

ORDINANCE NO. 3951



AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF FARMERS BRANCH, TEXAS, REPEALING IN ITS ENTIRETY CITY OF FARMERS BRANCH ORDINANCE NO. 3611, CODIFIED AS CHAPTER 22 (BUILDINGS AND BUILDING REGULATIONS) ARTICLE VI (MECHANICAL STANDARDS); AND ADOPTING THE 2024 EDITION OF THE INTERNATIONAL MECHANICAL CODE, WITH CERTAIN ADDITIONS, DELETIONS, AND AMENDMENTS, AS THE MECHANICAL CODE OF THE CITY OF FARMERS BRANCH; PROVIDING A REPEALER CLAUSE, SEVERABILITY CLAUSE, A SAVINGS CLAUSE, A PENALTY CLAUSE; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

WHEREAS, the International Code Council (ICC) has developed a set of comprehensive and coordinated national model construction codes, including the International Mechanical Code; and

WHEREAS, since the 1970s, the City of Farmers Branch has been involved throughout the development process of the ICC, specifically the International Mechanical Code, in conjunction with the North Texas Chapter of the International Code Council, Regional Codes Coordinating Committee of North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG), and the International Conference of Building Officials (ICBO); and

WHEREAS, on December 12, 2019, by Ordinance No. 3611, the City Council for the City of Farmers Branch established a Mechanical Code to reflect and provided regulations thereunder, and such Ordinances were codified as Chapter 22 (Buildings and Building Regulations) Article VI (Mechanical Code) of the City's Code of Ordinances; and

WHEREAS, the 2024 International Mechanical Code, a publication of the ICC, has been reviewed by city staff and the NCTCOG for necessary updates and amendments; and

WHEREAS, the City Council of the City of Farmers Branch has determined that it is in the best interest of the citizens of the City of Farmers Branch to adopt the 2024 Edition of the International Mechanical Code, and the additions, deletions, and amendments thereto, as the minimum standards for the design and installation of mechanical systems, appliances, appliance venting, duct and ventilation systems, combustion air provisions, hydronic systems and solar systems within the City limits, as set forth herein, and to adopt the Mechanical Code in order to account for unique local practices and /or conditions relating to the same within the City;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF FARMERS BRANCH, TEXAS, THAT:

SECTION 1. Ordinance No. 3611 duly passed and approved by the City Council of the City of Farmers Branch on December 12, 2019, is hereby repealed in its entirety.

SECTION 2. A new Chapter 22 (Buildings and Building Regulations) Article VI (Mechanical Standards) is hereby adopted and shall read in its entirety as follows:

ARTICLE VI. MECHANICAL STANDARDS

Sec. 22 -191. Adoption of International Mechanical Code; purpose.

The 2024 Edition of the International Mechanical Code, as published by the International Code Council and as amended pursuant to Sec. 22-191 is hereby adopted. Copies of the Mechanical Code are on file in the office of the city secretary for permanent record and inspection and are incorporated into this section as if fully set forth herein. The city manager or designee is hereby authorized and directed to enforce all provisions of the Mechanical Code. For purposes of this Article, the phrase “Mechanical Code” means collectively (i) the 2024 Edition international Mechanical Code, as published by the International Code Council and (ii) the local amendments adopted pursuant to Sec. 22-192.

Sec 22-192. Local Amendments to the International Mechanical Code: For purposes of enforcement of the provisions of the Mechanical Code within the incorporated limits of the City, the following deletions, additions, and amendments to the 2024 Edition of the International Mechanical Code are hereby approved and amended as follows:

Section 102.8; change to read as follows:

102.8 Referenced Codes and Standards. The codes and standards referenced herein shall be those that are listed in Chapter 15 and such codes and standards, when specifically adopted, shall be considered part of the requirements of this code to the prescribed extent of each such reference and as further regulated in Sections 102.8.1 and 102.8.2.

Whenever amendments have been adopted to the referenced codes and standards, each reference to said code and standard shall be considered to reference the adopted amendments. Any reference to NFPA 70 shall mean the National Electrical Code as adopted.

Exception: Where enforcement of a code provision would violate the conditions of the listing of the equipment or appliance, the conditions of the listing and the manufacturer’s installation instruction shall apply.

Section 202; add definition of Effective Dispersal Volume Charge as follows:

Effective Dispersal Volume Charge (EDVC). The maximum refrigerant charge permitted for an effective dispersal volume.

Section 202; add definition of Refrigerant Detection System as follows:

Refrigerant Detection System - The product safety standard addresses both refrigerant detection systems and leak detection systems. In the product safety standard, a leak detection system is defined as “a sensing system which responds to refrigerant leaking from a refrigerating system.” A leak detection system may include gas sensing, ultrasonic, or other such methods that meet the standards UL 60335-2-40/CSA C22.2 No. 60335-2-40 or UL 60335-2-89/CSA C22.2 No. 60335-2-89. [ASHRAE 15-2022: 3.1]

Section 202; add definition of Refrigerant Detector as follows:

Refrigerant Detector - “Refrigerant sensor” is another term for refrigerant detector. A refrigerant sensor is a sensing element combined with electronic circuitry that provides a digital output or an analog signal output that corresponds to the sensed refrigerant gas concentration. [ASHRAE 15-2022: 3.1]

Section 306.3; change to read as follows:

306.3 Appliances in attics. Attics containing appliances shall be provided with an opening and unobstructed passageway large enough to allow removal of the largest appliance. The passageway shall be not less than 30 inches (762 mm) high and 22 inches (559 mm) wide and to more than 20 feet (6096 mm) in length measured along the centerline of the passageway from the opening to the appliance. The passageway shall have continuous solid flooring not less than 24 inches (610 mm) wide. A level service space not less than 30 inches (762 mm) deep and 30 inches (762 mm) wide shall be present at the front or service side of the appliance. The clear access opening dimensions shall be not less than 20 inches by 30 inches (508 mm by 762 mm), and large enough to allow removal of the largest appliance. As a minimum, access to the attic space shall be provided by one of the following:

1. A permanent Stair.
2. A pull-down stair with a minimum 300 lb (136 kg) capacity.
3. An access door from an upper floor level.

Exceptions:

1. The passageway and level service space are not required where the appliance is capable of being serviced and removed through the required opening with the approval of the code official.
2. Where the passageway is unobstructed and not less than 6 feet (1829 mm) high and 22 inches (559 mm) wide for its entire length, the passageway shall be not greater than 50 feet (15,250 mm) in length.

Section 306.5.1; change to read as follows:

306.5.1 Sloped Roofs. Where appliances, equipment, fans or other components

that require service are installed on a roof having a slope of 3 units vertical in 12 units horizontal (25-percent slope) or greater and having an edge more than 30 inches (762 mm) above grade at such edge, a catwalk at least 16 inches in width with substantial cleats spaced not more than 16 inches apart shall be provided from the roof access to a level platform at the appliance. The level platform shall be provided on each side of the appliance or equipment to which access is required for service, repair or maintenance. The platform shall be not less than 30 inches (762 mm) in any dimension and shall be provided with guards. The guards shall extend not less than 42 inches (1067 mm) above the platform, shall be constructed so as to prevent the passage of a 21-inch-diameter (533 mm) sphere and shall comply with the loading requirements for guards specified in the International Building Code...{remainder of text unchanged}.

Section 501.3; add an exception to read as follows:

501.3 Exhaust Discharge. The air removed by every mechanical exhaust system shall be discharged outdoors at a point where it will not cause a public nuisance and not less than the distances specified in Section 501.3.1. The air shall be discharged to a location from which it cannot again be readily drawn in by a ventilating system. Air shall not be exhausted into an attic, crawl space, or be directed onto walkways.

Exceptions:

1. Whole-house ventilation-type attic fans shall be permitted to discharge into the attic space of dwelling units having private attics.
2. Commercial cooking recirculating systems.
3. Where installed in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions and where mechanical or natural ventilation is otherwise provided in accordance with Chapter 4, listed and labeled domestic ductless range hoods shall not be required to discharge to the outdoors.
4. Toilet room exhaust ducts may terminate in a warehouse or shop area when infiltration of outside air is present.

Section 1104.2 Machinery Room; add an exception to read as follows:

Exception

3. Machinery Rooms are not required when in compliance with ASHRAE 15 Section 7.4.

Section 1104.3.1.1 Group A2L High-Probability Systems. Add this section to read:

1104.3.1.1 Group A2L High-Probability Systems. High-probability systems using Group A2L refrigerants shall comply with ASHRAE 15 section 7.6.

Section 1109.2.5 Refrigerant pipe shafts. Change to read: [Existing text to remain]

Exceptions:

1. [Existing text to remain]
2. Piping in a direct refrigeration system where the refrigerant quantity does not exceed the limits of Table 1103.1 for the smallest occupied space through which the piping passes.
3. [Existing text to remain]

SECTION 3. All provisions of the Code of Ordinances of the City of Farmers Branch in conflict with the provisions of this Ordinance are hereby repealed, and all other provisions of the Code of Ordinances of the City of Farmers Branch, not in conflict with the provisions of this Ordinance, shall remain in full force and effect.

SECTION 4. It is the intention of the City Council that this Ordinance, and every provision thereof, shall be considered severable, and the invalidity or unconstitutionality of any section, clause, provision, or portion of this Ordinance shall not affect the validity or constitutionality of any other portion of this Ordinance.

SECTION 5. The repeal of any Ordinance or part of Ordinances effectuated by the enactment of this Ordinance shall not be construed as abandoning any action now pending under or by virtue of such Ordinance or as discontinuing, abating, modifying or altering any penalty accruing or to accrue, or as affecting any rights of the municipality under any section or provisions of any Ordinances at the time of passage of this Ordinance.

SECTION 6. Any violation of the provisions or terms of this ordinance shall be subject to the same penalty as provided in the Code of Ordinances of the City of Farmers Branch as heretofore amended and, upon conviction, shall be punished by a fine not to exceed the sum of Two Thousand Dollars (\$2,000.00). Every day a violation continues shall constitute a separate offense.

SECTION 7. This Ordinance shall take effect on October 1, 2025, following the passage of this Ordinance, the publication of the caption hereof as the law and charter in such case provide.

**PASSED AND APPROVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF
FARMERS BRANCH, TEXAS, THIS 19th DAY OF AUGUST, 2025.**

ATTEST:

APPROVED:

Erin Flores, City Secretary

Terry Lynne, Mayor

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

Nicole Corr, City Attorney
[vf.07.20.25]