

**WASHINGTON STATE BUILDING CODE COUNCIL**  
**APPLICATION FOR REVIEW OF A PROPOSED LOCAL AMENDMENT**  
**TO THE WASHINGTON STATE BUILDING CODE**

**1. State Building Code to be Amended.**

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> International Building Code          | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> International Residential Code |
| <input type="checkbox"/> International Mechanical Code        | <input type="checkbox"/> International Fire Code                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Uniform Plumbing Code                | <input type="checkbox"/> ICC ANSI A117.1 Accessibility Code        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> International Fuel Gas Code          | <input type="checkbox"/> NFPA 54 National Fuel Gas Code            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> NFPA 58 Liquefied Petroleum Gas Code | <input type="checkbox"/> State Energy Code                         |

**Section R313; P2904**

**Page 3-52; 29-8**

**2. Type of Local Amendment**

- Preproposal                       Final Adoption                       Reconsideration

**3. Applicant:**

City of Airway Heights

**4. Local Jurisdiction Adoption**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Ordinance or Resolution No.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date Adopted

**5. Signed:**

Albert Topp  
Chief Executive Officer

City Manager  
Title

2-5-25  
Date

**6. Contact Person:**

**Name:** Mike Makela

**Title:** Fire Marshal

**Address:** Airway Heights Fire Department  
1208 S Lundstrom Street  
Airway Heights, WA 99001

**Phone:** (509) 244-3322 ext. 3    **E-mail:** [mmakela@cawh.org](mailto:mmakela@cawh.org)

**7. Proposed Code Amendment** (Underline all added words, strike through deleted words) Additional pages may be attached.

Code 2021 IRC Section R313; P2904 Page 3-52; 29-8

The following amendments to be adopted by the City of Airway Heights are contingent upon approval by the State Building Code Council.

Amend section to read as follows:

The 2021 International Residential Code (IRC), published by the International Code Council, as adopted and amended by Chapter 51-51 WAC, provided, that Chapters 11 and 25 through 43 are not adopted. Appendices AF, AH, AJ, AM, AQ, AWU and AWV are hereby adopted, except that:

(1) Section R313.1 shall be modified to read:

**R313.1 Townhouse automatic fire sprinkler systems.** An automatic residential fire sprinkler system shall be installed in a townhouse unit.

**Exceptions:**

- ~~1.~~ An automatic residential fire sprinkler system shall not be required where additions or alterations are made to an existing townhouse unit that does not have an automatic residential fire sprinkler system installed.
- ~~2.~~ ~~Townhouse buildings containing no more than four townhouse units.~~

(2) Section R313.2 shall be adopted and modified to read:

**R313.2 One- and two-family dwellings automatic sprinkler systems.** ~~This section is not adopted.~~  
An automatic residential fire sprinkler system shall be installed in one- and two-family dwellings, any new accessory dwelling units (ADU), and any new dwellings included in middle housing development (townhomes, cottage housing, courtyard apartments, stacked flats, duplexes, triplexes, fourplexes).

**Exception:** An automatic residential fire sprinkler system shall not be required where additions or alterations are made to an existing dwelling that does not have an automatic residential sprinkler system installed.

(3) Section R313.2.1 is added to read as follows:

**R313.2.1 Design and installation.** Automatic residential fire sprinkler systems shall be designed and installed in accordance with Section P2904 or NFPA 13D.

(4) Section P2904.1.1 shall be modified to read:

**P2904.1.1 Required sprinkler locations.** Sprinklers shall be installed to protect all areas of a dwelling unit.

**Exceptions:**

- ~~1.~~ Uninhabitable attics, crawl spaces and normally unoccupied concealed spaces that do not contain fuel-fired appliances do not require sprinklers. In uninhabitable attics, crawl spaces and normally unoccupied concealed spaces that contain fuel-fired equipment, a sprinkler shall be installed above the equipment; however, sprinklers shall not be required in the remainder of the space.
- ~~2.~~ ~~Clothes closets, linen closets and pantries no exceeding 24 square feet (2.2 m<sup>2</sup>) in area, with the smallest dimension not greater than 3 feet (915 mm) and having wall and ceiling surfaces of gypsum board.~~
- ~~3.~~ ~~Bathrooms not more than 55 square feet (5.1 m<sup>2</sup>) in area.~~
- ~~4.~~ ~~Garages; carports; exterior porches; unheated entry areas, such as mud rooms, that are adjacent to an exterior door; and similar areas.~~

## 8. Background information on amendment.

Local government residential amendments submitted to the Council for approval should be based on:

- (1) Climatic conditions unique to the jurisdiction.
- (2) Geologic or seismic conditions unique to the jurisdiction.
- (3) Environmental impacts, such as noise, dust, etc., unique to the jurisdiction.
- (4) Life, health or safety conditions unique to the jurisdiction.
- (5) Other special conditions unique to the jurisdiction.

The Airway Heights Fire Department is a combination (career and volunteer) department that responds out of a single fire station to more than 2,400 calls for service annually. Often times, we are dispatched to respond to two and three calls for service at the same time, requiring the assistance of neighboring fire departments to respond into our city to assist in emergencies and adding additional minutes to response times to reach those in need of fire and medical services.

Automatic residential fire sprinkler systems are installed in apartment buildings in Airway Heights. The Airway Heights Fire Department responds to several fires a year in residential units contained in these apartment buildings. These fires typically originate in the kitchen area, bedroom area or on the exterior balcony/patio. In all of these fires, fire sprinklers have activated and either fully extinguished the fire or kept the fire small enough that firefighters have been able to extinguish the fire with a fire extinguisher. There has not been a single fatality reported in any of our apartment buildings because of the installation and operation of fire sprinklers in these residential buildings.

The Airway Heights Fire Department also responds to several fires a year in one- and two-family homes that have resulted in fire fatalities. One- and two-family homes in Airway Heights are not equipped with automatic residential fire sprinkler systems; however, the Airway Heights Fire Department hopes to change that statistic and prevent any future fire related fatalities from occurring in new one- and two-family homes.

Several local jurisdictions in Washington have previously adopted ordinances requiring the installation of automatic residential fire sprinkler systems in **one- and two-family dwellings** within their respective jurisdictions. These jurisdictions include: City of Bonney Lake, City of Camas, City of Mercer Island, City of Olympia, City of Redmond, and City of Washougal.

Several local jurisdictions in Washington have previously adopted ordinances requiring the installation of automatic residential fire sprinkler systems in **accessory dwelling units (ADUs)** within their respective jurisdictions. These jurisdictions include: City of Camas, City of Olympia, City of Redmond, and City of Washougal.

The adoption of their respective ordinances has previously been presented to the Washington State Building Code Council (Council) for review and have been approved by the Council to be adopted in the respective jurisdictions. The City of Airway Heights proposes local code amendments to the 2021 International Residential Code, as adopted by the State of Washington, to require automatic residential fire sprinkler systems in one- and two-family dwellings, townhomes and accessory dwelling units is consistent with proposed local code amendments previously submitted to and approved by the Washington State Building Code Council.

Middle Housing Development is new to the State of Washington in 2025. RCW 36.70A.635 and RCW 36.70A.636 require the City of Airway Heights to allow two accessory dwelling units per lot and at least six of the nine types of middle housing types to be constructed on a lot. The City of Airway Heights has chosen townhomes, cottage housing, courtyard apartments, stacked flats, duplexes, triplexes, and fourplexes to meet these requirements. These new residential dwellings will be included the City of Airway Heights proposed local

code amendment to require the installation of automatic residential fire sprinkler systems in new construction under the 2021 International Residential Code.

The requirement by the State of Washington for the City of Airway Heights to now allow for new accessory dwelling units and/or middle housing development on new and existing lots poses significant fire response challenges for the Airway Heights Fire Department. The lack of off-street parking for the residents of two new accessory dwelling units (ADUs) allowed to be constructed on an existing lot behind an already existing one- and two-family home means that numerous additional automobiles may now be parked on the streets as our existing lot sizes and city engineering design standards will not allow for additional off-street parking. This hampers access of our fire apparatus to get to a residential structure in case of fire, whether the fire be in the existing one- and two-family home or in one of the ADUs behind the existing home. These new housing units will also be constructed to the rear of existing residential homes meaning that longer stretches of fire hose will have to be deployed in order to reach these new residential structures. Access to these new housing units may be hampered as well as we have to maneuver around the sides of and in between existing housing. These conditions will add critical time to our responses to fires in these housing units. We know that time matters to viability of human life when a fire occurs. Fires double in size every two minutes if not mitigated.

Residential structures are constructed utilizing better materials and methods than 10, 20, 30 years ago and campaigns for maintaining smoke alarms has increased awareness of the importance of fire safety among occupants of residential structures, but the contents and fire hazards found inside of residential structures have worsened over the past 10, 20, 30 years. Furniture items manufactured today are made predominately with oil-based products and produce products of combustion and generate heat release rates that create immediately dangerous to life and health (IDLH) atmospheres with temperatures reaching in excess of 1000° C in less than five minutes after initiation of a fire. We also know from scientific testing that fires double in size every two minutes. This poses an elevated risk in one- and two-family dwellings that we can mitigate with the installation of automatic residential fire sprinkler systems. Automatic residential fire sprinkler systems detect heat generation quickly in case of fire and upon activation, typically just one or two sprinklers opening and operating, will quickly reduce elevated temperatures in the area, reduce the size of the fire and minimize the productions of products of combustion. These actions are like having a firefighter on the ready inside of the home and work to ensure that the occupants can exit their dwelling and survive the fire.

## INSTRUCTIONS

1. Check the code or codes for which amendments are being proposed.
2. If only Council review and comment are requested, it is a pre-proposal amendment. If the amendment is being proposed for implementation statewide, it is a statewide amendment. If the amendment has been adopted by a local government for local implementation and enforcement, and only effects single and multifamily buildings as defined by RCW 19.27.015, it is a local government residential amendment. If the amendment has been rejected by the Council, it is for reconsideration.
3. Provide the name of the local government, organization, or individual proposing the code change.
4. Ordinance or resolution number and date official action was taken for local government residential amendment. Amendments affecting 1-4 unit residential buildings should be adopted contingent upon approval by the State Building Code Council.
5. When the application is for approval of a local amendment, it shall be signed by the Chief Executive Officer of a city or county, City Mayor, Chair of County Board of Commissioners, or County Executive.
6. Provide the name, address, and phone number of the contact person designated to work with the Council and staff to supply information on the proposed changes as needed.
7. The specific section for which an amendment is proposed should be listed. The **entire section** should be reproduced, including the proposed amendatory language.  
  
All added words should be underlined, all deleted words should be struck through. Any separate new sections added should be inserted in the appropriate place in the code in order to continue the established numbering system of the code. If more than one section is proposed for amendment or more than one page is needed for reproducing the affected section of the code, additional pages may be attached.
8. Provide background information on the code amendment to include need or reason for the amendment, as well as any other information appropriate to assist the Council in a clear understanding of the issue.
9. Mail the completed application to:

State Building Code Council  
Post Office Box 42525  
Olympia, Washington 98504-2525  
Phone: (360) 725-2966

**NOTE: REPRODUCE THIS FORM AND ADD ADDITIONAL PAGES AS NEEDED.**