Chapter 9

Fire and Emergency Services

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Article I, In General

Sec. 9.1. Fire Limits

The corporate limits of the Town shall constitute the fire district of the Town.

Sec.9.2. False Fire Alarms

It shall be unlawful for any person to knowingly give a false fire alarm. It shall be unlawful to give alarm of fire by activating a call box, telephoning, informing any third person that an emergency exists knowing the same to be untrue, or in any other manner, communicating falsely to the fire department that an emergency exists.

Sec. 9.3. Fire Hydrants and Waterlines

It shall be unlawful for any person, except a member of the fire department or a person expressly authorized thereto by the town administrator or his designee to open or otherwise tamper with any fire hydrant or waterline, in the limits of the Town.

Sec. 9.4. Driving over Fire Hose

It shall be unlawful for any person to drive a vehicle of any description over or across fire hose stretched or laid upon the ground for use at a fire, for practice of the fire department, or for any other proper purpose of the fire department.

Sec .9.5. Interfering with Firemen

It shall be unlawful to hinder or obstruct any fireman or other authorized person while such person is answering a fire call or any other emergency call, or to hinder or obstruct such person who is attempting to extinguish a fire or remedy any emergency while acting in an official capacity. The failure to obey any lawful order of any official of the fire or law enforcement agency at the scene of any emergency shall constitute a violation of this section.

Sec. 9.6. Tampering with Fire Equipment.

It shall be unlawful for any unauthorized person to use, borrow or tamper with any equipment of the fire department without the express consent of the fire department. "Equipment" shall be construed to mean all vehicles, firefighting apparatus, supplies, facilities or other material belonging to the fire department.

Sec. 9.7. Following or Parking Near Fire Equipment

The driver of any vehicle other than one on official business shall not follow any fire apparatus traveling in response to a fire alarm closer than five hundred (500) feet or drive into or park such vehicle within the block where fire apparatus has stopped in answer to a fire alarm.

Sec. 9.8. Obstructing Fire Equipment.

No person shall park any vehicle or otherwise cause any obstruction to fire equipment at a fire or at an entrance to the fire station, nor park within ten (10) feet of any fire hydrant. It shall be unlawful to interfere with or obstruct the activities of any member of the fire department who is acting in the line of duty at or proceeding to a fire.

Sec. 9.9. Penalties, Generally

Except as otherwise provided, it shall be a misdemeanor to violate any provision of this chapter and upon conviction the penalty shall be in accordance with Section 14.5 of this code.

Sec. 9.10. Penalty For Criminal Carelessness (Arson)

If the investigating officer shall consider that any fire be due to criminal carelessness, the person responsible for it shall be indicted before a magistrate for a misdemeanor and, upon conviction for the same, may be fined in a sum not exceeding fifty dollars ($50) or imprisonment for not more than ten (10) days.

Article II, Fire Inspections

Sec. 9.11. Annual Building Inspections.

At least once in each and every year, the town administrator or his designee shall make a general inspection of all buildings in the corporate limits and ascertain if the laws and ordinances in reference to fire protection are complied with. It shall be the duty of the town administrator or his designee to notify the occupant and owner of all premises of any defects or hazards found in this general inspection, and to see that they are properly corrected.

Sec. 9.12. Quarterly Building Inspections.

Once in every three (3) months the town administrator or his designee shall make a personal inspection of every building within the fire limits and shall especially inspect the basement and garret. He shall make such other inspections as may be required by the state fire marshal and report all defects or hazards found by him in any building, upon a blank furnished him by the state fire marshal. The town administrator or his designee shall notify the owner or occupant of buildings of any defects or hazards and notify them to correct the same within a reasonable time.

Sec. 9.13. Reports of Inspections.

The town administrator or his designee shall report before the 15th of February of each and every year the number and dates of general and quarterly inspections during the preceding year ending December 31, upon blanks furnished by the state fire marshal, and furnish such other information and make such other reports as shall be called for by the state fire marshal.

Sec. 9.14. Notice to Repair Unsafe Buildings.

To every building which shall appear to the inspector to be dangerous to life or limb or, because of its liability to fire, bad condition of walls, over-loaded construction, decay or other cause, shall be held to be unsafe, the inspector shall affix a notice of the dangerous character of the structure at a conspicuous place on the exterior wall of the building and shall give immediate notice to the owner or agent for the correction of such condition. Notice shall be presented to the building inspector for action.

Sec. 9.15. Notice and Penalty.

The town administrator or other authorized inspector may report his findings to the town council who, after consideration, may issue an order for the immediate correction, removal, or discontinuance of the hazard. If the hazard is not corrected within the time fixed in the notice, the offending party shall be subject to the provisions of Section 6.34 of this Code.

Sec. 9.16 Fire Investigation

The inspector of buildings shall investigate all fires and file a report to the state fire marshal as provided by Sections 5-25-16 and 5-25-210 of the South Carolina Code of Laws, 1976. The town building inspector shall be made available to the fire chief to assist in any investigation and remedial actions deemed appropriate by the fire chief.