

ORDINANCE NO. 25-06

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF RANCHO SANTA MARGARITA, CALIFORNIA, AMENDING SECTIONS 10.06 AND 10.07 OF TITLE 10 (BUILDINGS AND CONSTRUCTION) OF THE RANCHO SANTA MARGARITA MUNICIPAL CODE BY ADOPTING THE 2025 EDITION OF THE CALIFORNIA FIRE CODE (CALIFORNIA CODE OF REGULATIONS, TITLE 24, PART 9) INCLUDING APPENDICES B, BB, C, CC, AND H BASED ON THE 2024 INTERNATIONAL FIRE CODE, TOGETHER WITH CERTAIN AMENDMENTS, ADDITIONS AND DELETIONS

WHEREAS, pursuant to California Government Code Section 50022.1 *et seq.*, the City of Rancho Santa Margarita ("City") may adopt by reference the California Fire Code (Part 9), 2025 Edition, as provided in Title 24 of the California Code of Regulations; and

WHEREAS, the California Building Standards Commission ("Commission") recently adopted new amendments to the California Fire Code; and

WHEREAS, California Health & Safety Code Sections 17958 *et seq.*, and 18941.5 authorize cities to modify the California Fire Code by adopting more restrictive standards and modifications if such standards and modifications are accompanied by express findings that they are reasonably necessary because of local climatic, geological, or topographical conditions; and

WHEREAS, based upon the recommendations of the Fire Official and the Building Official, the City Council finds that the proposed amendments to the 2025 California Fire Code set forth in this Ordinance, which are more restrictive than the standards adopted by the California Building Standards Commission, would decrease the potential incidence of property damage, injury and death due to fires, and are reasonable and necessary to mitigate local climatic, geological or topographical conditions; and

WHEREAS, on September 10, 2025, the City Council introduced this Ordinance for first reading at a regular meeting of the City Council, and set a public hearing and second reading of the Ordinance for October 8, 2025; and

WHEREAS, the City Council held a public hearing on October 8, 2025, at which time all interested persons had the opportunity to appear and be heard on the matter of adopting the 2025 California Fire Code as amended herein; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to Government Code Section 6066, the City published notice of the aforementioned public hearing; and

WHEREAS, any and all other legal prerequisites relating to the adoption of this Ordinance have occurred.

THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF RANCHO SANTA MARGARITA,  
CALIFORNIA, DOES HEREBY ORDAIN AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION 1. The City Council hereby finds that the proposed amendments to the 2025 California Fire Code are reasonably necessary because of local climatic, geological and topographical conditions and adopts the findings provided below to support the modifications to the 2025 California Fire Code:

1. Climatic Conditions

- A. Orange County is located in a semi-arid Mediterranean type climate. It annually experiences extended periods of high temperatures with little or no precipitation. Hot, dry (Santa Ana) winds, which may reach speeds of 70 M.P.H. or greater, are also common to the area. These climatic conditions cause extreme drying of vegetation and common building materials. Frequent periods of drought and low humidity add to the fire danger. This predisposes the area to large destructive fires (conflagration). In addition to directly damaging or destroying buildings, these fires are also prone to disrupt utility services throughout the County. Obstacles generated by a strong wind, such as fallen trees, street lights and utility poles will greatly impact the response time to reach an incident scene.
- B. The climate alternates between extended periods of drought and brief flooding conditions. Flood conditions may affect the Orange County Fire Authority's ability to respond to a fire or emergency condition. Floods also disrupt utility services to buildings and facilities within the County.
- C. Water demand in this densely populated area far exceeds the quantity supplied by natural precipitation; and although the population continues to grow, the already-taxed water supply does not. Due to storage capacities and consumption, and a limited amount of rainfall future water allocation is not fully dependable. This necessitates the need for additional and on-site fire protection features.
- D. These dry climatic conditions and winds contribute to the rapid spread of even small fires originating in high-density housing or vegetation. These fires spread very quickly and create a need for increased levels of fire protection. The added protection of fire sprinkler systems and other fire protection features will supplement normal fire department response by providing immediate protection for the building occupants and by containing and controlling the fire spread to the area of origin. Fire sprinkler systems will also reduce the use of water for firefighting by as much as 50 to 75 percent.

2. Topographical Conditions

- A. Natural slopes of 15 percent or greater generally occur throughout the foothills of Orange County. The elevation change caused by the hills creates the

geological foundation on which communities with Orange County is built and will continue to build. With much of the populated flatlands already built upon, future growth will occur on steeper slopes and with greater constraints in terrain.

- B. Traffic and circulation congestion is an artificially created, obstructive topographical condition, which is common throughout Orange County.
- C. These topographical conditions combine to create a situation that places fire department response time to fire occurrences at risk and makes it necessary to provide automatic on-site fire-extinguishing systems and other protection measures to protect occupants and property.

### 3. Geological Conditions

The Orange County region is a densely populated area that has buildings constructed over and near a vast and complex network of faults that are believed to be capable of producing future earthquakes similar or greater in size than the 1994 Northridge and the 1971 Sylmar earthquakes. Earthquake faults run along the northeast and southwest boundaries of Orange County. The Newport-Inglewood Fault, located within Orange County was the source of the destructive 1933 Long Beach earthquake (6.3 magnitude) which took 120 lives and damaged buildings in an area from Laguna Beach to Marina Del Rey to Whittier. In December 1989, another earthquake occurred in the jurisdiction of Irvine at an unknown fault line. Regional planning for reoccurrence of earthquakes is recommended by the state of California, Department of Conservation.

- A. Previous earthquakes have been accompanied by disruption of traffic flow and fires. A severe seismic event has the potential to negatively impact any rescue or fire suppression activities because it is likely to create obstacles similar to those indicated under the high wind section above. The October 17, 1989, Santa Cruz earthquake resulted in one major fire in the Marina District (San Francisco). When combined with the 34 other fires locally and over 500 responses, the department was taxed to its fullest capabilities. The Marina fire was difficult to contain because mains supplying water to the district burst during the earthquake. This situation creates the need for both additional fire protection and automatic on-site fire protection for building occupants. State Department of Conservation noted in their 1988 report (Planning Scenario on a Major Earthquake on the Newport-Inglewood Fault Zone, page 59), "unfortunately, barely meeting the minimum earthquake standards of building codes places a building on the verge of being legally unsafe."
- B. Road circulation features located throughout the County also make amendments reasonably necessary. Located through the County are major roadways, highways and flood control channels that create barriers and slow response times. Hills, slopes, street and storm drain design, accompanied by occasional heavy rainfall, causes roadway flooding and landslides and at times

may make an emergency access route impassable. There are areas in Orange County that naturally have extended emergency response times that exceed the 5-minute goal.

- C. Soils throughout the County possess corrosive properties that reduce the expected usable life of water services when metallic pipes are in contact with soils.

Due to the topographical conditions of sprawling development separated by waterways and narrow and congested streets and the expected infrastructure damage inherent in seismic zones described above, it is prudent to rely on automatic fire sprinkler systems to mitigate extended fire department response time and keep fires manageable with reduced fire flow (water) resources available for a given structure. Additional fire protection is also justified to match the current resources of firefighting equipment and personnel within the Orange County Fire Authority.

#### 4. Administrative Amendments

Additional amendments have been made to the 2025 California Fire Code that are hereby found to be administrative or procedural in nature.

The amendments to the 2025 California Fire Code set forth herein, and indexed in the following table, are reasonably necessary because of the local climatic, geological and topographical conditions presented or are administrative in nature.

#### 2025 CALIFORNIA FIRE CODE AMENDMENT FINDINGS LEGEND

CODE SECTION	TITLE (CLARIFICATION)	FINDINGS
113.4	Violation penalties	Administrative
113.4.2	Infraction and misdemeanor	Administrative
202	General definitions	Administrative
304.1.3	OCFA vegetation management	I
305.6	Hazardous conditions (outdoor fires)	I & II
305.7	Disposal of rubbish	I & II
307	Open burning, recreational fires, fire pits, fire rings, and outdoor fireplaces	Administrative
307.6	Outdoor fireplaces, fire pits, fire rings	Administrative
307.6.1	Gas-fueled devices (outdoor fires)	I & II
307.6.2	Devices using wood or fuels other than natural gas or LPG	I & II
307.6.2.1	Where prohibited (burning of solid fuels)	I & II
324.1	Fuel modification requirements for new construction	I
325.1	Clearance of brush or vegetation growth from roadways	I
326.1	Unusual circumstances (vegetation management)	Administrative
327.1	Use of equipment (IC engines and spark arresters)	I

327.2	Use of equipment and devices generating heat, sparks or open flames	I
327.3	Spark arresters	I
407.5	Hazardous material inventory statement	I & II
501.1	Scope (fire service features)	Administrative, I, II & III
510.1	Emergency responder radio coverage	Administrative
903.2	Where required (sprinklers)	I, II & III
903.2.8	Group R (sprinklers)	I, II & III
903.3.5.3	Hydraulically calculated systems	I, II & III
2801.2	Permit (biomass storage and handling)	Administrative
2808.2	Storage site	Administrative
2808.3	Size of piles	I
2808.4	Pile separation	I
2808.7	Pile fire protection	I
2808.9	Material-handling equipment	I
2808.11	Temperature control	I
2808.11.1	Pile temperature control	I
2808.11.2	New material temperature control	I
2808.12	Water availability (for piles)	I
2808.13	Tipping area	I
2808.14	Emergency contact information	Administrative
2808.15	Maximum grid of piles and rows	Administrative, I
2808.16	Push-out / clear area	Administrative, I
5001.5.2	Hazardous materials inventory statement	Administrative
5003.1.1.1	Extremely hazardous substances	I, II & III
5608.2	Firing (commercial fireworks)	Administrative
5608.3	Application for permit (commercial fireworks)	Administrative
Chapter 80	Reference Standards	N/A
	2025 NFPA 13 (commercial sprinkler systems)	Administrative, II & III
	2025 NFPA 13D (single family sprinkler systems)	I & II
	2025 NFPA 24 (underground water supply systems)	Administrative & III

**SECTION 2.** Chapter 10.06 of Title 10 of the Rancho Santa Margarita Municipal Code is hereby amended and restated in its entirety to read as follows:

### **Chapter 10.06 California Fire Code – Adoption**

#### **Sec. 10.06.010. - Adoption of California Fire Code.**

- (a) The City Council adopts and incorporates, as though set forth in full in this section, the 2025 California Fire Code, including Appendices B, BB, C, CC, and H based on the 2024 International Fire Code as published by the International Code Council, as amended by this Chapter.

- (b) The provisions of the California Fire Code, as amended by this Title 10 shall constitute the Fire Code of the City of Rancho Santa Margarita and shall be known as the "Rancho Santa Margarita Fire Code".

SECTION 3. Chapter 10.07 of Title 10 of the Rancho Santa Margarita Municipal Code is hereby amended and restated in its entirety to read as follows:

### **Chapter 10.07 Amendments to the California Fire Code**

#### **Sec. 10.07.010. - Chapter 1 – Scope and Administration.**

Chapter 1 Scope and Administration is adopted in only those sections and subsections adopted by the SFM with the following amendments:

- (a) Section 113.4 Violation penalties is hereby revised as follows:

**113.4 Violation penalties.** Persons who shall violate a provision of this code or shall fail to comply with any of the requirements thereof or shall fail to comply with any issued orders or notices or who shall erect, install, alter, repair or do work in violation of the approved construction documents or directive of the fire code official, or of a permit or certificate used under provisions of this code, shall be subject to penalties assessed as prescribed in the OCFA Prevention Field Services adopted fee schedule. Each day that a violation continues after due notice has been served shall be deemed a separate offense.

- (b) Section 113.4.2 Infraction and misdemeanor is hereby added as follows:

**113.4.2 Infraction and misdemeanor.** Persons operating or maintaining any occupancy, premises or vehicle subject to this code that shall permit any fire or life safety hazard to exist on premises under their control shall be guilty of an infraction. Persons who fail to take immediate action to abate a fire or life safety hazard when ordered or notified to do so by the chief or a duly authorized representative are guilty of a misdemeanor.

#### **Sec. 10.07.020. - Chapter 2 – Definitions.**

Chapter 2 Definitions is adopted in its entirety as amended by SFM with the following amendments:

- (a) Section 202 General Definitions is hereby revised by adding "OCFA" and "Spark Arrester" as follows:

**OCFA:** Orange County Fire Authority, authority having jurisdiction.

**SPARK ARRESTER.** A listed device constructed of noncombustible material specifically for the purpose of meeting one of the following conditions:

1. Removing and retaining carbon and other flammable particles/debris from the exhaust flow of an internal combustion engine in accordance with California Vehicle Code Section 38366.
2. Fireplaces that burn solid fuel in accordance with California Building Code Chapter 28.

**Sec. 10.07.030. - Chapter 3 – General Requirements.**

Chapter 3 General Requirements is adopted in only those sections and subsections adopted by the SFM with the following amendments:

- (a) Section 304.1.3 Vegetation is hereby revised as follows:

**304.1.3 Vegetation.** Weeds, grass, vines or other growth that is capable of being ignited and endangering property, shall be cut down and removed by the owner or occupant of the premises. Vegetation clearance requirement in urban-wildland interface areas shall be in accordance with Part 7, the California Wildland-Urban Interface Code. Type, amount, arrangement, and maintenance of vegetation in a fuel modification area, interior slope, or similarly hazardous area shall be in accordance with OCFA Guideline C-05 "Vegetation Management Guideline: Technical Design for New Construction, Fuel Modification Plans, and Maintenance Program."

- (b) Section 305.6 Hazardous conditions is hereby added as follows:

**305.6 Hazardous conditions.** Outdoor fires burning wood or other solid fuel are not allowed when any of the following conditions applies:

1. When predicted sustained winds exceed 8 MPH and relative humidity is less than 25%, or a red flag condition has been declared.
2. When an official sign was caused to be posted by the fire code official, or a public announcement is made.

No outdoor fires using any fuel type are permitted when predicted sustained winds exceed 20 MPH or when such fires present a hazard as determined by the fire code official.

- (c) Section 305.7 Disposal of rubbish is hereby added as follows:

**305.7 Disposal of rubbish.** Rubbish, trash or combustible waste material shall be burned only within an approved incinerator and in accordance with Section 307.2.1.

- (d) Section 307 OPEN BURNING, RECREATIONAL FIRES AND PORTABLE OUTDOOR FIREPLACES is hereby revised as follows:

**SECTION 307 OPEN BURNING, RECREATIONAL FIRES, FIRE PITS, FIRE RINGS, AND PORTABLE OUTDOOR FIREPLACES**

- (e) Sections 307.6 Outdoor fireplaces, fire pits, fire rings, or similar devices used at Group R occupancies is hereby added as follows:

**307.6 Outdoor fireplaces, fire pits, fire rings, or similar devices used at Group R occupancies.** Outdoor fireplaces, fire pits, fire rings, or similar exterior devices used at Group R occupancies shall comply with this section.

**Exception:** Barbeques, grills, and other portable devices intended solely for cooking.

- (f) Section 307.6.1 Gas-fueled devices is hereby added as follows:

**307.6.1 Gas-fueled devices.** Outdoor fireplaces, fire pits and similar devices fueled by natural gas or liquefied-petroleum gas are allowed when approved by the Building Department and the device is designed to only burn a gas flame and not wood or other solid fuel. At R-3 occupancies, combustible construction and vegetation shall not be located within three feet of an atmospheric column that extends vertically from the perimeter of the device. At other R occupancies, the minimum distance shall be ten feet. Where a permanent Building Department approved hood and vent is installed, combustible construction may encroach upon this column between the bottom of the hood and the vent opening. Where chimneys or vents are installed, they shall have a spark arrester as defined in Section 202.

- (g) Section 307.6.2 Devices using wood or fuels other than natural gas or liquefied-petroleum gas is hereby added as follows:

**307.6.2 Devices using wood or fuels other than natural gas or liquefied-petroleum gas.** Permanent outdoor fireplaces burning wood or other solid fuel shall be constructed in accordance with the California Building Code with clearance from combustible construction and building openings as required therein. Fires in a fireplace shall be contained within a firebox with an attached chimney. The opening in the face of the firebox shall have an installed and maintained method of arresting sparks.

The burning of wood or other solid fuel in a device is not allowed within 25 feet of combustible structures unless within an approved permanent fireplace, Conditions which could cause a fire to spread within 25 feet of a structure or to vegetation shall be eliminated prior to ignition. Fires in devices burning wood or solid fuel shall be in accordance with Sections 305, 307, and 308.



Exceptions:

1. Portable fireplaces and fire rings/pits equipped with a device to arrest sparks shall be located at least 3 feet from combustible construction at R-3 occupancies,
2. Portable fireplaces, and fire pits/rings equipped with a device to arrest sparks, shall be located at least 15 feet from combustible structures at other R occupancies.

- (h) Section 307.6.2.1 Where prohibited is hereby added as follows:

**307.6.2.1 Where prohibited.** The burning of wood and other solid fuels shall not be conducted within a fuel modification zone, Wildfire Risk Area (WRA), Wildland-Urban Interface Area (WUI), or in locations where conditions could cause the spread of fire to the WRA or WUI.

Exceptions:

1. Permanent fireplaces that are not located in a fuel modification zone.
2. Where determined by the Fire Code Official that the location or design of the device should reasonably prevent the start of a wildfire.

- (i) Section 324.1 Fuel Modification Requirements for New Construction is hereby added as follows:

**324.1 Fuel Modification Requirements for New Construction.** All new structures and facilities adjoining land containing hazardous combustible vegetation shall be approved and in accordance with the requirements of OCFA Guideline C-05 "Vegetation Management Guideline – Technical Design for New Construction Fuel Modification Plans and Maintenance Program."

- (j) Section 325.1 Clearance of brush or vegetation growth from roadways is hereby added as follows:

**325.1 Clearance of brush or vegetation growth from roadways.** The fire code official is authorized to cause areas within 10 feet (3048 mm) on each side of portions of highways and private streets which are improved, designed or ordinarily used for vehicular traffic, to be cleared of flammable vegetation and other combustible growth. Measurement shall be from the flow-line or the end of the improved edge of the roadway surfaces.

**Exception:** Single specimens of trees, ornamental shrubbery or cultivated ground cover such as green grass, ivy, succulents or similar plants used as ground covers, provided that they do not form a means of readily transmitting fire.

- (k) Section 326.1 Unusual Circumstances is hereby added as follows:

**326.1 Unusual circumstances.** The fire code official may suspend enforcement of the vegetation management requirements and require reasonable alternative measures designed to advance the purpose of this code if determined that in any specific case that any of the following conditions exist:

1. Difficult terrain.
2. Danger of erosion.
3. Presence of plants included in any state and federal resources agencies, California Native Plant Society and county-approved list of wildlife, plants, rare, endangered and/or threatened species.
4. Stands or groves of trees or heritage trees.
5. Other unusual circumstances that make strict compliance with the clearance of vegetation provisions undesirable or impractical.

- (l) Section 327.1 Use of Equipment is hereby added as follows:

**327.1 Use of equipment.** Except as otherwise provided in this section, no person shall use, operate, or cause to be operated in, upon or adjoining any hazardous fire area any internal combustion engine which uses hydrocarbon fuels, unless the engine is equipped with a spark arrester as defined in Section 202 maintained in effective working order, or the engine is constructed, equipped and maintained for the prevention of fire.

**Exceptions:**

1. Engines used to provide motor power for trucks, truck tractors, buses, and passenger vehicles, except motorcycles, are not subject to this section if the exhaust system is equipped with a muffler as defined in the Vehicle Code of the State of California.
2. Turbocharged engines are not subject to this section if all exhausted gases pass through the rotating turbine wheel, there is no exhaust bypass to the atmosphere, and the turbocharger is in good mechanical condition.

- (m) Section 327.2 Use of equipment and devices generating heat, sparks or open flames is hereby added as follows:

**327.2 Equipment and devices generating heat, sparks or open flames.** During any time of the year within Wildfire Risk Areas, within or immediately adjacent to any forest- or brush-covered land or non-irrigated grass-covered land, no person shall use or operate any welding equipment, cutting torches, tar pots, grinding devices, or other tools or equipment that may produce a spark, fire, or flame that could result in a wildfire without doing the following:

1. First clearing away all flammable material, including snags, from the area around such operation for a distance of 30 feet or other approved method to reduce fire spread into the wildlands. If 30-foot clearing cannot be achieved, then an alternate method shall be approved by the AHJ prior to work starting.
2. Maintain one serviceable round point shovel with an overall length of not less than forty-six (46) inches and one backpack pump water-type fire extinguisher fully equipped and ready for use at the immediate area during the operation.
3. Stop work when winds are 8 MPH or greater during periods when relative humidity is less than 25%, or a red flag condition has been declared or public announcement is made, when an official sign was caused to be posted by the fire code official, or when such fires present a hazard as determined by the fire code official.
4. Keep a cell phone nearby and call 911 immediately in case of fire.

(n) 327.3 Spark arresters is hereby added as follows:

**327.3 Spark arresters.** Spark arresters shall comply with Section 202, and when affixed to the exhaust system of engines or vehicles subject to Section 327 shall not be placed or mounted in such a manner as to allow flames or heat from the exhaust system to ignite any flammable material.

**Sec. 10.07.040. - Chapter 4 – Emergency Planning and Preparedness.**

Chapter 4: Emergency Planning and Preparedness is adopted with only those sections and subsections adopted by the SFM with the following amendment.

(a) Section 407.5 is hereby revised as follows:

**407.5 Hazardous Materials Inventory Statement.** Where required by the fire code official, each application for a permit shall OCFA Guideline G-04 "Completion of the Chemical Classification" in accordance with Section 5001.5.2.

**Sec. 10.07.050. - Chapter 5 – Fire Service Features.**

Chapter 5 Fire Service Features is hereby adopted in its entirety as amended by the SFM with the following amendments:

(a) Section 501.1 Scope is hereby revised as follows:

**501.1 Scope.** Fire service features for buildings, structures and premises shall comply with this chapter and, where required by the fire code official, with OCFA Guideline B-01 "Fire Master Plans for Commercial & Residential Development."

- (b) Section 510.1 Emergency responder communications enhancement systems in new buildings is hereby revised to read as follows:

**510.1 Emergency responder radio coverage in new buildings.** All new buildings shall have approved radio coverage for emergency responders within the building based upon the existing coverage levels of the public safety communication systems of the jurisdiction at the exterior of the building. This section shall not require improvement of the existing public safety communication systems. The Emergency Responder Radio Coverage System shall comply with the requirements of the Orange County Sheriff's Department, Communications and Technology Division, and where the functionality of performance requirements in the California Fire Code are more stringent, this code.

**Exceptions:**

1. In buildings or structures where it is determined by the fire code official that the radio coverage system is not needed, including but not limited to the following:
  - 1.1. Existing buildings or structures, unless required by the Building Official and OCFA for buildings and structures undergoing extensive remodel and/or expansion.
  - 1.2. Elevators.
  - 1.3. Structures that meet all of the following:
    - i. Three stories or less, and
    - ii. Do not have subterranean storage or parking, and
    - iii. Do not exceed 50,000 square feet on any single story.
  - 1.4. Structures that meet all of the following:
    - i. Residential structures four stories or less, and
    - ii. Constructed of wood, and
    - iii. Do not have subterranean storage or parking, and
    - iv. Are not built integral to an above ground multi-story parking structure.

Should a structure that is three stories or less and 50,000 square feet or smaller on any single story include subterranean storage or parking, then this ordinance shall apply only to the subterranean areas.

2. In facilities where emergency responder radio coverage is required and such systems, components or equipment required could have a negative impact on the normal operations of the facility, the fire code official shall have the authority to accept an automatically activated emergency radio coverage system.

**Sec. 10.07.060. - Chapter 9 – Fire Protection and Life Safety Systems.**

**Chapter 9 Fire Protection and Life Safety Systems** is adopted in its entirety as amended by the SFM with the following amendments:

- (a) Section 903.2 Where required is hereby revised as follows:

**903.2 Where required.** Approved automatic fire sprinkler systems in buildings and structures shall be provided when one of the following conditions exists:

1. **New buildings:** Notwithstanding any applicable provisions of Sections 903.2.1 through 903.2.21, an automatic fire sprinkler system shall also be installed in all occupancies when the total building area exceeds 5,000 square feet as defined in Section 202, regardless of fire areas or allowable area, or is more than two stories in height.

**Exception:** Subject to approval by the Fire Code Official, open parking garages in accordance with Section 406.5 of the California Building Code that are smaller than the area specified in section 903.2.10 (3) or 903.2.10.1 of the California Fire Code.

2. **Existing Buildings:** Notwithstanding any applicable provisions of this code, an automatic fire sprinkler system shall be provided in an existing building when an addition occurs and when one of the following conditions exists:
  - 2.1. When an addition is 33% or more of the existing building area, and the resulting building area exceeds 5,000 square feet.
  - 2.2. When an addition exceeds 2,000 square feet, and the resulting building area exceeds 5,000 square feet.
  - 2.3. An additional story is added above the second floor regardless of fire areas or allowable area.

**Exception:** Group R-3 occupancies shall comply with Section 903.2.8 (2).

- (b) Section 903.2.8 Group R is hereby revised as follows:

**903.2.8 Group R.** An automatic fire sprinkler system installed in accordance with Section 903.3 shall be provided throughout all buildings with a Group R fire area as follows:

1. **New Buildings:** An automatic fire sprinkler system shall be installed throughout all new buildings.
2. **Existing R-3 Buildings:** An automatic sprinkler system shall be installed throughout when one of the following conditions exists:

- 2.1. When the floor area of alterations or additions within any two-year period exceeds 50 percent of gross floor area of the existing structure and the building gross floor area exceeds 5,500 square feet.
- 2.2. An addition when the existing building is already provided with automatic sprinklers.
- 2.3. When an existing Group R Occupancy is being substantially renovated, and where the scope of the renovation is such that the Building Code Official determines that the complexity of installing a sprinkler system would be similar as in a new building.

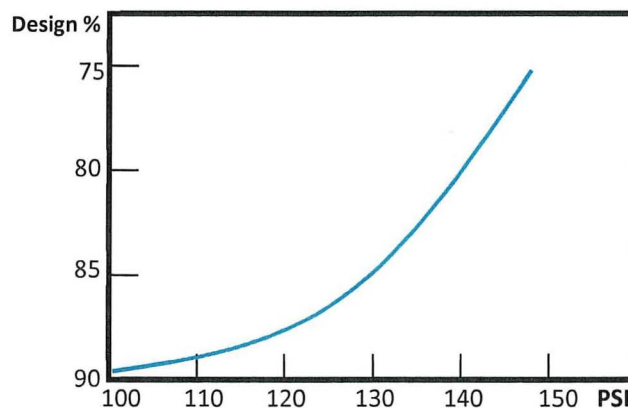
The **exceptions** in this section remain unchanged.

- (c) Section 903.3.5.3 Hydraulically calculated systems is hereby added as follows:

**903.3.5.3 Hydraulically calculated systems.** The design of hydraulically calculated sprinkler systems shall not exceed 90% of the water supply capacity.

**Exception:** When static pressure exceeds 100 psi, and when required by the fire code official, the sprinkler system shall not exceed the water supply capacity specified by Table 903.3.5.3.

**TABLE 903.3.5.3**  
**Hydraulically Calculated Systems**



**Sec. 10.07.070. - Chapter 28 – Lumber Yards and Agro-Industrial, Solid Biomass and Woodworking Facilities**

**Chapter 28 Lumber Yards and Agro-Industrial, Solid Biomass and Woodworking Facilities** is adopted in its entirety with the following amendments:

- (a) Section 2801.2 Permit is hereby revised as follows:

**2801.2 Permit.** Permits shall be required as set forth in Section 105.5 and 105.5.31.

- (b) Section 2808.2 Storage site is hereby revised as follows:

**2808.2 Storage site.** Storage sites shall be level and on solid ground, elevated soil lifts or other all-weather surface. Sites shall be thoroughly cleaned, and approval obtained from the fire code official before transferring products to the site.

- (c) Section 2808.3 Size of piles is hereby revised as follows:

**2808.3 Size of piles.** Piles shall not exceed 15 feet in height, 50 feet in width and 100 feet in length.

**Exception:** The fire code official is authorized to allow the pile size to be increased where a fire protection plan is provided for approval that includes, but is not limited to, the following:

1. Storage yard areas and materials-handling equipment selection, design and arrangement shall be based upon sound fire prevention and protection principles.
2. Factors that lead to spontaneous heating shall be identified in the plan, and control of the various factors shall be identified and implemented, including provisions for monitoring the internal condition of the pile.
3. The plan shall include means for early fire detection and reporting to the public fire department; and facilities needed by the fire department for fire extinguishment including a water supply and fire hydrants.
4. Fire apparatus access roads around the piles and access roads to the top of the piles shall be established, identified and maintained.
5. Regular yard inspections by trained personnel shall be included as part of an effective fire prevention maintenance program.

Additional fire protection called for in the plan shall be provided and shall be installed in accordance with this code. The increase of the pile size shall be based upon the capabilities of the installed fire protection system and features.

- (d) Section 2808.3.1 Increase in pile or stack size is hereby deleted in its entirety.
- (e) Section 2808.4 Pile Separation is hereby revised as follows:

**2808.4. Pile separation.** Piles shall be separated from adjacent piles by a minimum distance of 20 feet. Additionally, piles shall have a minimum

separation of 100 feet from combustible vegetation.

- (f) Section 2808.7 Pile fire protection is hereby revised as follows:

**2808.7 Pile fire protection.** Automatic sprinkler protection shall be provided in conveyor tunnels and combustible enclosures that pass under a pile. Combustible conveyor systems and enclosed conveyor systems shall be equipped with an approved automatic sprinkler system. Oscillating sprinklers with a sufficient projectile reach are required to maintain a 40% to 60% moisture content and wet down burning/smoldering areas.

- (g) Section 2808.9 Material-handling equipment is hereby revised as follows:

**2808.9 Material-handling equipment.** All material-handling equipment operated by an internal combustion engine shall be provided and maintained with an approved spark arrester. Approved material-handling equipment shall be available for moving wood chips, hogged material, wood fines and raw product during fire-fighting operations.

- (h) Section 2808.11 Temperature control is hereby added as follows:

**2808.11 Temperature control.** The temperature shall be monitored and maintained as specified in Sections 2808.11.1 and 2808.11.2.

- (i) Section 2808.11.1 Pile temperature control is hereby added as follows:

**2808.11.1 Pile temperature control.** Piles shall be rotated when internal temperature readings are in excess of 165 degrees Fahrenheit.

- (j) Section 2808.11.2 New material temperature control is hereby added as follows:

**2808.11.2 New material temperature control.** New loads delivered to the facility shall be inspected and tested at the facility entry prior to taking delivery. Material with temperature exceeding 165 degrees Fahrenheit shall not be accepted on the site. New loads shall comply with the requirements of this chapter and be monitored to verify that the temperature remains stable.

- (k) Section 2808.12 Water availability is hereby added as follows:

**2808.12 Water availability.** Facilities with over 2500 cubic feet shall provide a water supply. The minimum fire flow shall be no less than 500 GPM @ 20 psi for a minimum of 1 hour duration for pile heights up to 6 feet and 2-hour duration for pile heights over 6 feet. If there is no water purveyor, an alternate water supply with storage tank(s) shall be provided for fire suppression. The water supply tank(s) shall provide a minimum capacity of 2,500 gallons per



pile (maximum 30,000 gallons) for piles not exceeding 6 feet in height and 5,000 gallons per pile (maximum 60,000) for piles exceeding 6 feet in height. Water tank(s) shall not be used for any other purpose unless the required fire flow is left in reserve within the tank at all times. An approved method shall be provided to maintain the required amount of water within the tank(s).

- (l) Section 2808.13 Tipping area is hereby added as follows:

**2808.13 Tipping areas** shall comply with the following:

1. Tipping areas shall not exceed a maximum area of 50 feet by 50 feet.
2. Material within a tipping area shall not exceed 5 feet in height at any time.
3. Tipping areas shall be separated from all piles by a 20-foot wide fire access lane.
4. A fire hydrant or approved fire water supply outlet shall be located within 150 feet of all points along the perimeter of the tipping area.
5. All material within a tipping area shall be processed within 5 days of receipt.

- (m) Section 2808.14 Emergency contact is hereby added as follows:

**2808.14 Emergency contact.** The contact information of a responsible person or persons shall be provided to the Fire Department and shall be posted at the entrance to the facility for responding units. The responsible party should be available to respond to the business in emergency situation.

- (n) Section 2808.15 Maximum grid of piles and rows is hereby added as follows:

**2808.15 Maximum grid of piles and rows.** Rows of Piles shall not exceed 500 feet by 500 feet. Grids shall be separated by a minimum 50-foot clear space used for no other purpose.

- (o) Section 2808.16 Push-out / clear area is hereby added as follows:

**2808.16 Push-out / clear area.** Piles exceeding 20 cubic yards shall be provided with push-out areas. Push-out areas shall be maintained clear at all times to allow for the largest pile to be spread out to a depth of 2 feet in height. Push-out areas shall be located within 250 feet of all edges of any pile and shall be located a minimum of 20 feet from any building.

#### **Sec. 10.07.080. - Chapter 50 – Hazardous Materials – General Provisions**

Chapter 50 Hazardous Materials – General Provisions is adopted in its entirety as amended by the SFM with the following amendments.

- (a) Section 5001.5.2 Hazardous Materials Inventory Statement (HMIS) is hereby revised as follows:

**5001.5.2 Hazardous Materials Inventory Statement (HMIS).** Where required by the fire code official, an application for a permit shall follow OCFA Guideline G-04 "Completion of the Chemical Classification", which shall be completed and approved prior to approval of plans, and/or the storage, use or handling of chemicals on the premises.

- (b) Section 5003.1.1.1 Extremely hazardous substances is hereby added as follows:

**5003.1.1.1 Extremely hazardous substances.** No person shall use or store any amount of extremely hazardous substances (EHS) in excess of the disclosable amounts (see Health and Safety Code Section 25500 et al) in a residential zoned or any residentially developed property.

**Sec. 10.07.090. - Chapter 56 – Explosives and Fireworks**

Chapter 56 Explosives and Fireworks is adopted in its entirety as amended by the SFM with the following amendments:

- (a) Section 5608.2 Firing is hereby added as follows:

**5608.2 Firing.** All fireworks displays, regardless of mortar, device, or shell size, shall be electrically fired.

- (b) Section 5608.3 Application for permit is hereby added as follows:

**Section 5608.3 Application for permit.** A diagram of the grounds on which the display is to be held showing the point at which the fireworks are to be discharged, the fallout area based on 100 feet per inch of shell size, the location of all buildings, roads, and other means of transportation, the lines behind which the audience will be restrained, the location of all nearby trees, telegraph or telephone line, or other overhead obstructions shall be provided to OCFA.

**Sec. 10.07.100. - Chapter 80 – Referenced Standards.**

Chapter 80 Referenced Standards is adopted in its entirety as amended by the SFM with the following amendments:

- (a) NFPA 13, 2025 Edition, Standard for the Installation of Sprinkler Systems is hereby amended as follows:

- (b) Section 9.2.1.7 is hereby revised as follows:

**Section 9.2.1.7** Concealed spaces filled with noncombustible insulation shall not require sprinkler protection when approved by the fire code official.

- (c) Section 9.4.3.1 is hereby revised as follows:

**Section 9.4.3.1** When fire sprinkler systems are installed in shell buildings of undetermined use (Spec Buildings) other than warehouses (S occupancies), fire sprinklers of the quick-response type shall be used. Use is considered undetermined if a specific tenant/occupant is not identified at the time the fire sprinkler plan is submitted. Sprinklers in light hazard occupancies shall be one of the following:

- (1) Quick-response type as defined in 3.3.223.4.16
- (2) Residential sprinklers in accordance with the requirements of Chapter 12
- (3) Quick-response CMSA sprinklers
- (4) ESFR sprinklers
- (5) Standard-response sprinklers used for modifications or additions to existing light hazard systems equipped with standard-response sprinklers.
- (6) Standard-response sprinklers used where individual standard-response sprinklers are replaced in existing light hazard systems

- (d) Section 16.12.3.3 is hereby revised as follows:

**Section 16.12.3.3** Fire department connections (FDC) shall be of an approved type. The location shall be approved and be no more than 150 feet from a public hydrant. The FDC may be located within 150 feet of a private fire hydrant when approved by the fire code official. The size of piping and the number of 2½" inlets shall be approved by the fire code official. If acceptable to the water authority, it may be installed on the backflow assembly. Fire department inlet connections shall be painted OSHA safety red or as approved. When the fire sprinkler density design requires more than 500 gpm (including inside hose stream demand), or a standpipe system is included, four 2½" inlets shall be provided.

- (e) NFPA 13D, 2025 Edition, Standard for the Installation of Sprinkler Systems in One- and Two-Family Dwellings and Manufactured Homes is hereby amended as follows:

- (1) Section 7.1.2 is hereby revised as follows:

**Section 7.1.2** The sprinkler system piping shall not have separate control valves installed unless supervised by a central station, proprietary, or remote station alarm service.

- (f) NFPA 24, 2025 Edition, Standard for the Installation of Private Fire Service Mains and Their Appurtenances is hereby amended as follows:

- (a) Section 6.2.8.1 is hereby added as follows:

**Section 6.2.8.1** All indicating valves controlling fire suppression water supplies shall be painted OSHA red.

**Exceptions:**

1. Brass or bronze valves on sprinkler risers mounted to the exterior of the building may be left unpainted.
2. Where OS&Y valves on the detector check assembly are the only control valves, at least one OS&Y valve shall be painted red.

- (b) Section 6.2.9 is hereby revised as follows:

**Section 6.2.9** All connections to private fire service mains for fire protection systems shall be arranged in accordance with one of the following so that they can be isolated:

- (1) A post indicator valve installed not less than 40 ft (12 m) from the building
  - (a) For buildings less than 40 ft (12 m) in height, a post indicator valve shall be permitted to be installed closer than 40 ft (12 m) but at least as far from the building as the height of the wall facing the post indicator valve.
  - (b) Post indicating valves shall be allowed to be closer than 40 ft (12 m) to the building when a property line or other physical barriers make it impossible to have a post indicating valve 40 ft (12m) away.
  - (c) Post indicating valves shall be allowed to be closer than 40 ft (12 m) to the building when building driveway or fire access roadways or other building traffic make it impractical to be 40 ft (12 m).
- (2) A wall post indicator valve on risers located within the building, either a nonrising stem gate valve with a wall post indicator or a listed butterfly valve with an indicating handle extending out through the building wall.
- (3) A backflow preventer with at least one indicating valve not less than 40 ft (12 m) from the building
  - (a) For buildings less than 40 ft (12 m) in height, a backflow preventer with at least one indicating valve shall be permitted to be installed closer than 40 ft (12 m) but at least as far from the building as the height of the wall facing the backflow preventer.

- (b) Backflow preventer valves shall be allowed to be closer than 40 ft (12 m) to the building when a property line or other physical barriers make it impossible to have a backflow preventer valve 40 ft (12 m) away.
  - (c) Backflow preventer valves shall be allowed to be closer than 40 ft (12 m) to the building when building driveway or fire access roadways or other building traffic make it impractical to be 40 ft (12 m).
- (4) Indicating control valves installed in a fire-rated room accessible from the exterior
- (5) Indicating control valves in a fire-rated stair enclosure accessible from the exterior as permitted by the AHJ
- (6) Any other valve type or location as permitted by the AHJ
- (g) Section 10.1.5 is hereby added as follows:

**Section 10.1.5** All ferrous pipe and joints shall be polyethylene encased per AWWA C150, Method A, B, or C. All fittings shall be protected with a loose 8-mil polyethylene tube or sheet. The ends of the tube or sheet shall extend past the joint by a minimum of 12 inches and be sealed with 2-inch-wide tape approved for underground use. Galvanizing does not meet the requirements of this section.

**Exception:** 304 or 316 Stainless Steel pipe and fittings
- (h) Section 10.4.1.1 is hereby revised as follows:

**Section 10.4.1.1** All bolted joint accessories shall be cleaned and thoroughly coated with asphalt or other corrosion-retarding material after installation.

**Exception:** Bolted joint accessories made from 304 or 316 stainless steel.
- (i) Section 10.4.1.1.1 is hereby added as follows:

**Section 10.4.1.1.1** All bolts used in pipe-joint assembly shall be 316 stainless steel.
- (j) Section 10.4.3.2 is hereby deleted and replaced as follows:

**Section 10.4.3.2** Where fire service mains enter the building adjacent to the foundation, the pipe may run under a building to a maximum of 24 inches, as measured from the interior face of the exterior wall to the center of the vertical pipe. The pipe under the building or building

foundation shall be 304 or 316 stainless steel and shall not contain mechanical joints or it shall comply with 10.4.3.2.1 through 10.4.3.2.4.

**Sec. 10.07.110. – Appendices.**

**Appendix A** is not adopted.

**Appendix B** is adopted in its entirety as amended by the SFM.

**Appendix BB** is adopted in its entirety.

**Appendix C** is adopted in its entirety as amended by the SFM.

**Appendix CC** is adopted in its entirety.

**Appendix D** is not adopted.

**Appendix E** is not adopted.

**Appendix F** is not adopted.

**Appendix G** is not adopted.

**Appendix H** is adopted in its entirety.

**Appendix I** is not adopted.

**Appendix J** is not adopted.

**Appendix K** is not adopted.

**Appendix L** is not adopted.

**Appendix M** is not adopted.

**Appendix N** is not adopted.

**Appendix O** is not adopted.

**Appendix P** is not adopted.

**Appendix Q** is not adopted.

**SECTION 4.** This Ordinance shall become effective January 1, 2026. Upon the effective date of this Ordinance, all former ordinances or parts thereof conflicting or inconsistent with the provisions of this Ordinance or the codes herein adopted by reference and any other ordinance in conflict herewith are hereby repealed and declared to be of no further force and effect.

**SECTION 5.** The City Council finds that this Ordinance is not subject to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to the California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Chapter 3, Sections 15060(c)(2) (the activity will not result in a direct or reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment) and 15060(3) (the activity is not a project as defined in Section 153710) because it has no potential for resulting in physical change to the environment, directly or indirectly.

SECTION 6. If any section, subsection, sentence, clause, phrase or portion of this Ordinance is for any reason held out to be invalid or unconstitutional by the decision of any court of competent jurisdiction, such decision shall not affect the validity of the remaining portions of this ordinance. The City Council of the City of Rancho Santa Margarita hereby declares that it would have adopted this ordinance and each section, subsection, sentence, clause, phrase or portion thereof irrespective of the fact that any one or more sections, subsection, sentence clause, phrases or portions be declared valid or unconstitutionally.

SECTION 7. Adoption includes the whole each thereof together with accumulative supplements, and associated standards referenced therein, including such portions as may be added by the provisions of this Ordinance, except such portions as may be deleted or modified by the provisions of this Ordinance.

SECTION 8. The City Clerk shall certify to the adoption of this Ordinance and cause the same to be posted at the duly designated posting places within the City and published once within fifteen days after passage and adoption as may be required by law; or, in the alternative, the City Clerk may cause to be published a summary of this Ordinance and a certified copy of the text of this Ordinance shall be posted in the Office of the City Clerk five days prior to the date of adoption of this Ordinance; and, within fifteen days after adoption, the City Clerk shall cause to be published, the aforementioned summary and shall post a certified copy of this Ordinance, together with the vote for and against the same, in the Office of the City Clerk.

SECTION 9. This Ordinance shall take effect January 1, 2026. The City Clerk, or his or her duly appointed deputy, shall certify to the adoption of this Ordinance and shall cause this Ordinance to be published as required by law.

PASSED, APPROVED AND ADOPTED THIS 8<sup>TH</sup> DAY OF OCTOBER 2025.



L. ANTHONY BEALL, MAYOR

ATTEST:

  
AMY DIAZ, CITY CLERK

STATE OF CALIFORNIA )  
COUNTY OF ORANGE ) ss  
CITY OF RANCHO SANTA MARGARITA )

I, Amy Diaz, City Clerk of the City of Rancho Santa Margarita, California, DO HEREBY CERTIFY that the foregoing Ordinance No. 25-06 was regularly introduced and placed upon its first reading at a Regular Meeting of the City Council on the 10<sup>th</sup> day of September 2025, and that thereafter, said Ordinance was duly adopted and passed at a Regular Meeting of the City Council on the 8<sup>th</sup> day of October 2025, by the following vote, to wit:

AYES: Council Members Baert and Figueroa, Mayor Pro Tempore McGirr and Mayor Beall (4)

NOES:       None (0)

ABSTAIN: None (0)

ABSENT: Council Member Holloway (1)

  
AMY DIAZ, CITY CLERK



## AFFIDAVIT OF POSTING AND PUBLICATION

STATE OF CALIFORNIA )  
COUNTY OF ORANGE ) ss  
CITY OF RANCHO SANTA MARGARITA )

AMY DIAZ, being first duly sworn, deposes and says:


That she is the duly appointed and qualified City Clerk of the City of Rancho Santa Margarita;

That in compliance with State Laws of the State of California, ORDINANCE NO. 25-06, being:

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF RANCHO SANTA MARGARITA, CALIFORNIA, AMENDING SECTIONS 10.06 AND 10.07 OF TITLE 10 (BUILDINGS AND CONSTRUCTION) OF THE RANCHO SANTA MARGARITA MUNICIPAL CODE BY ADOPTING THE 2025 EDITION OF THE CALIFORNIA FIRE CODE (CALIFORNIA CODE OF REGULATIONS, TITLE 24, PART 9) INCLUDING APPENDICES B, BB, C, CC, AND H BASED ON THE 2024 INTERNATIONAL FIRE CODE, TOGETHER WITH CERTAIN AMENDMENTS, ADDITIONS AND DELETIONS

on the 19<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> day of September 2025, was published in the Coto De Caza News; and was in compliance with City Resolution No. 00-01-06-07, on the 19<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> day of September 2025, caused to be posted in three places in the City of Rancho Santa Margarita, to wit:

Rancho Santa Margarita City Hall  
Fire Station 45  
Trabuco Canyon Water District

  
AMY DIAZ, CITY CLERK  
Rancho Santa Margarita, California

