or
- b) a change in occupancy classification involving a change in the purpose or level of activity in a building, including the renovation of a warehouse into a loft apartment. For purposes of determining if an improvement is a substantial improvement, the applicant for a permit must submit data reflecting cost of the improvement, restoration, reconstruction, improvement, or remodeling. Costs shall include the value of all labor and materials. A permit is required prior to the start of any substantial improvement. For purposes of this Code, substantial improvement begins on the date that the repair, restoration, reconstruction, improvement, or remodeling or the change in occupancy classification begins or on the date materials are first delivered for that purpose.

UNINCORPORATED AREA. Unincorporated Area means the area in Williamson County, Texas, which is not within an incorporated area of a city or town.

**CHAPTER 3
GENERAL REQUIREMENTS**

SECTION 319.1.1, 319.11 and 319.2 are added to read as follows:

319.1.1 Location. A mobile food vehicle being used on a property shall comply with the following:

1. The vehicle shall not be parked beneath or within 20 feet of a structure while operating.
2. Accessory weather protection cannot exceed 700 square feet and shall be open on at least three sides.

319.11 Electrical. All electrical components shall be in compliance with Sections 604.1 through 604.9 and the National Electrical Code current edition (NFPA 70).

319.12 Solid Fuel Cooking. All solid fueled cooking appliances and operations shall be in accordance with NFPA 96, current addition.

**CHAPTER 4
EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS REQUIREMENTS**

SECTION 403.12.3.1 is amended to read as follows:

403.12.3.1 Number of crowd managers. Follow recommendations of the mass gathering permit and not fewer than two trained crowd managers, and not fewer than one trained crowd manager for each 250 persons or portion thereof, shall be provided for the gathering.

Exceptions:

1. Outdoor events with fewer than 500 persons in attendance shall not require crowd managers.
2. Assembly occupancies used exclusively for religious worship with an occupant load not exceeding 1,000 shall not require crowd managers.
3. The number of crowd managers shall be reduced where, in the opinion of the *fire code official*, the fire protection provided by the facility and the nature of the event warrant a reduction.

CHAPTER 5
FIRE SERVICE FEATURES

SECTION 503.1.1 Exceptions 1.1 and 1.2 are amended to read as follows:

Exception: 1.1. Buildings equipped throughout with an *approved automatic sprinkler system* installed in accordance with Section 903.3.1.1, 903.3.1.2 or 903.3.1.3, the dimension shall be increased to 200 feet.

Exception 1.2. When fire apparatus access roads cannot be installed because of location on property, topography, waterways, nonnegotiable grades or other similar conditions, and an *approved* alternative means of fire protection is provided. An acceptable alternative is to install external remote fire hose connections per Section 918 of the International Fire Code.

SECTION 505.1 is amended to read as follows; **SECTION 505.1.1** is added to read as follows:

505.1 Address identification. New and existing buildings shall be provided with *approved* address identification. The address identification shall be legible and placed in a position that is clearly identifiable and visible from the street or road fronting the property. Address identification characters shall contrast with their background. Address numbers shall be Arabic numbers or alphabetical letters. Numbers shall not be spelled out. Each character shall be not less than 4 inches (102 mm) high with a minimum stroke width of 1/2 inch (12.7 mm). Where required by the *fire code official*, address identification shall be provided in additional *approved* locations to facilitate emergency response. Where access is by means of a private road and the building cannot be viewed from the *public way*, a monument, pole or other sign or means shall be used to identify the structure. Address identification shall be maintained.

505.1.1 Additional Identification Required. In multi-tenant buildings where exterior exit doors face directions other than the road front of buildings, each door shall be labeled with business name and suite number or address. Numbers and letters shall be Arabic numbers or alphabetical block letters, not less than 2 inches in height and a minimum stroke width of 1/2" inch.

SECTION 506.1.1 is amended to read as follows:

506.1.1 Locks. An approved lock shall be installed on gates, doors or similar barriers where required by the *fire code official*. Only key locks, key boxes, and key box systems manufactured and supplied by the Knox® Company, with a key cut for unincorporated Williamson County designated fire departments shall be utilized.

SECTION 506.1.2 Item 3 is amended to read as follows:

3. The key box shall be mounted within 20 feet of the main elevator bank at the lobby nearest to

the lowest level of fire department access.

SECTION 506.1.3 is added to read as follows:

506.1.3.2 Gated Communities and Multi-Unit Housing. To assure reasonable access for fire-fighting vehicles and equipment, emergency medical services vehicles, and law enforcement officers, the owner or the owners association of a gated community or multi-unit housing project shall comply with this section.

506.1.3.1 Vehicular Gates. Each vehicular gate to the gated community or multi-unit housing project must have a key box within sight of the gate and in close proximity outside the gate or a chain with approved lock. The key box at all times must contain a key, card, or code to open the gate or a key switch or cable mechanism that overrides the key, card, or code that normally opens the gate and allows the gate to be opened manually.

506.1.3.2 Pedestrian Gates. If there are one or more pedestrian gates, at least one pedestrian gate must have a key box within sight of the gate and in close proximity outside the gate. The key box at all times must contain a key, card, code, key switch, or cable mechanism to open the gate. If different pedestrian gates are operated by different keys, cards, or codes, the key box must contain:

1. Each key, card, or code, properly labeled for its respective gate; or
2. A single master key, card, code, or a key switch or cable mechanism that will open every gate.

506.1.3.3 Electrical Power Gate. If a gate is powered by electricity, it must be possible to open the gate without a key, card, code, or key switch if the gate loses electrical power.

SECTION 506.3 is added to read as follows:

506.3 Key Box Access. Access to a key box (KNOX box) required by this section shall be limited to a person or agency providing firefighting or emergency medical services for the county.

SECTION 507.5.1.1 is amended to read as follows:

507.5.1.1 Hydrant for standpipe systems. Building equipped with any fire department connection installed in accordance with Section 903 or Section 905 shall have a fire hydrant within 100 feet (30 480 mm) of the fire department connections.

Exception: The distance shall be permitted to exceed 100 feet (30 480 mm) where *approved* by the *fire code official*.

SECTIONS 509.3 is added to read as follows:

509.3 Main electrical disconnect. The main electrical disconnect for each building shall be labeled and installed on the exterior of the building in an *approved* location. In lieu of the main disconnect, an approved remote shunt trip may be installed in an *approved* location to disconnect electrical service when *approved* by the *fire code official*.

SECTION 510 is amended to read as follows:

SECTION 510
EMERGENCY RESPONDER RADIO COVERAGE

510.1 Emergency responder radio coverage in new buildings. New buildings shall have *approved* radio coverage for emergency responders within the building based on the existing coverage levels of the public safety communication systems utilized by the jurisdiction, measured at the exterior of the building. Coverage shall include the Williamson County Radio System. The frequency range to be supported is 700-800 MHz (FDMA and TDMA)). Additional VHF/UHF (150-174 MHz/408-512 MHz) frequency range may be required based upon the need of local public safety services or as otherwise required in writing by Williamson County for public safety purposes. Any building or structure that fails to support adequate radio coverage must be brought into compliance. The owner shall immediately contact the Williamson County Fire Marshal's Office to report the system failure. This section shall not require improvement of the existing public safety communication systems.

Exceptions:

1. Where it is determined by the *fire code official* that the radio coverage system is not needed.
2. Buildings less than 15,000 square feet.
3. Single-family detached residential dwellings and multifamily buildings.
4. Any building less than four stories in height with less than 50,000 square feet per floor.

510.4.1.1 Minimum signal strength into the building. The minimum inbound signal strength shall be sufficient to provide usable voice communications throughout the coverage area as specified by the fire code official. The inbound signal level shall be sufficient to provide not less than -95 dBm for analog systems or a Delivered Audio Quality (DAQ) of 3.0 for digital systems or an equivalent Signal-to-Interference-Plus-Noise-Ratio (SINR) applicable to the technology for either analog or digital signals.

510.4.1.2 Minimum signal strength out of the building. The minimum outbound signal strength shall be sufficient to provide usable voice communications throughout the coverage area as specified by the fire code official. The outbound signal level shall be sufficient to provide not less than -95 dBm for analog systems or a DAQ 3.0 for digital systems or an equivalent Signal-to-Interference-Plus-Noise-Ratio (SINR) applicable to the technology for either analog or digital signals.

**CHAPTER 9
FIRE PROTECTION SYSTEMS**

SECTIONS 901.4.6, 901.4.6.1, 901.4.6.4, 901.6.1, 903.4.1, 907.4.1 are amended to read as follows;
SECTIONS 901.4.6.5, 903.7, 907.2.24, 907.6.2.1, 913.2.1.1, 913.6, 918 are added, to read as follows:

901.4.6 Pump and riser room size. Where provided, fire pump rooms and *automatic sprinkler system* riser rooms shall be designed with adequate space for all equipment necessary for the installation, as defined by the manufacturer, with sufficient working space around the stationary equipment. Clearances around equipment to elements of permanent construction, shall be sufficient to allow inspection, service, repair or replacement without removing such elements or permanent construction or disabling the function of a required fire-resistance-rated assembly. Fire pump and *automatic sprinkler system* riser rooms shall be provided with doors and unobstructed passageways large enough to allow removal of the largest piece of equipment. Storage rooms shall not be used for a fire sprinkler system riser room.

901.4.6.1 Access. Automatic sprinkler system risers, fire pumps and controllers shall be provided with ready access. Where located in a fire pump room or automatic sprinkler riser room, the door shall be permitted to be locked provided that the key is available at all times. Fire sprinkler riser rooms with an exterior access door is required to have a Key Box system compliant with 506.1 for fire department access.

Exceptions: Automatic fire sprinkler control valves that are located on the exterior of the building, or in a vault, or located in *readily accessible* area outside of the building.

901.4.6.4 Lighting. Permanently installed artificial illumination on both interior and exterior sides of the access door shall be provided in the automatic sprinkler system riser rooms and fire pump rooms.

901.4.6.5 Fire Sprinkler Riser Room Separation. Automatic fire sprinkler riser rooms shall be separated from the remainder of the building by not less than one-hour fire barrier. **901.6.1 Standards.** *Fire protection systems* shall be inspected, tested, and maintained in accordance with the referenced standards listed in Table 901.6.1.

901.6.1 Standards. *Fire protection systems* shall be inspected, tested, and maintained in accordance with the referenced standards listed in Table 901.6.1.

**Table 901.6.1
FIRE PROTECTION SYSTEM MAINTENANCE STANDARDS**

SYSTEM	STANDARD
Portable fire extinguishers	NFPA 10
Carbon dioxide fire-extinguishing system	NFPA 12
Halon 1301 fire-extinguishing system	NFPA 12A
Dry-chemical extinguishing systems	NFPA 17
Wet-chemical extinguishing systems	NFPA 17A
Water-based fire protection systems	NFPA 25
Fire alarm systems	NFPA 72
Standard for smoke and heat venting	NFPA 204
Water-mist systems	NFPA 750
Clean agent extinguishing systems	NFPA 2001
Aerosol fire-extinguishing systems	NFPA 2010

903.4.1 Monitoring. Alarms, supervisory and trouble signals shall be transmitted to an *approved* supervising station, through a dedicated function fire alarm control unit or a fire alarm control panel. Each alarm, supervisory, and trouble signal shall be addressable and identify the building, zone or riser location when initiated or activated. When *approved* by the County *Fire Code Official*, a performance-based alternative may be approved.

Exceptions:

1. Underground key or hub valves in roadway boxes provided by the municipality or public utility are not required to be monitored.
2. Backflow prevention device test valves located in limited area sprinkler system supply piping shall be locked in the open position. In occupancies required to be equipped with a fire alarm system, the backflow preventer valves shall be electrically supervised by a tamper switch installed in accordance with NFPA 72 and separately annunciated.

903.7 Required minimum safety pressure. An automatic fire sprinkler system shall be required a minimum hydraulically calculated safety factor of five (5) psi or greater.

907.2.24 Alarm annunciation. Alarm annunciation/indication is required to be located at the main entrance of all buildings required to have an approved fire alarm system.

907.4.1 Protection of fire alarm control unit. A single smoke detector shall be provided at the location of

each fire alarm control unit, notification appliance circuit power extenders and supervising station transmitting equipment.

907.6.2.1 Fire Alarm Surge Protectors. Surge protection shall be provided on all fire alarm related components, to protect from transient voltage, including but not limited to the following: signaling line circuits (SLC), notification appliance circuits (NAC), telephone lines, AC power connections.

913.2.1.1 Fire Pump Rooms. Each room where fire pumps are located shall have an exterior access door with a Key Box system compliant with 506.1 for fire department access. Illumination shall be provided on both the exterior and interior sides of the access door and the door shall be clearly marked and identified per Section 509.1. Storage rooms shall not be used for a fire pump room.

913.6 Water Supply for Fire Pumps: All fire pump installations where the fire pump is supplied directly from a water main or utility district water line shall include a break tank designed in accordance with NFPA 22 or provide an approval letter from the water authority authorizing direct connection to the water main provided with specified backflow prevention.

Exception: Performance-based alternative provided by a Civil Engineer (with Fire Protection education), Fire Protection Engineer, or RME- G licensed by the State of Texas may be submitted for consideration by the Fire Code Official.

SECTION 918 is added to read as follows:

SECTION 918 REMOTE FIRE HOSE CONNECTIONS

918.1 Remote fire hose connection. Where approved by the County Fire Marshal, remote fire hose connections may be installed to reduce the fire hose length as required by Section 503. For portions of buildings being protected by remote fire hose connections in Occupancy groups F, S, and H, access doors compliant with Section 3206.6.1 of the International Fire Code shall be provided.

918.2 External remote fire hose connection. Remote fire hose connections shall be designed using a minimum of 4 inch(102mm) diameter galvanized steel pipe for up to 1,000 ft. (305m), or 6 inch(152mm) diameter galvanized steel pipe for over 1,000 ft. (305 m) in length, or any other equivalent pipe material approved by the Fire Code Official. C900 pipe may be substituted for underground line as required per Williamson County design standard. The fire department connection and fire hose connection thread shall be designated by the local responding fire department.

918.2.1 Installation. An approved fire department connection and hose connection compatible with the response agency shall be a minimum height of 18 inches and a maximum of 48 inches and installed within 10-ft of a fire department access door if not fronting a fire lane access road.

918.2.2 Vehicle impact protection. Shall be provided and comply with Section 312 of the International Fire Code.

918.2.3 Signs and markings. External remote fire hose connections shall comply with Section 912 of the International Fire Code. The fire department connection sign shall state "DRY REMOTE FDC". The remote fire hose connection sign shall state "DRY REMOTE FIRE HOSE CONNECTION".

918.2.4 Locking Caps. Approved locking caps shall be provided for all remote hose connections.

918.3 Piping protection. Piping that passes through the interior of the building shall comply with Section 905.4.1 of the International Building Code.

918.4 Remote fire hose connection location(s). Where approved by the Fire Code Official or Fire Marshal, remote fire hose connections shall be installed so that all portions of the building are covered within 150 ft. of fire hose lay. Fire department connection shall be located within 10ft of the fire lane.

Exception: Fire hose lay shall be increased up to 200 ft. when the building is protected with an automatic fire sprinkler system.

918.5 Maintenance, inspection, and testing. Remote fire hose connections shall be maintained, flow tested, and inspected annually. A written record shall be maintained and shall be made available to the fire code official.

CHAPTER 11 CONSTRUCTION REQUIREMENTS FOR EXISTING BUILDINGS

SECTION 1103.7.7 is added to read as follows:

1103.7.7 Group R-4. Please refer to Exhibit A, Section 2 of the Williamson County Fire Code for additional information and Residential Board and Care design criteria.

CHAPTER 32 HIGH PILED COMBUSTIBLE STORAGE

SECTION 3201 is amended by the addition of Section 3201.5, to read as follows:

SECTION 3201.5 Required Specialized Engineered Plans. All high piled storage facilities shall be designed with the assistance of an engineer specializing in fire protection, licensed in the State of Texas.

CHAPTER 50
HAZARDOUS MATERIALS - GENERAL PROVISIONS

SECTION 5001.7 is added to read as follows:

SECTION 5001.7 REQUIRED SPECIALIZED ENGINEERED PLANS. All Group H occupancies shall be designed with the assistance of an engineer specializing in fire protection, licensed in the State of Texas.

CHAPTER 80
REFERENCED STANDARDS

CHAPTER 80 is amended to read as follows:

The opening paragraph to **CHAPTER 80** is amended as follows:

This chapter lists the standards that are referenced in various sections of this document. The standards are listed herein by the promulgating agency of the standard, the standard identification, effective date and title, and the section or sections of this document that reference the standard. If the State of Texas has adopted any of the listed standards, the more stringent and/or more current standard of the provisions shall apply. Use of all standards and references will be reviewed and utilized by the fire code official.

CHAPTER 80 is amended to include the following reference standards:

- a. NFPA 1, Uniform Fire Code-Current State adopted edition, Section 20.5
- b. NFPA 101® Life Safety Code ®- Current State adopted edition, Chapter 33

APPENDIX B
FIRE – FLOW REQUIREMENTS FOR BUILDINGS

SECTION B103.3 is amended to read as follows:

SECTION B103.3 Areas without water supply systems. For information regarding water supplies for firefighting purposes in rural and suburban areas in which adequate and reliable water supply systems do not exist, the *fire code official* is authorized to use standards as established by Williamson County.

APPENDIX L
REQUIREMENTS FOR FIRE FIGHTER AIR REPLENISHMENT SYSTEMS

SECTION L 101.2 is added to read as follows:

SECTION L 101.2 Required location. In new buildings, fill stations shall be required when any of the following conditions occur:

1. Any new high-rise building.
2. Any new building with 2 or more floors below grade.
3. Any new building 500,000 square feet or more in size.

Exhibit B



Williamson County Certificate of Compliance



1. Williamson County Fire Marshal Certificate Number
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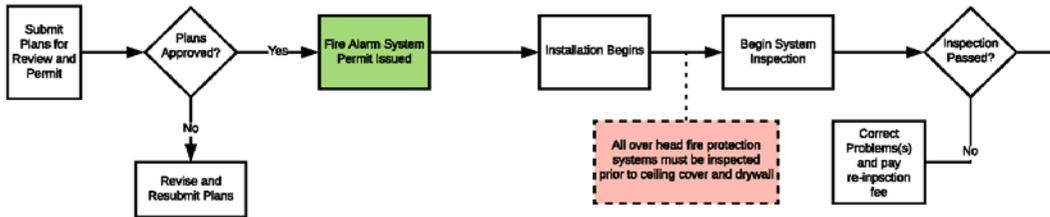
2. Property Name	3. Property Address	4. City, State, Zip Code	
5. Type of Construction A. New Construction <input type="checkbox"/> B. Renovation <input type="checkbox"/> C. Change of Occupancy <input type="checkbox"/>	6. Sprinkler System Required Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	7. Alarm System Required Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	8. Fire Code and Edition
9. Occupied Area		10. Designed Occupant Load	
11. Type of Construction		12. Description of Use	
13. Special Stipulations or Code Modifications			
This certificate ensures that all fire protection and life safety systems have been completed, inspected, successfully tested and approved for the specific area of the building specified above to provide a reasonable degree of safety to the occupants from fire and similar emergencies.			
14. Name of Approval Official	15. Signature	16. Date	

This certificate is valid only for the premises of the project address.

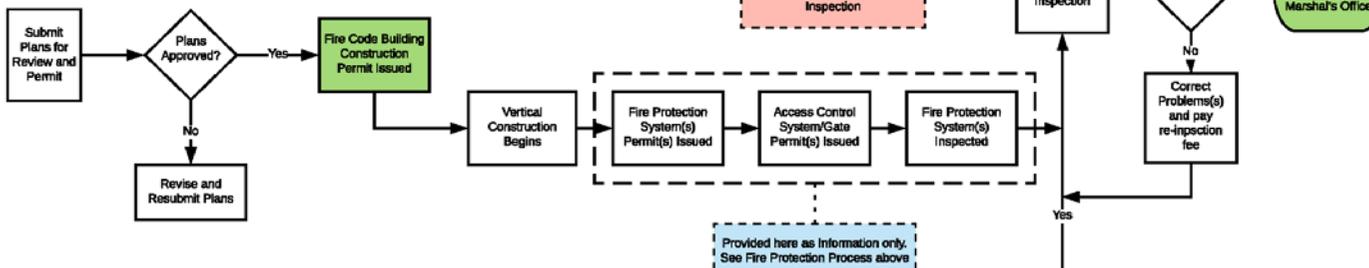
Williamson County Fire Marshal's Office Fire Code Process

For Detailed Permits and Inspection Process, Reference the Williamson County Fire Code

Fire Alarm System Process Flow



Fire Code Building Construction Process Flow



Fire Sprinkler Protection Process Flow

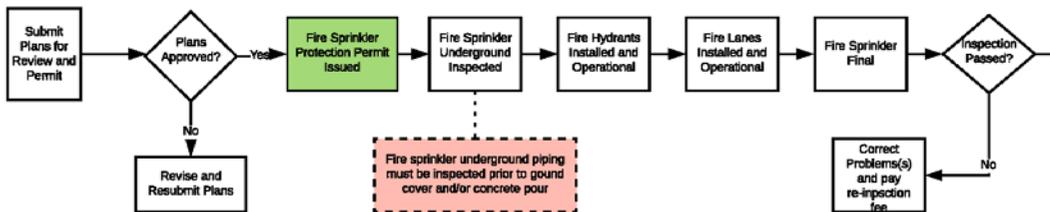


Exhibit D

Fee Schedule

A. Fire Code Building Permit

The base fee for all submitted plans and issue of Certificate of Compliance is \$25 for the copy. This fee is for processing building plans submitted for approval and will be paid at time of submission of the plans. All projects will use the following fee schedule:

FEES MUST BE PAID WHEN PLANS ARE SUBMITTED

Building Permits and Commercial Occupancies	Additional Details	Fee
Certificate of Compliance	Fire Final Inspection or Certificate (for existing structure without certificate)	\$100
Civil/Site Plans – Fire Code Review	Fire lane and fire access (Commercial)	\$150
Subdivision Plans – Fire Code Review	Fire lane and fire access (Residential)	\$150
Plat Review (Preliminary and/or Final)	Per Section/Phase	\$150
Fire Code Plan Review/New Building Permit	\$125 X Per 1000 sq. ft. of Structure (round up to the nearest 1000)	\$125 X Sq. ft.
Fire Code Plan Review/ New Building Shell Only	\$75 X Per 1000 sq. ft. of Structure (round up to the nearest 1000)	\$75 X Sq. ft.
Fire Code Plan Review/ New Building Finish Out	\$75 X Per 1000 sq. ft. of Structure (round up to the nearest 1000)	\$75 X Sq. ft.
Fire Code Plan Review/ Existing Building Remodel		\$150
Other Required Permits		\$100
Re-Submittal of Construction Plans	If changes are done after the initial plan review, the review of changes are required.	\$100
Work Without Permit	2 X Regular Permit Fee	\$***.**
Fire Protection Inspection Systems	Additional Details	Fee
Fire Alarm/Detection System	1 to 10 devices	\$150
Fire Alarm/Detection System	11 to 25 devices	\$200
Fire Alarm/Detection System	26 to 150 devices	\$250
Fire Alarm/Detection System	151 to 499 devices	\$350
Fire Alarm/Detection System	≥ 500 + .50¢/device additional	\$350+(<u> </u> + .50¢)
Fire Sprinkler System	1 to 20 heads	\$150
Fire Sprinkler System	21 to 250 heads	\$200
Fire Sprinkler System	251 to 499 heads	\$250
Fire Sprinkler System	≥ 500 + .50¢/head additional	\$350+(<u> </u> + .50¢)
Fire Standpipe System		\$200
Water Storage/Related Equipment System	On-site Fire Flow Tanks (Appendix B or NFPA 1142)	\$150
Fire Pumps/Related Equipment System		\$150
Underground/Backflow Fire Protection System	Underground water supply for fire protection system	\$150
Automatic Fire-extinguishing Systems (Commercial Cooking)	Fixed Systems	\$150
New Spraying or Dipping Booths (Paint)	Building/Booths	\$150
New Service Station Piping Plan		\$200
Other Required Fire Code Inspections		\$100
Re- Inspections	Must be paid prior to re-scheduling	\$100
Other Inspections and Fire Code Fees	Additional Details	Fee
Firework Stand/Building <25,000 square feet	Per Stand/Building (annual permit)	\$100
Firework Stand/Building >25,000 square feet	Per Stand/Building (annual permit)	\$200
Fireworks Storage/Building >100,000 square feet	Per Building (annual permit)	\$300
Fireworks Display/Show Permit	Per Launch Site	\$250
Electronic Entrance Gates Permit	Pedestrian and road gates	\$100
Tent Permit	Per Event/Set-up	\$150
Mass Gathering Permit	Per Event	\$150
Mobile Food Vendor Inspection	Annual permit	\$75
Other Required Fire Code Permits		\$100
Re-Inspections	Paid after corrections have been made from initial inspection	\$75

B.

License Inspection

State license facilities that require an annual fire inspection for operational permits.

State and County Licensed Facility (facilities that require an annual fire inspection for operational permits)		Fee
Commercial Day Cares		\$100
Nursing Homes or Care Centers		\$150
Hospitals		\$200
State or County Inspections not listed		\$100
Foster Home, Licensed Adoption		\$50
(Williamson County) County Permits		EXEMPT
Re-inspection fee for State of County licensed Inspection	Re-inspection fee for State or County licensed Inspection will be the same amount as the original permit paid prior to scheduling for a re-inspection	

FORMS OF PAYMENT ACCEPTED: CHECK, CASHIERS CHECK, MONEY ORDER OR ELECTRONIC PAYMENT