

CITY COUNCIL MEMORANDUM

FROM: The Office of the City Manager **DATE:** October 14, 2019
SUBJECT: Consider Ordinance No. 3614, amending Chapter 98, Article VII, of the North Richland Hills Code of Ordinances adopting the 2018 International Fuel Gas Code with Amendments.
PRESENTER: David Pendley, Chief Building Official

SUMMARY:

In a continuing effort to modernize the city's building codes in support of council's goal to provide quality community development and revitalization, staff brings forth consideration of the 2018 International Fuel Gas Code.

GENERAL DESCRIPTION:

The International Building Codes (I-Codes) are developed by construction industry professionals and adopted around the world as model codes based on the best, most recent building science. The I-Codes form a framework upon which the city develops a building code with regional and local amendments reflecting the city's unique needs as determined by local code users. These codes are reviewed by the Regional Codes Coordinating Committee appointed by the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) and staff; and are ultimately recommended for approval by the Council-appointed Construction Code Board of Appeals, which serves as our Technical Code Review Committee.

The I-Codes are continuously updated and republished every three years by the International Code Council, Inc. (ICC) headquartered in Washington D.C. with organizational roots dating back to the early 20th century. It has been the city's policy to update our codes every-other code cycle (every six years).

Adoption of the 2018 I-Codes is in the best interest of the citizens of North Richland Hills by promoting health, safety and welfare. Updated codes also benefit our citizens by:

- Establishing consistency of code adoptions with other local jurisdictions.
- Ensuring the best rating possible by the Insurance Services Organization (ISO). ISO collects information nation-wide on building codes in effect in communities, as well as how the communities enforce their building codes. ISO analyzes the data using a Building Code Effectiveness Grading Schedule and assigns a grade to each community. Insurers use this grading to determine premium rates for buildings constructed within the city. The single most important factor used by ISO is how modern a jurisdiction's adopted codes are. Any city that is more than two

code-cycles behind (which are the 2012 I-Codes), are automatically given the lowest rating possible.

- Contributes to the city's good standing in FEMA's Community Rating System (CRS) which enables discounted flood insurance rates for our residents.

Staff is proposing the adoption of the 2018 International Fuel Gas Code to go into effect upon council's approval. However, if approved, staff intends to establish a policy providing a 45 day window to submit projects that were designed under the 2012 I-Codes; giving engineers, architects, homeowners and builders time to adjust to the requirements.

Significant code changes include:

- Gas fired clothes dryers are no longer prohibited in bathrooms provided a permanent opening of 100 S.I. is provided that communicates with other areas of the home that are not sleeping rooms, bathrooms, or storage closets.
- The code now makes it clear that yellow CSST (corrugated stainless steel tubing) must be properly bonded to the electrical grounding system of the house.
- Limits 75 feet as the maximum length a CSST bonding conductor can be ran from the gas meter to the electrical panel. Also allows a separate grounding electrode when over 75 feet provided it is bonded to the electrical service grounding electrode.
- Schedule 10 steel gas piping is now allowed (previous code versions required Schedule 40 or greater).
- Press-connect gas fittings allowed for all sizes.
- The code has been clarified that gas appliance shut-off valves are not intended to be for emergencies and that they are now allowed to be located behind a moveable appliance.
- A new section stating that shut-off valves connected to CSST tubing must be rigidly and securely supported.
- Plastic venting of gas appliances must meet product standards specified by the appliance manufacturer or be listed in accordance with UL 1738. Typical PVC piping cannot be used unless approved by the appliance manufacture or has the UL 1738 listing.
- Direct vent termination chart has been added for clearances from openings.



This action follows suit with surrounding communities that have adopted or will soon be adoption the 2018 I-Codes. The council-appointed Construction Code Appeals Board (acting in its role as the Technical Code Review Committee) voted on September 12, 2019 to recommend the approval of the 2018 International Fuel Gas Code.

RECOMMENDATION:

Approve Ordinance No. 3614