

## **Fire Codes in Georgia and Cobb County**

Title 25 Chapter 2 O.C.G.A. (Official Code of Georgia Annotated), known as "Regulation of Fire and Other Hazards to Persons and Property Generally", allows the Safety Fire Commissioner to adopt rules and regulations to promote fire safety. These rules and regulations are adopted under Chapter 120-3-3 "Rules and Regulations of the Safety Fire Commissioner" and known as "Rules and Regulations for the State Minimum Fire Safety Standards." Certain NFPA standards and the Standard Fire Prevention Code are adopted under 120-3-3. According to 25-2-4 O.C.G.A., these codes have the "force and effect of law." For enforcement purposes, Cobb County adopts these state minimum standards by reference in the Cobb County Code 54-54. The Cobb County Fire Marshal's Office enforces the state minimum standards and, according to Section 25-2-12 O.C.G.A., performs the following duties:

1. Conduct fire safety inspections of existing buildings and structures
2. Review plans for proposed buildings.
3. Issue permanent and temporary certificates of occupancy.

### **Common Code Violations**

#### **1. Violation: ADDRESS OR SUITE NUMBER NOT POSTED**

Applicable Code: Section 106-2(b), Cobb County Code

(b) Each dwelling unit and place of business shall have posted and maintained in a prominent place on the property, legible from the street providing public access, the address of the dwelling unit or place of business as follows:

- (1) For residences, in figures at least three inches high with a reflective contrasting background or reflective numbers on a contrasting background. Numbers posted on mailboxes located adjacent to the street can be one inch high with a reflective contrasting background or reflective numbers on a contrasting background; and
- (2) For commercial establishments, in figures at least six inches high with a reflective contrasting background or reflective numbers on a contrasting background. (3" acceptable for exterior suite numbers and 1" acceptable for interior suite numbers and apartment unit doors)
- (3) Larger figures may be required than listed above to ensure they are legible from the street.

#### **2. Violation: EXPOSED WIRING**

Applicable Code: Section 605.6, 2012 International Fire Code

Open junction boxes and open-wiring splices shall be prohibited. Approved covers shall be provided for all switch and electrical outlet boxes.

#### **3. Violation: HYDRANT OBSTRUCTED**

Applicable Code: Section 507.5.5, 2012 International Fire Code

A 3-foot clear space shall be maintained around the circumference of fire Hydrants except as otherwise required or approved.

#### **4. Violation: FIRE DEPARTMENT CONNECTION NOT VISIBLE TO APPARATUS OR OBSTRUCTED**

Applicable Code: Section 912.2.2, 2012 International Fire Code

On existing buildings, wherever the fire department connection is not visible to approaching fire apparatus, the fire department connection shall be indicated by an approved sign mounted on the street front or on the side of the building. Such sign shall have the letters "FDC" at least 6 inches high and words in letters

at least 2 inches high or an arrow to indicate the location. All such signs shall be subject to the approval of the fire code official.

Section 912.3 Immediate access to fire department connections shall be maintained at all times and without obstruction by fences, bushes, trees, walls or any other object. Access to fire department connection shall be approved by the fire chief.

Section 912.3.2 Clear space around connections. A working space of not less than 36 inches in width, 36 inches in depth and 78 inches in height shall be provide and maintained in front of an to the sides of wall-mounted fire department connections and around the circumference of free-standing fire department connections, except as otherwise required or approved by the fire chief.

**5. Violation: COMPRESSED GAS CYLINDER NOT SECURED**

Applicable Code: Section 5303.5.3, 2012 International Fire Code

Compressed gas containers, cylinders and tanks shall be secured to prevent falling caused by contact, vibration or seismic activity.

**6. Violation: STORAGE WITHIN 30 INCHES OF ELECTRICAL PANELS**

Applicable Code: Section 605.3, 2012 International Fire Code

A working space of not less than 30 inches in width, 36 inches in depth and 78 inches in height shall be provided in front of electrical service equipment. Where the electrical service equipment is wider than 30 inches, the working space shall not be less than the width of the equipment. No storage of any materials shall be located within the designated working space.

**7. Violation: EXTENSION CORDS USED AS PERMANENT WIRING**

Applicable Code: Section 605.5, 2012 International Fire Code

Extension cords and flexible cords shall not be a substitute for permanent wiring. Extension cords and flexible cords shall not be affixed to structures, extended through walls, ceilings or floors, or under doors or floor coverings, nor shall such cords be subject to environmental damage or physical impact. Extension cords shall be used only with portable appliances.

**8. Violation: KNOX BOX or KNOX SWITCH NEEDED**

Applicable Code: Section 506.1, 2012 International Fire Code

Where access to or within a structure or an area is restricted because of secured openings or where immediate access is necessary for life-saving or fire-fighting purposes, the fire code official is authorized to require a key box to be installed in an approved location. The key box shall be of an approved type listed in accordance with UL 1037, and shall contain keys to gain necessary access as required by the fire code official.

506.1.1 An approved lock shall be on gates or similar barriers when required by the fire code official.

**9. Violation: NO SUPPLY OF SPARE SPRINKLER HEADS**

Applicable Code: Section 5.4.1.4, NFPA 25, 2011 edition

A supply of spare sprinklers (never fewer than six) shall be maintained on the premises so that any sprinklers that have operated or been damaged in any way can be promptly replaced.

Section 5.4.1.4.1 The sprinklers shall correspond to the types and temperature ratings of the sprinklers in the property.

Section 5.4.1.4.2 The sprinklers shall be kept in a cabinet located where the temperature in which they are subjected will at no time exceed 100 F.

**10. Violation: NO SPECIAL WRENCH AVAILABLE**

Applicable Code: Section 5.4.1.6, NFPA 25, 2011 edition

A special sprinkler wrench shall be provided and kept in the cabinet to be used in the removal and installation of sprinklers.

5.4.1.6.1 One sprinkler wrench shall be provided for each type of sprinkler installed.

**11. Violation: SPRINKLERS BLOCKED BY STORAGE**

Applicable Code: Section 5.2.1.2, NFPA 25, 2011 edition

Unacceptable obstructions to spray patterns shall be corrected.

Section A-5.2.1.2 NFPA 13 allows stock, furnishings and equipment to be as close as 18 in. to standard spray sprinklers or as close as 36 in. to ESFR and large drop sprinklers.

**12. Violation: EXTINGUISHERS OUT OF DATE**

Applicable Code: Section 7.3.2.1, NFPA 10, 2013 edition

An annual external visual examination of all fire extinguishers shall be made to detect obvious physical damage, corrosion, or nozzle blockage to verify that the operating instructions are present, legible, and facing forward, and that the HMIS information is present and legible, and to determine if a 6-year interval examination or hydrostatic test is due.

7.3.4.1 Each extinguisher shall have a tag or label securely attached that indicates that maintenance was performed.

**13. Violation: EXIT BLOCKED**

Applicable Code: Section 7.1.10.1, 2012 Life Safety Code

Means of egress shall be continuously maintained free of all obstructions or impediments to full instant use in the case of fire or other emergency.

**14. Violation: MULTIPLE LOCKS ON EXIT DOORS**

Applicable Code: Section 7.2.1.5.10, 2012 Life Safety Code

A latch or other fastening device on a door leaf shall be provided with a releasing device having an obvious method of operation and is readily operated under all lighting conditions.

7.2.5.10.2 The releasing mechanism shall open the door leaf with not more than one releasing operation, unless otherwise specified in 7.2.1.5.10.3, 7.2.1.5.10.4, 7.2.1.5.10.6.

**15. Violation: GRILLING ON BALCONY OF WOOD CONSTRUCTION**

Applicable Code: Section 308.1.4, 2012 International Fire Code

Charcoal burners and other open-flame cooking devices shall not be operated on combustible balconies or within 10 feet of combustible construction.

*Exceptions:*

1. *One and two family dwellings.*
2. *Where buildings, balconies and decks are protected by an automatic sprinkler system.*
3. *LP-gas cooking devices having LP-gas container with a water capacity not greater than 2 ½ pounds.*

**16. Violation: FIRE PROTECTION SYSTEM SHUTDOWN**

Applicable Code: Section 901.7, 2012 International Fire Code

Where a required fire protection system is out of service, the fire department and the fire code official shall be notified immediately and, where required by the fire code official, the building shall either be evacuated or an approved fire watch shall be provided for all occupants left unprotected by the shutdown until the fire protection system has been returned to service.

Where utilized, fire watches shall be provided with at least one approved means for notification of the fire department and their only duty shall be to perform constant patrols of the protected premises and keep watch for fires.