



City of Olympia
Building Division Policy #01-2017
(Municipal & Fire/Building Code Interpretation)

Subject: Fire Suppression “Sprinkler” System requirements for dwellings

(International Fire Code 903.2.7)

(Olympia Municipal Code, Section 16.32.140)

The City of Olympia Community Planning and Development and Fire Departments enforce regulations related to fire protection and construction practices through the application of state adopted construction codes.

The following information was developed to assist with understanding the provisions for fire protection related to sprinkler systems and the application of these systems in residential units within the City limits of Olympia. The goal of this interpretation policy is to assist you with understanding the specific requirements of the application of fire sprinklers so that you may plan your project and apply for, and receive a permit for your residential project.

Section 903.2.7 of the International Fire Code has been amended by the City of Olympia through the Olympia Municipal Code (OMC), Section 16.32.140 which reads as follows:

16.32.140 Amendment of Section 903.2.7 of the International Fire Code

OMC Section 16.32.140 Amendment of Section 903.2.7. Section 903.2.7 of the International Fire Code is hereby amended to read as follows:

903.2.7 Group R. Except as provided in Section 903.2.7.1 below, an automatic sprinkler system installed in accordance with Section 903.3 shall be provided throughout all buildings with a Group R fire area.

903.2.7.1. Group R-3. Automatic Sprinkler System Requirements. A fully automatic residential fire sprinkler system shall be designed, installed, tested and maintained per N.F.P.A. (National Fire Protection Association) 13D, current edition, RCW 18.160 and the approval of the Fire Chief, in all Group R-3 structures (including additions and alterations to structures with existing sprinkler systems) when:

(a) The structures are constructed within subdivisions in which internal streets are required to be constructed in accordance with the provisions of Chapter 4, Standard Plan 4-2J of the Engineering Design and Development Standards, as the same were amended in December, 2006, except as provided below; and

(b) The application for subdivision approval for the subdivision in which the structure is located became vested by operation of law on or after December 1, 2006.

EXCEPTIONS:

- a. Detached carports and greenhouses

b. Sheds and auxiliary structures under 200 square feet and not used for human habitation.

Questions have been asked related to what the exacting requirements of this section means to any structure interpreted to be a single residential unit; specifically when a structure must have a sprinkler system installed. The list of structures requiring sprinklers is as follows:

- New Single Family Residential Units of any size.

Exception: Temporary structures specifically designed as part of a camp that serves as a temporary shelter and is to be removed at a future date as determined by the City of Olympia.

- New Residential Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) as defined by the OMC.
- An illegally established ADU that is being converted to be recognized as a legal ADU. If attached to another structure, the ADU may require the entire structure attached or portion thereof to be sprinklered in addition to the ADU.
- A new ADU associated with the conversion of an existing detached or non-detached structure which is currently not a dwelling unit or ADU such as, but not limited to a garage or accessory structure.
- A new or existing space converted to a Residential Dwelling Unit or Residential ADU or Duplex. A unit which is attached to an existing home or a portion of a home being converted to an ADU shall have sprinkler heads placed in addition to those required within the ADU or other residential structure on the existing home interior side wall, ceiling or floor at the interface of the ADU or other Residential Unit to the home common wall, ceiling or floor. *(Consult the Olympia Fire Marshal for more specific details related to the specific location of these additional sprinkler heads).*
- Any new modular, factory-built dwelling or mobile home that is being placed onto a lot within the City of Olympia or an established mobile home or Recreation Vehicle (RV) park within the City.

Exception: The placement of a modular, factory-built or mobile home where one had previously existed on a lot and is being removed and replaced in similar kind based on square footage. *(Consult the Olympia Fire Marshal for more specific detail related to this requirement).*

- Any dwelling where the structure is being demolished and rebuilt or has been damaged by fire such that greater than 50% of the structure is being reconstructed or is defined as substantially damaged per applicable codes or as determined by the Building Official, Fire Marshal or their designated representative.

If you have any questions, please contact the Community Planning and Development Department at: (360) 753-8314 or the City of Olympia Fire Marshal at: (360) 753-8458.