

**CITY OF RICHMOND HILL  
STATE OF GEORGIA**

**AN ORDINANCE OF THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF RICHMOND HILL, GEORGIA AMENDING THE FIRE PREVENTION AND PROTECTION ORDINANCE, CHAPTER 38, ARTICLE II, SECTIONS 38-31 THROUGH SECTION 38-42; FOR THE PURPOSE OF ADDING ADDITIONAL STATE OF GEORGIA REQUIREMENTS; TO REPEAL CONFLICTING ORDINANCES; TO PROVIDE FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.**

**ARTICLE I. - IN GENERAL**

**Sec. 38-1. - Driving over fire hose.**

No person shall drive any vehicle over fire hose except upon specific orders from the chief or other officer in charge where the hose is issued.

*(Ord. of 2-20-73, § V, art. IV)*

**Sec. 38-2. - False alarm.**

No person shall maliciously turn in or cause to be turned in a false alarm.

*(Ord. of 2-20-73, § V, art. VI)*

**Cross reference**— False alarm fine, § 50-11.

**Secs. 38-3—38-30. - Reserved.**

**ARTICLE II. - FIRE PREVENTION CODE**

**Sec. 38-31. Adoption by reference.** 

a. There is hereby adopted by the city for the purpose of prescribing rules and regulations to improve public safety by promoting the control of fire hazards; regulating the installation, use and maintenance of equipment; regulating the use of structures, premises, and open areas; providing for the abatement of fire hazards; establishing the responsibilities and procedures for code enforcement; and setting forth the standards for compliance and achievement of these objectives, that certain set of codes known as The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) National Fire Codes, to include the Life Safety Code and The International Fire Code, as modified by the State of Georgia's Rules and Regulations of the Safety Fire Commissioner Chapter 120-3-3 Rules and Regulations for the State Minimum Fire Safety Standards, and all subsequent amendments thereto, save and except such portions as are hereinafter deleted, modified or amended, of which code at least one copy is on file in the office of the city fire inspector; and the same is hereby adopted and incorporated as fully as if set out at length herein; and from the date on which this section shall take effect, the provisions thereof shall be

controlling within the limits of the city; however, should any provision of the fire prevention code as adopted hereby be in conflict with any other provisions of this Code of Ordinances, the provisions of this Code of Ordinances shall prevail.

b. The penalties for violating any section of this fire prevention code shall be as prescribed in section 38-32(o).

*(Ord. of 12-4-90, § 3-1; Ord. of 5-18-99; Ord. of 7-3-07; Ord. of 9-8-14)*

**Sec. 38-32. Bureau of fire prevention.** 

(a) The fire chief shall be responsible for the enforcement of the fire prevention code. The fire chief may detail qualified members of the fire department, as inspectors as shall from time to time be necessary. To assist in the performance of the responsibilities and duties placed upon the fire chief, a bureau of fire prevention in the fire department is hereby created. This bureau shall operate under the supervision of the fire chief. The fire chief shall designate a member of the fire department as fire marshal. The fire marshal shall be responsible for the direct administration and enforcement of the fire prevention code as may be set forth by the chief of the fire department. The fire marshal shall be appointed based on examination or other method for determining qualifications. The fire chief may also designate such number of technical inspectors as shall from time to time be authorized by the mayor. Such technical inspectors shall be selected through an examination to determine their fitness for the position. In addition, the appointed Fire Marshal shall be deputized by the State Fire Marshal's office.

(b) It shall be the duty of the Fire Marshal to enforce all laws and ordinances of the city as adopted in Sec. 38-31.

(c) The fire chief may delegate any powers or duties under this article to the fire marshal.

(d) The fire chief shall prepare instructions for the fire marshal to include all forms used in reports.

(e) The bureau of fire prevention shall investigate the cause, origin and circumstances of every fire occurring in the city by which property has been destroyed or damaged and, so far as possible, shall determine whether the fire is the result of carelessness or design. Such investigations shall begin immediately upon the occurrence of such a fire. The fire marshal shall take charge immediately of the physical evidence, shall notify the city police department and the state fire marshal to pursue the investigation of such matters if needed, and shall further cooperate with the authorities in the collection of evidence and in the prosecution of the case. Every fire shall be reported in writing to the bureau of fire prevention within two days after the occurrence of the same by the fire department officer in whose jurisdiction such a fire has occurred. Such report shall be in such a form as shall be prescribed by the fire marshal and shall contain a statement of all facts relating to the cause, origin and circumstances of such fire; the extent of the damage thereof; the insurance upon such property; and such other information as may be required, including the injury, death or rescue of persons.

(f) Before permits may be issued, the fire marshal shall inspect and approve the receptacles, processes, vehicles, buildings or storage places to be used for the conducting of business.

(g) The fire marshal shall inspect or cause to be inspected all premises on a periodic basis, and

shall make such orders as may be necessary for the enforcement of the laws and ordinances governing the same and for safeguarding of life and property from fire.

(h) Whenever any inspector shall find in any building, or upon any premises or other places, combustible or explosive matter or dangerous accumulations of rubbish or unnecessary accumulations of wastepaper, boxes, shavings, or any highly flammable materials especially liable to fire, and which is so situated as to endanger property, or shall find obstructions to or on fire escapes, stairs, passageways, doors or windows, liable to interfere with the operations of the fire department or egress of occupants in case of fire, the inspector shall order the same to be removed or remedied; and such order shall forthwith be complied with by the owner or occupant of such premises or buildings, subject to the appeals procedure provided for in the fire prevention code. Any owner or occupant failing to comply with such order within 30 days after the service of the order shall be liable to penalties prescribed in subsection (o) below. The service of any such order may be made upon the occupant of the premises to whom it is directed, either by delivering a copy of same to such occupant personally, or leaving it with any person in charge of the premises, or, in case no such person is found upon the premises, by affixing a copy thereof in a conspicuous place on the door to the entrance of the premises, or by mailing such copy by certified mail to the owner's last known post office address. Whenever it may be necessary to serve such an order upon the owner of premises, such order may be served by delivering to and leaving with the person a copy of the order, or, if the owner is absent from the jurisdiction of the officer making the order, by mailing such copy by certified mail to the owner's last known post office address. The owner of the premises shall inform the bureau of fire prevention of the fire department in writing of the corrections made on the premises.

(i) Fire inspectors are to charge a fee for any re-inspection where the previously issued violations have not been corrected after the time prescribed. Failure to pay the fee will constitute non-compliance and result in the issuance of a citation to appear in Richmond Hill Municipal Court. Fines will be as described in sub-paragraph (o) of this section. The payment for inspections and re-inspections are included in the city's revenue ordinance section I.

(j) The fire marshal shall compile and keep a record of all fires and of all the facts concerning the same, including injuries, deaths, rescue of persons, and the statistics as to the extent of such fires and the damage caused thereby, and whether such losses were covered by insurance, and if so, in what amount. Such record shall be made daily from reports made by the technical inspectors under the provisions of this article and the fire department officer appointed by the fire chief to make such records. All such records shall be public.

(k) The fire marshal shall make an annual report of the activities of the bureau of fire prevention and shall transmit this report to the Fire Chief who in turn shall include all activities in the department's annual report to mayor and council. This report shall contain all proceedings under the fire prevention code with such statistics as the fire chief may wish to include therein.

(l) The fire chief or the fire marshal shall recommend any amendments to the fire prevention code or ordinance that shall be desirable.

(m) The provision of the fire prevention code shall apply equally to both public and private property, and it shall apply to all structures and their occupancies, except as otherwise specified.

(n) This article shall be deemed an exercise of police powers of the city for the preservation and protection of the public health, peace, safety and welfare; and all the provisions of the fire prevention code shall be liberally construed for that purpose.

(o) Any person who shall violate any of the provisions of the fire prevention code; or shall fail to comply therewith; or shall violate or fail to comply with any order made there under; or shall build in violation of any details, statements, specifications or plans submitted or approved there under, or shall operate not in accordance with the provisions of any certificate, permit or approval issued there under, and from which no appeal has been taken; or who shall fail to comply with such an order as affirmed or modified by the fire marshal or by a court of competent jurisdiction within the time fixed herein shall severally for each and every violation and noncompliance, respectively, be guilty of a misdemeanor punishable by a fine of not less than \$50.00 and not more than \$500.00 or by imprisonment for not less than two days nor more than 30 days or by both such fines and imprisonment. The imposition of a penalty for any violation shall not excuse the violation, nor shall the violation be permitted to continue. All such persons shall be required to correct or remedy such violations or defects within 30 days and when not otherwise specified the application of the above penalty shall not be held to prevent the enforced removal of prohibited conditions.

*(Ord. of 12-4-90, § 3-2; Ord. of 7-3-07)*

### **Sec. 38-33. Definitions.**

The following words, terms and phrases, when used in the fire prevention code adopted in this article, shall have the meanings ascribed to them in this section, except where the context clearly indicates a different meaning:

- Bureau of fire prevention means the City of Richmond Hill Fire Department
- Corporation counsel means the city attorney.
- Fire marshal means the head of the Prevention Bureau.

*(Ord. of 12-4-90, § 3-3; Ord. of 7-3-07)*

Cross reference— **Definitions generally, § 1-2.**

### **Sec. 38-35. Fire chief and officials to cooperate with state officials.**

The fire chief and all other city officials, department heads and employees shall lend their cooperation to the state safety fire commissioner, state fire marshal, and their deputies or assistants, whenever called upon by them in the enforcement of the state safety fire law, and the rules and regulations promulgated pursuant thereto.

*(Ord. of 12-4-90, § 3-5)*

### **Sec. 38-36. Electric wires, electric power meters; authority to cut electric wires and remove electric power meters.**

The chief of the fire department and persons acting under him are authorized to cut any electric wire or remove any electric power meter deemed necessary to cut off the current at any fire, or related emergency, without expense to the city for so doing.

(Ord. of 12-4-90, § 3-6)

## **Sec. 38-37. Fire hydrants.**

(a) *Inspection and subsequent reports and repairs.* The chief of the fire department shall be responsible for the inspection, testing, servicing, painting, documentation of testing and repair of all fire hydrants in the city, such inspection to be made semiannually, and shall file a report concerning the condition of the fire hydrants with the mayor. However, if any fire hydrant is in need of immediate repair, he shall immediately notify the cities utilities department who shall take immediate action to have the hydrant repaired.

(b) The barrel of fire hydrants shall be set perpendicular to the ground with the lowest discharge at least 15 inches above the finished surface with the large discharge facing the street or closest paved driveway. Hydrants shall be located within six feet of the curb line or at a location suitable to the AHJ. A cutoff valve shall be installed between the fire hydrant and the main. Hydrants shall be installed so as the distance between hydrants does not exceed 660 feet of driving distance. Dead end streets and cul-de-sac shall have a fire hydrant installed so that the primary entrance to the most distant building is not greater than 300 feet. When new construction or modification to existing structure is made in areas of existing water mains, and hydrants separation or required fire flow does not meet requirements, construction contractors will be required to install fire hydrants to meet the requirements of **this section and the IFC.**

All Fire Hydrants installed within the city limits of Richmond Hill will be three way hydrants (2) 2.5 discharges and (1) 4.5 discharge (No two-way hydrants) fitted with a five "5" inch Storz adapter installed on the larger discharge. The adapter will be purchased and installed at the contractors / developer expense. All fire hydrants when installed by the contractor shall be silver (aluminum) in color. The bonnets of each hydrant installed shall be color-coded by the fire department to identify hydrant flow).

*(Ord. of 12-4-90, § 3-7; Ord. of 5-18-99; Ord. of 7-3-07; 09-08-14)*

## **Sec. 38-38. Obstructing fire station, apparatus, hydrant, etc.**

(a) It shall be unlawful for any person willfully or knowingly to put any trash or obstruction of any nature whatsoever in front of any fire apparatus or fire station.

(b) No person shall park any vehicle or otherwise cause any obstruction to be placed within 50 feet of the entrance to any fire station or other place where fire apparatus is stored, or within ten feet of any fire hydrant or cistern.

*(Ord. of 2-20-73, § V, art. V; Ord. of 12-4-90, § 3-8)*

### **Sec. 38-39. Setting fires.**

(a) Outdoor burning of natural vegetative yard debris shall be conducted within the guidelines of the Georgia Forestry Commission. The Fire Chief or Fire Marshal shall have the full authority to declare any burning activity a nuisance, regardless of the permit status, and may order the fire to be extinguished.

(b) *Leaving unattended.* No person shall leave a fire that has been lawfully started out-of-doors while the same is still burning but shall remain in the vicinity of the fire until it has become extinguished. The fire shall be under observation at all times while it is burning by the person starting the same or someone specifically designated to do so. Tools needed to control the fire must be with the person attending the fire at all times. A charged water hose that will reach beyond the burning pile shall be maintained at all times while burning is conducted. All fires shall be extinguished before sunset of the day of burning.

(c) *Prohibited as to certain materials.* No material or substance other than natural vegetative debris may be burned within the city.

(d) *Contractors' equipment permits.* Contractors involved in the burning of machine piled natural vegetation as the result of land clearing operations shall abide by the Georgia Forestry Commission's regulations regarding the use of an Air Curtain Destructor. Permits must be obtained through the Georgia Forestry Commission for each day that the burning occurs.

(e) *Responsibility for damages.* All contractors or persons shall be held responsible for any damages caused by burning debris, trees, stumps, brush, lumber or trash. The city or the fire department shall not be held liable for any damages caused by any permitted burning.

*(Ord. of 12-4-90, § 3-9; Ord. of 5-18-99)*

(f) Barbeque Grills For other than one- and two-family dwellings, no hibachi, gas-fired grill, charcoal grill, or other similar devices used for cooking, heating, or any other purpose, shall be used or kindled on any balcony or under any overhanging portion or within 10 ft (3 m) of any structure. Listed electric ranges, grills, or similar electrical apparatus shall be permitted.

(g) Reserved

(h) Hazardous Material Routes. The provisions shall apply to all streets, avenues, highways, roadways, alleys or other public right-of-ways within the city except those specified within this section where transportation of hazardous materials shall be allowed. Transportation of hazardous materials shall be allowed upon the following streets, avenues, highways or roadways: Georgia US 17 & 144 are designated MR's for the City of Richmond Hill.

### **(I) Weeds, vegetation, & Trash**

(a) Growth restrictions.

(1) It shall be unlawful for any person to allow any lot, tract, parcel of land or portion thereof, occupied or unoccupied, improved or unimproved, to allow uncultivated grass, weeds, or brush to grow to a height greater than 12 inches on any lot, tract, or parcel of land, or portion thereof.

Sec. 38-40. Fire lanes. 

(a) It shall be an unlawful act for any person to park or block any fire lane in the city either by traffic or by other means.

(b) Fire lanes may be occupied by vendors, between the hours of 5:00 a.m. and 10:00 a.m., for the purpose of the unloading of wares, provided that signs have been posted stating the times mentioned above. Signs shall be the responsibility of the storeowner.

*(Ord. of 12-4-90, § 3-10)*

**Editor's note—**

An ordinance of May 18, 1999, § 5, amended the Code by repealing former § 38-41 in its entirety. Former § 38-41 pertained to education for employees of day care centers/group homes, and derived from an ordinance of December 4, 1990.

Sec. 38-42. Fire protection requirements. 

(a) Fire protection requirements for all buildings shall be in accordance with the Georgia Rules and Regulations for the State Minimum Fire Safety Standards (Subject 120-3-3) except as required below.

(1) Class I Standpipe systems shall be installed in accordance with International Building Code Section 905 and NFPA 14 in all new hotels, dormitories, or similar occupancies which are three stories or greater in height, and certain large footprint buildings of any occupancy type where fire department pre-connect hoses cannot reach all areas, or as otherwise required by the AHJ.

(2) Property owners will be required to purchase a “Knox Box” for each sprinkler control room and fire alarm control room and provide entry keys for each room to be placed in boxes. A Knox Switch shall be installed at any gate restricting vehicular traffic. Knox purchases are to be made online through the Knox Company’s website for the Richmond Hill Fire Department. Installation of Knox Boxes and Switches will be the contractor's responsibility prior to completion for new and existing construction.

(3) Fire department connections (FDC’s) shall be equipped with a 5-inch Storz connection.

(b) Fire separation distances shall be in accordance with the Georgia State Minimum Standard Codes for Construction as adopted and amended by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs.

(c) Permits for all fire protection systems shall be obtained through the Richmond Hill Planning

& Zoning Office.

(d) All Contractors, insurance companies, building owners or occupants shall notify the fire department prior to performing any work, repair, test, or maintenance of any fire protection system inside the city. All sprinkler contractors shall be licensed by the state to perform any sprinkler work. All sprinkler plans for new installation or modification to existing systems must be approved prior to starting work.

(e) If this section of the code in any way conflicts with the provisions in the Georgia Rules and Regulations for the State Minimum Fire Safety Standards, the more restrictive shall apply.

(f) Fire suppression system water supply and maintenance.

(1) Fire suppression systems shall be serviced by a minimum six-inch water main and have a fire hydrant within 100 feet of the fire department connection if wall mounted or 50 feet if freestanding. If the suppression system and the fire hydrant are on the same water main then minimum size required for the water main is eight inches. Exception: modified systems or residential systems that use domestic water supplies.

(2) Water mains that service fire hydrants will be a minimum of eight inches in diameter.

(3) Dead end water mains that exceed 300 feet in length will be a minimum of eight inches in diameter. Dead end water mains that exceed 600 feet in length will be a minimum of ten inches in diameter. Exception: Where plans can be shown for future development that will continue the water main to tie to an existing water main.

(4) New water mains installed are required to extend to the farthest lot lines of that phase of development or to the last lot line of the property owned by the developer. If mains terminate 300 feet or less from an existing water main, the developer will be required to connect to the existing water main to loop the system.

*(Ord. of 7-3-07; Ord. of 9-18-07)*

### **Sec. 38-43. Fireworks.**

(a) Fireworks will be stored and displayed IAW Georgia State Fire Commissioner's Regulations and Georgia State Laws.

(b) Firework displays must be approved by the mayor and council and the city fire chief. A fee for Fire Works Display shall be charged for inspection of site and fire apparatus stand-by.  
(See Cites revenue ordinance)

(c) Indoor pyrotechnics use is prohibited in the City of Richmond Hill.

*(Ord. of 7-3-07)*

### **Secs. 38-44—38-75. Reserved.**

## ARTICLE III. - VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS

- Sec. 38-78. - Membership.
- Sec. 38-79. - Equipment.
- Sec. 38-80. - Identification of members; rights-of-way when responding to alarm; insignia.
- Sec. 38-81. - Mutual aid agreements.
- Sec. 38-82. - Penalty.
- Sec. 38-83. - Special police powers for enforcement purposes.
- Sec. 38-84. - Duties of chief of police, peace officers.

### **Sec. 38-78. - Membership.**

(a) The membership of the department shall consist of such persons as may be appointed by the chief and shall be able-bodied citizens residing within the 20th Congressional District.

(b) Any member of the department may be suspended or discharged from the department by the chief at any time he may deem such action necessary for the good of the department.

*(Ord. of 2-20-73, § III)*

### **Sec. 38-79. - Equipment.**

(a) All volunteer firefighters shall be issued PPE equipment after their six month with the department)

(b) All equipment issued shall be turned in when a volunteer has been in active for a period of 90 days or more or does not accumulate enough training hours annually to remain state certified).

(e) No person shall use any fire apparatus or equipment for any private purpose, nor shall any person willfully and without proper authority take away or conceal any article used in any way by the department.

(f) Volunteer Firefighters shall not enter any place where fire apparatus is housed or handle any apparatus or equipment unless accompanied by or having the special permission from the Officer on Duty

*(Ord. of 2-20-73, § IV)*

### **Sec. 38-80- Identification of members; rights-of-way when responding to alarm; insignia.**

(a) Volunteer Firefighters shall be issued a badge and/or identification card designating his rank.

(b) Each member of the department driving a car shall be issued a suitable insignia to be attached to his car.

- **Sec. 38-81. - Mutual aid agreements.**

Response to a call for assistance under the mutual aid agreements with adjacent fire departments can only be authorized by the fire chief, mayor, mayor pro tem, or City Manager by a direct contact from the Senior Fire Official of the fire department or mayor of the city requesting such assistance.

*(Ord. of 2-20-73, § V, arts. I—III)*

- **Sec. 38-82. - Penalty.**

Any person violating the provisions of this article shall, upon conviction, be punished as provided in section 1-12.

*(Ord. of 2-20-73, § VI, art. I)*

- **Sec. 38-83. - Special police powers for enforcement purposes.**

All regularly appointed members of the department are hereby given special police powers for the purpose of enforcing the provisions of this article.

*(Ord. of 2-20-73, § VI, art. II)*

- **Sec. 38-84. - Duties of chief of police, peace officers.**

It is hereby made the special duty of the chief of police and/or other peace officers who may be on duty and available for fire duty, to respond to all fire alarms and assist the department in the protection of life and property, in regulating traffic, maintaining order, and in enforcing observance of this article.

*(Ord. of 2-20-73, § VI, art. III)*

Section 2. All ordinances or parts of ordinance in conflict with this ordinance are, to the extent of such conflict, hereby repealed.

Section 3. This ordinance shall be effective upon its adoption.

SO ORDAINED, this \_\_11\_\_ of \_\_June\_\_, 2024.