

ORDINANCE 3282

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING TITLE 12, CHAPTER 5, AND TITLE 15, CHAPTER 9 OF THE OFFICIAL CODE OF THE CITY OF GREAT FALLS (OCCGF) PERTAINING TO PARADES, PROCESSIONS, FUN RUNS AND STREET CLOSURES AND THE FIRE CODE

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WHEREAS, the OCCGF was established to promote public health, safety and welfare; and

WHEREAS, the Great Falls Fire Rescue (GFFR) operates under the current version of the International Fire Code (IFC); and

WHEREAS, upon review of the most current version of the IFC, it was determined that amendments to the fire code and ordinances related to fireworks in the OCCGF were necessary for clarity; and

WHEREAS, GFFR and the Legal Department have reviewed and proposed amendments to OCCGF Title 12, Chapter 5, and Title 15, Chapter 9 to clarify fire code requirements and establish clear processes for obtaining permits for fire alarms, public displays of fireworks and parades; and

WHEREAS, the proposed amendments to Title 12, Chapter 5 are intended to:

- Clarify for the public that parade permits will now be administered by GFFR and not the Park and Recreation Department; and

WHEREAS, the proposed amendments to Title 15, Chapter 9 are intended to:

- Adopt current versions of the IFC and additional sections not adopted by the State of Montana;
- Clarify language on the duties of the Fire Prevention Bureau and preventative inspections;
- Give authority to Fire Chief to initiate burn bans within the City;
- Establish requirements for burn and special events permits;
- Clarify existing fire alarm permit requirements;
- Clarify requirement for Knox boxes for new construction that have life safety systems;
- Prohibit blasting and tenting within the City;
- Establish process for GFFR to charge fees for responses to nuisance structures; and

WHEREAS, the City Commission finds that these amendments are consistent with the City's goals of encouraging fire safety and public safety throughout the community.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COMMISSION OF THE
CITY OF GREAT FALLS, MONTANA:**

- Section 1. That Title 12, Chapter 5 of the OCCGF be amended as depicted in **Exhibit “A”** attached hereto, which removes any language indicated by a strike-out and adds language which is bolded;
- Section 2. That Title 15, Chapter 9 of the OCCGF be amended as depicted in **Exhibit “B”** attached hereto, which removes any language indicated by a strike-out and adds language which is bolded;
- Section 3. This ordinance shall be in full force and effect thirty (30) days after second reading and final adoption by the City Commission.

APPROVED by the City Commission of the City of Great Falls, Montana on first reading December 2, 2025.

ADOPTED by the City Commission of the City of Great Falls, Montana on second reading December 16, 2025.

Cory Reeves, Mayor

ATTEST:

Lisa Kunz, City Clerk

(Seal of the City)

APPROVED FOR LEGAL CONTENT:

David Dennis, City Attorney

State of Montana)
County of Cascade : ss
City of Great Falls)

I, Lisa Kunz, City Clerk of the City of Great Falls, Montana, do certify that I did post as required by law and as prescribed and directed by the Commission, Ordinance 3282 on the Great Falls Civic Center posting board and the Great Falls City website.

Lisa Kunz, City Clerk

(CITY SEAL)

Title 12 - STREETS, SIDEWALKS, TREES, AND SHRUBBERY
Chapter 5 PARADES, PROCESSIONS, FUN RUNS AND STREET CLOSURES

Chapter 5 PARADES, PROCESSIONS, FUN RUNS AND STREET CLOSURES

Sections:

12.5.010 Definitions.

The following words and phrases, when used in this chapter, shall have the following meanings:

- A. "Procession" means any march, parade, motorcade, fun run, assembly to support a cause, or other event, consisting of people, animals, vehicles, or combination thereof, except funeral processions, upon any public street, sidewalk or alley, which does not comply with normal and usual traffic regulations and controls and is expressly designed for the safety and involvement of the public as well as the participants, which is approved by the City under the provisions of this chapter.
- B. "Motorcade" means an organized procession containing twenty-five (25) or more vehicles, except funeral processions, upon any public street, sidewalk or alley.
- C. "Procession Route" means the route of travel of any parade, march, motorcade, fun run, or other procession, to include the assembly, staging and disbanding areas.
- D. "Street" includes all streets, highways, avenues, lanes, alleys, courts, places, squares, curbs, or other public ways in this City which have been or may hereafter be dedicated and open to public use, or such other public property so designated in any law of the State.

(Ord. 3170, 2018)

12.5.020 Established and designated procession routes.

Processions are to proceed as follows:

- 1. Procession to stage on Park Drive South, in designated areas, and proceed north past the east side of the Police Department onto 1st Avenue South, then east to Park Drive, then North to Central, then east to 8th Street, disbanding on the north and/or south side of Central Avenue;
- 2. Procession to stage on the north and/or south side of Central Avenue at 8th Street and proceed west on Central Avenue to Park Drive, then south to 1st Avenue South, then west until disbanding; or
- 3. Any alternate route approved and designated at the discretion of the City Manager or designee.

(Ord. 3170, 2018)

12.5.030 Public conduct during processions.

- A. No person shall knowingly or purposely:
 - 1. Participate in any procession conducted in violation of any of the terms of the permit;
 - 2. Join or participate in any permitted procession without the consent of the permittee; and/or
 - 3. Interfere in any manner with the procession's progress or orderly conduct.

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- B. No person shall hamper, obstruct, impede, or interfere with any procession or with any person, vehicle or animal participating or used in a procession.
 - C. No driver of a vehicle shall drive between the vehicles or persons comprising a procession when such vehicles or persons are in motion and are traveling along a procession route. Nothing in this section shall prohibit an emergency vehicle from interrupting a procession for the purpose of responding to an emergency.
 - D. No person shall view, watch or observe the procession from the street or beyond the sidewalk curb or beyond the imaginary curb line that, if it existed, would extend through the intersection from corner to corner of any street perpendicular to the procession route.
 - E. No vehicle larger than an automobile or pickup truck shall park along the procession route during the procession.
 - F. The City Manager, or designee, shall have the authority, when reasonably necessary, to prohibit parking of vehicles along a procession route. Signs shall be posted to such effect and it shall be unlawful for any person to park or leave unattended any vehicle in violation thereof. The applicant shall be responsible for posting and removing of signs.

(Ord. 3170, 2018)

12.5.040 Participants' conduct during processions.

- A. It is unlawful for any persons in a procession to deviate from the established or approved procession route.
- B. No participant in a procession shall throw, cast, or drop candy, trinkets, or any other articles. A violation of this provision shall be a misdemeanor punishable by a fine not to exceed five hundred dollars (\$500.00). This does not prohibit a walking procession participant from handing the candy or other articles directly to the spectators.
- C. No participant in a procession shall entice, lure, or attempt to entice or lure, any spectator to leave the designated viewing area. A violation of this provision shall be a misdemeanor punishable by a fine not to exceed five hundred dollars (\$500.00).
- D. No participant in a procession shall operate any vehicle in a careless manner as to endanger the safety and welfare of other procession participants or spectators.
- E. As a condition to the permit, each permittee shall provide persons, horses with riders, or persons in small motorized vehicles, such as a golf cart, to travel on both sides of any procession vehicle which is larger than an automobile or pickup.
- F. Any person operating a motor vehicle in a procession shall possess a valid driver's license. All participants in the procession shall follow all applicable motor vehicle laws and/or regulations.

(Ord. 3170, 2018)

12.5.050 Application - contents.

- A. Any person, firm, corporation, or other entity desiring to conduct a procession, as defined in OCCGF 12.5.010, shall apply to the ~~Park and Recreation Department~~ **Great Falls Fire Rescue Department** for a permit at least forty-five (45) calendar days in advance of the event date and comply with the provisions set forth in such permit. The application shall designate the intended route, date and time of the event. In the City Manager or designee's discretion, and for good cause shown, applications may be accepted less than forty-five (45) calendar days in advance of the event date.

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- B. ~~Park and Recreation Department~~ **The Great Falls Fire Rescue Department Chief (Fire Chief), or designee,** may approve, revise, or deny the application in consideration of the following factors:
1. Promotion of the community as a whole;
 2. Provision of positive civic and economic benefit;
 3. Impact on neighboring business and properties;
 4. Impact on public uses, safety, and services;
 5. Consideration of frequency of closures;
 6. Consideration of the event's financial impact; and
 7. The applicant's performance under prior issued permits.
- C. Following approval from the City, the applicant will be responsible for notification of news media, and the associated costs of said notice, in order to inform the public of the date, time and procession route.
- D. The applicant will designate a person who can be contacted by the City to coordinate plans for the procession.
- E. The procession shall not deviate from the designated route, time, or date approved in the permit. If, for any reason, the event is postponed or canceled, the applicant shall immediately notify the City.
- F. Processions shall be scheduled between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 12:00 p.m. Special requests will be considered for processions at other times, provided arrangements can be made which, in the City's determination, will not impede normal traffic conditions or inhibit business in the downtown area.
- G. The applicant will be responsible for placing and removing barricades on the designated procession route side of the nearest designated alleys and streets no earlier than thirty (30) minutes prior to the start of the procession and, in no case, longer than fifteen (15) minutes following the end of the procession. Barricades may be available at the Park and Recreation Department and may be rented subject to a fee set by City Commission resolution. It will be the responsibility of the applicant to pick up from and return to the Park and Recreation Department all barricades used, and to contact the Park and Recreation Director or designee, at least fourteen (14) calendar days in advance to discuss a barricading plan acceptable to the City.
- H. No sales or solicitations will be permitted by procession participants without proper licensing in advance.
- I. Applicants or organizations sponsoring processions will be required to remove all trash, paper and litter from the streets and sidewalks. Street cleaning arrangements must be made with the Public Works Street Division at least fourteen (14) calendar days before the event date.
- J. The Police Department will provide one (1) vehicle to escort the procession. All other traffic and crowd control must be provided by the sponsoring organizations and, in no case, be less than two (2) people for each block of procession length.
- K. The applicant shall indemnify, defend and hold harmless the City from any and all claims, damages, losses and expenses arising from the procession or created by any of the participants. The applicant shall be required to carry insurance for comprehensive general liability, automobile liability and designated premises in the amount of one million dollars (\$1,000,000.00) per occurrence and two million dollars (\$2,000,000.00) aggregate, and list the City as an additional named insured under the policy. Documentation of such insurance must be provided to the City at least 72 hours prior to the event.
- L. If determined necessary by the City, considering the factors listed in B. above, or due to the type, length, time or date of the procession, additional provisions and safeguards may be required as conditions of the permit.

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- M. Failure to comply with the provisions of this chapter and other permit requirements will be cause for rejection of future procession permits requested by the applicant.
 - N. The procession organizer must submit with the permit request information as to how property owners, tenants, and/or business owners along the procession route will be notified of the procession, and provide verification of such notice to the City.
 - O. If the application for a procession permit is denied or revised in a way which is unacceptable to the applicant, the applicant may appeal the decision in writing to the City Manager within fifteen (15) calendar days of the denial or reversal. The City Manager or designee shall review the application and uphold, reverse, or revise the decision on the application within ten (10) calendar days. If applicant makes no such appeal, the ~~Park and Recreation Department's~~ **determination of the Fire Chief, or designee,** will stand.
 - P. If the City Manager affirms or revises the determination of the application for a procession permit, the applicant may appeal the decision in writing within fifteen (15) calendar days of the date of affirmation or revision to the City Commission, which shall review the application in a public meeting and uphold, reverse, or revise the decision on the application within ten (10) calendar days of the hearing. If applicant makes no such appeal, the City Manager's determination will stand.
 - Q. Unless otherwise specified in this chapter, appeals to the City Commission of the denial, revocation, or suspension of licenses or permits under this chapter shall comply with the provisions of OCCGF 1.2.040.

(Ord. 3282, 2025; Ord. 3170, 2018)

12.5.060 Street closure permits for public events and block parties.

Persons or entities who organize events which require the temporary closure of a public street must comply with the provisions of OCCGF Title 9.

(Ord. 3170, 2018)

Title 15 - BUILDINGS AND CONSTRUCTION
Chapter 9 FIRE CODE

Chapter 9 FIRE CODE

Sections:

15.9.010 Fire Chief authority.

- A. In conjunction with Title 8, Chapter 48 of the Official Code of the City of Great Falls (OCCGF) and any other provision of this code, the Great Falls Fire Rescue Department Chief (Fire Chief) is authorized to issue a burn ban and may prohibit all fires and burning of combustibles including but not limited to all open burning, fire pits, chimineas, charcoal grills, fireworks, outdoor fire places, and similar devices within the city limits.
- B. In determining to implement a burn ban, the Fire Chief may consider current climate conditions including drought, weather forecast, and available fire resources, among other factors. Any burn ban issued by the Fire Chief may take immediate effect without implementing further actions and will remain in effect until rescinded by the Fire Chief.

(Ord. 3282, 2025)

15.9.010020 International Fire Code—adoption.

- ~~A. The City of Great Falls hereby adopts the most currently Montana state adopted International Fire Code (IFC) and appendices, as may be administratively amended by the Great Falls Fire Rescue Department (GFFR).~~
- ~~B. A copy of the IFC, as may be amended, is available for inspection in the City Clerk's office and the GFFR Fire Marshall's office.~~
- ~~C. Copies of the IFC may also be obtained from the International Code Council.~~
- A. The City of Great Falls hereby adopts various sections of the most current edition of the International Fire Code (IFC) as adopted by the Fire Prevention and Investigation Bureau of the Montana Department of Justice, as set out in the Administrative Rules of Montana (ARMs), and as amended from time to time. These ARMs are adopted herein by reference and incorporated in this Title as set forth in full, except as may be noted in this Chapter, by future administrative order, or by any regulations not applicable to local government jurisdictions.
- B. The City of Great Falls hereby adopts, and incorporates herein, the following section(s) of the IFC not adopted by the Fire Prevention and Investigation Bureau of the Montana Department of Justice.
 - 1. Section 105, Permits
 - a. Construction Permits will not be adopted by the IFC.; construction permits will be subject to the permitting requirements of the Official Code of the City of Great Falls (OCCGF).
 - b. Notwithstanding any other provisions of the OCCGF, only the following operational permits, and no others, are adopted:
 - i. 105.5.34 Open burning (exception: recreational fires)
 - 2. Appendix B, Fire Flows
 - 3. Appendix C, Hydrants
 - 4. Appendix D, Fire Apparatus Access Roads
 - 5. Appendix E, Hazard Categories

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6. **Appendix F, Hazard Rankings**
 7. **Appendix G, Cryogenic Fluids – Weights and Equivalents**
 8. **Appendix I, Fire Protection Systems – Noncompliant Conditions**
 9. **Appendix N, Indoor Trade Shows and Exhibitions**

- C. A copy of the IFC, as may be amended, is available for inspection in the City Clerk's office and the Great Falls Fire Rescue Department (GFFR) Fire Prevention Bureau's office. A copy may also be obtained from the International Code Council.

(Ord. 3282, 2025; Ord. 3213, 2020; Ord. 3189, 2018).

15.9.020030 Definitions.

Whenever the following words are used in the IFC, the following definitions shall apply:

- A. **"Assistant Chief of Prevention" means the Assistant Chief of the Bureau of Fire Prevention.**
- AB. "Chief of the Bureau of Fire Prevention" means the Great Falls Fire Rescue Department (GFFR) Chief.
- BC. "Corporation Counsel" means the Great Falls City Attorney.
- D. **"GFFR Fire Prevention Bureau" means the City of Great Falls Fire Rescue Fire Prevention Bureau.**
- EE. "Jurisdiction" means the incorporated City limits of Great Falls.
- D. ~~"Removal" in relation to storage tanks includes vents and fill pipes and all other incidental hardware.~~

(Ord. 3282, 2025; Ord. 3189, 2018).

15.9.030040 Bureau of Fire Prevention—established—duties.

- A. The IFC shall be enforced by the GFFR Bureau of Fire Prevention, under the supervision of the Fire Chief.
- B. The GFFR Fire Prevention Bureau may, in the discretion of the ~~Fire Marshall~~ **Assistant Chief of Prevention**, assess fees for **false activation of fire alarm systems as outlined in Title 5 of the OCCGF, and** inspections and/or re-inspections of premises for compliance with the IFC, **or applicable National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) standards.** Said fees shall be set by Commission resolution.
- C. **The GFFR Fire Prevention Bureau shall have all other duties established under this Title.**

(Ord. 3282, 2025; Ord. 3213, 2020; Ord. 3189, 2018).

15.9.040 Pipes thawed with torch prohibited.

- A. ~~It is unlawful to use any torch or other flame-producing device for the purpose of thawing out any pipe in or under any house, building, or structure in the incorporated City limits.~~
- B. ~~A violation of this section is a misdemeanor punishable by a term not to exceed six (6) months in jail, a fine not to exceed five hundred dollars (\$500.00), or both.~~
- C. ~~Costs incurred by City emergency personnel responding to a violation of this section may be assessed as a lien on the subject property by Commission resolution.~~

(Ord. 3282, 2025; Ord. 3189, 2018).

15.9.050 Preventative Inspections.

- A. GFFR Bureau of Fire Prevention may, in the discretion of the Assistant Chief of Prevention, inspect, or cause to be inspected as often as may be necessary, all premises within the City of Great Falls, except the interior of private dwellings, for the purpose of ascertaining, and causing to be corrected, any conditions liable to cause fire, or that may be considered a life safety hazard(s). The Assistant Chief of Prevention shall provide reasonable advance notice of said inspection(s).

(Ord. 3282, 2025)

15.9.050060 Inspection, testing, maintenance and records.

- A. All system inspections, tests and maintenance that are required by applicable IFC standards shall be performed by qualified individuals who are licensed to perform work in the City of Great Falls and written reports of such inspections, tests and maintenance shall be kept on the premises for a minimum of three (3) years.
- B. All inspection, testing and maintenance reports shall be submitted to the City's online reporting vendor within the following time frame:
1. No deficiencies found: within ten (10) days of the date the inspection, testing or maintenance took place;
 2. Deficiencies found: within seven (7) days of the date the inspection, testing or maintenance took place; or
 3. Critical issues found: Immediately following the inspection, testing or maintenance, along with immediate notification to the ~~Fire Marshal~~ **Assistant Chief of Prevention**.
- C. Inspections, tests and maintenance that do not comply with the provisions in this Chapter shall result in the inspected or serviced system being deemed non-compliant with the provisions of this Chapter.
- D. Non-compliance with this Chapter will be addressed as set forth in 15.9.060 and/or by Title 5, Chapter 2, Safety Inspections.

(Ord. 3282, 2025; Ord. 3237, 2021).

~~Ord. 3237, § 1(Exh. A), adopted Dec. 7, 2021, renumbered the former § 15.9.050 as § 15.9.060 and enacted a new § 15.9.050 as set out herein. The historical notation has been retained with the amended provisions for reference purposes.~~

15.9.070 Existing Fire Alarm Permit Requirements.

- A. The replacement of five (5) or more existing fire alarms or replacement of a fire alarm control panel or control unit will require a permit. This includes like for like replacement.
- B. The appropriate permit application and permit fee shall be submitted to the City Building Division.

(Ord. 3282, 2025)

15.9.080 Fire Hazard nuisances caused by structures prohibited.

- A. Any and all buildings, ruins, chimneys, flues, boilers, walls, remains of burned buildings or other constructions within the city limits which, by reason of their construction or condition, are in danger of being set on fire, or are in any manner a menace to adjoining property or to the public generally, are each hereby declared to be a nuisance, and unlawful to exist on any premises within the incorporated City limits.**
- B. It shall be the duty of the Fire Chief, or designee, to enforce the provisions of this section and examine premises with the conditions included above, and, for such purposes, may enter any building within reasonable hours and upon reasonable advance notice. If, in the opinion of the Fire Chief, any nuisance, as defined by this chapter, shall exist, the Fire Chief shall notify the owner(s), in writing, requesting the property owner(s) abate such nuisance immediately and without delay.**
- C. The written notice shall be served upon the owner(s), by regular mail and by posting on the premises, directing abatement of a specific nuisance(s) within a reasonable time, but not less than ten (10) days, from the date of the written notice; and stating in case of a fire resulting directly or indirectly from the failure to promptly comply with the issued notice the following action will be taken:**
 - 1. The owner(s) so failing to comply with such notice and abate said nuisance shall pay to the general fund of the City, after receipt of an itemized invoice from the Fire Chief, the actual costs incurred by GFFR in fighting such fire occurring subsequent to the required notice; if the owner/owners fail to pay the invoice from GFFR within 30 days from the invoice date, such costs may be assessed against the property. Such assessments may be included as part of an annual resolution assessing delinquent accounts;**
 - 2. The City may file criminal proceedings pursuant to this Chapter; or**
 - 3. The City may proceed with nuisance abatement proceedings pursuant to Title 8, Chapter 49.**

(Ord. 3282, 2025)

15.9.090 Emergency Key Box required on certain construction or buildings.

- A. Any new construction occurring within the City of Great Falls that has a life safety system, fire suppression system, or commercial kitchen hood installed, shall have installed an emergency key box, such as a Knox Box, that is accessible by the GFFR for use in emergency situations.**
- B. Any existing building that undergoes remodeling or alterations that significantly alter or enhance a life safety system, fire suppression system, or commercial kitchen hood, shall have an emergency key box, such as a Knox Box, that is accessible by the GFFR for use in emergency situations.**

(Ord. 3282, 2025)

15.9.100 Explosives and blasting agents; prohibited.

- A. The storage of blasting agents or explosives for construction purposes within the city is prohibited.**
- B. The use of blasting agents or explosives for construction purposes is prohibited.**

(Ord. 3282, 2025)

15.9.110 Fire sprinkler system tenting prohibited.

- A. Given the temperature fluctuations that occur in Great Falls, the practice of tenting fire sprinkler pipe is prohibited within the city.

(Ord. 3282, 2025)

15.9.060120 Violation—penalty.

- A. Unless otherwise specified in this Chapter, any person who violates or fails to comply with any of the provisions of the IFC as adopted, or any of the provisions of this Chapter, is guilty of a misdemeanor, punishable by a term not to exceed six (6) months in jail, a fine not to exceed five hundred dollars (\$500.00), or both.
- B. A property that contains a violation of the IFC, or any other violation of this Chapter, is hereby declared a Nuisance as defined by OCCGF Title 8, Chapter 49.

(Ord. 3282, 2025; Ord. 3237, 2021; Ord. 3189, 2018).

~~Editor's note(s)—See editor's note following 15.9.050.~~