



ORDINANCE NO. 28266

1 AN ORDINANCE relating to the Fire Code; amending Chapter 3.09 of the Tacoma
2 Municipal Code by adding a new Section 3.09.050, entitled “Building
3 Inspection Program fees,” to provide for fees related to enforcement
4 inspections of buildings of various industrial, commercial, and multi-family
5 uses, to become effective June 1, 2015.

6 WHEREAS the Tacoma Fire Department (“TFD”) performs periodic code
7 enforcement inspections of buildings, in accordance with the adopted Fire Code, to
8 protect people, property, and the environment, and

9 WHEREAS this fire and life safety code compliance program is one of TFD’s
10 fire prevention activities that help improve the overall safety of the community by
11 reducing the risk of fires and hazardous materials incidents, and

12 WHEREAS these routine inspections identify and correct Fire Code
13 violations, educate business and property owners on fire and life safety issues,
14 reduce fire loss, and reduce demand on public emergency services, and

15 WHEREAS TFD plans to enhance its inspection program by improved
16 scheduling, personnel training, and commencing online payments as the Accela
17 Fire module is activated, and

18 WHEREAS, in an effort to reduce the City’s dependence on federal grants to
19 maintain TFD staffing levels, staff is recommending that fees be implemented,
20 effective June 1, 2015, to offset a portion of the building inspection costs; Now,

21 Therefore,

22 BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY OF TACOMA:

23 Section 1. That Chapter 3.09 of the Tacoma Municipal Code (“TMC”) is
24 hereby amended by amending Section 3.09.030; by the addition of a new
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Section 3.09.050, entitled “Building Inspection Program fees”; and by moving
“Waivers to fees” to Section 3.09.060, as set forth in the attached Exhibit “A.”

Section 2. That TMC 3.09.050 shall become effective on June 1, 2015.

Passed _____

Mayor

Attest:

City Clerk

Approved as to form:

Deputy City Attorney



EXHIBIT "A"

Chapter 3.09
FIRE CODE PERMITS AND FEES

Sections:

- 3.09.010 Purpose.
- 3.09.015 Adjustments
- 3.09.020 Definitions.
- 3.09.030 Permits and fees – General Provisions.
- 3.09.032 Construction permits.
- 3.09.035 Construction permits administered by the Prevention and Preparedness Bureau.
- 3.09.038 Operational permits and fees.
- 3.09.040 Miscellaneous services and fees.
- 3.09.050 [Building Inspection Program fees.](#)
- [3.09.060](#) Waivers to fees.

3.09.030 Permits and fees – General provisions.

Fees for IFC construction and operational permits shall be paid prior to issuance of the permit and completion of inspection. The fees specified in this chapter shall be doubled in any instance where a person starts or continues work for which a permit fee is required prior to obtaining said permit, provided that in no case shall such fee be less than \$200. This section shall be subject to the provisions of Section 3.09.0560-TMC. The payment of such double fee shall not relieve any person from full compliance with applicable codes in the execution of the work, nor from any other penalties prescribed by law.

3.09.050 [Building Inspection Program fees.](#)

[The Fire Chief or his or her designee has the authority to impose a fee for and administer a Building Inspection Program \("BIP"\). The BIP shall focus on commercial, industrial, and multi-family buildings for fire and life safety code enforcement purposes.](#)

[A. The owners and occupants of any commercial, industrial, or multi-family building that contains any occupancy type, as defined within the adopted Fire Prevention Code, Chapter 3.02 TMC, shall pay the fee\(s\) for periodic building inspections conducted under the BIP in accordance with the fee schedule listed in Section 3.09.050.B TMC.](#)

[B. Inspection Fees Assessed. Building inspection fees for periodic fire and life safety code enforcement inspections shall be assessed in accordance with the following fee schedule based on total building area\(s\) of each individual occupancy and the relevant occupancy group as defined by the adopted Fire Prevention Code.](#)

[BIP Base Inspection Fees](#)^{1, 2, 3}

	Building Area (sq. ft.)	1. Occupancy Group 1 Fee (\$) (B, M & R⁴ & U)	2. Occupancy Group 2 Fee (\$) (A & E)	3. Occupancy Group 3 Fee (\$) (F, H, I & S)
A	0 – 1,500	35	80	115
B	1,501 – 3,000	60	105	140
C	3,001 – 5,000	85	130	165
D	5,001 – 7,500	110	155	190
E	7,501 – 10,000	135	180	215
F	10,001 – 12,500	160	205	240
G	12,501 – 15,000	185	230	265



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<u>H</u>	<u>15,001 – 17,500</u>	<u>210</u>	<u>255</u>	<u>290</u>
<u>I</u>	<u>17,501 – 20,000</u>	<u>235</u>	<u>280</u>	<u>315</u>
<u>J</u>	<u>20,001 – 30,000</u>	<u>260</u>	<u>305</u>	<u>340</u>
<u>K</u>	<u>30,001 – 40,000</u>	<u>285</u>	<u>330</u>	<u>365</u>
<u>L</u>	<u>40,001 – 50,000</u>	<u>310</u>	<u>355</u>	<u>390</u>
<u>M</u>	<u>50,001 – 60,000</u>	<u>335</u>	<u>380</u>	<u>415</u>
<u>N</u>	<u>60,001 – 70,000</u>	<u>360</u>	<u>405</u>	<u>440</u>
<u>O</u>	<u>70,001 – 100,000</u>	<u>385</u>	<u>430</u>	<u>465</u>
<u>P</u>	<u>100,001 – 150,000</u>	<u>410</u>	<u>455</u>	<u>490</u>
<u>Q</u>	<u>150,001 – 200,000</u>	<u>435</u>	<u>480</u>	<u>515</u>
<u>R</u>	<u>Over 200,000</u>	<u>460</u>	<u>505</u>	<u>540</u>

¹ Base Inspection Fees: The base inspection fee shall cover the initial inspection and one follow-up inspection for the purpose of ensuring the correction of any deficiencies or defects noted during the initial inspection.

² Additional Follow-Up Inspection Fees: Any additional follow-up inspections beyond the first follow-up inspection necessary to ensure correction of any identified deficiencies or defects shall be billed at a minimum of \$177 per hour (one-hour minimum charge with additional time computed in quarter-hour increments) until full compliance is achieved.

³ The Fire Chief or his or her designee is authorized to waive or partially reduce inspection fees in accordance with 3.09.060 TMC.

⁴ Single-family residences and duplexes are excluded from the inspection program and therefore shall not be assessed inspection fees.

C. Inspection Fee Payment Obligation. The obligation to pay the fees assessed shall fall to the building owners or occupants of the building as determined pursuant to an inspection accounts process established by the BIP. The occupants or building owners identified during the inspection as being responsible for code compliance of the building or space shall be deemed the responsible party for paying the fees.

D. Inspection Fee Collection Procedure. The fees established shall be billed directly to the responsible party. For accounts delinquent for more than 30 days, a monthly fee of one percent per month on the unpaid balance with a minimum of \$3.00 charge shall be assessed to the responsible party. In addition, the Fire Chief or his or her designee may use any other lawful means to collect the obligation, including the use of collection agencies.

E. Inspection Fee Applicability. The BIP fees shall apply equally to all buildings under the jurisdictional authority of the adopted Fire Prevention Code, Chapter 3.02 TMC, unless otherwise determined.

3.09.060 Waivers to fees.

The Fire Chief or his or her designee may waive fees under the following situations:

A. Construction permit fees by departments and divisions of the City and other public agencies receiving funding for said construction from the City’s General Fund shall be waived.

B. Construction permit fees for multi-family residential housing shall be waived when all of the following conditions apply:

1. The multi-family residential structure is intended for low-income individuals.
2. The alteration and repair involves some volunteer labor.
3. The alteration and repairs are being constructed by an organization classified as a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization by the Internal Revenue Service.
4. The multi-family residential structure is primarily owned and operated by a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.

C. The Fire Chief or his or her designee shall have the authority to waive re-inspection fees required by Section 3.09.0560 TMC if he or she determines that the original order or notice of non-compliance was invalid or when mitigating circumstances beyond the responsible party’s control exist including, but not limited to conflicting enforcement requirements by other agencies or conditions caused by third parties.

D. Prepayment of civil interview fees may be waived under subsection 3.09.040.P TMC for any person who has previously pre-paid interview fees and established a business account in good standing with the Fire Department.



E. Permit fees may be waived for good cause.

F. Applicants Classified as 501(c)(3). Nonprofit organizations may apply for a waiver of Assembly event permit fees by submitting the Waiver of Fees Request Form.

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