

December 14, 2021

MEMORANDUM

To: Public Safety & Human Services Committee
From: Ann Gorman, Analyst
Subject: Council Bill 120245 – SFD permit and services cleanup

On December 14, 2021, the Public Safety & Human Services Committee will discuss Council Bill 120245, which would amend the Seattle Municipal Code (SMC) to align with the current version of the Seattle Fire Code ("fire code") and with Seattle Fire Department (SFD) practices. This memorandum provides background of the legislation and a summary of the code changes.

Background

The City last updated its fire code in February 2021 through [Ordinance 126283](#). The fire code is one of the City's construction codes, which are typically updated approximately every three years, following the International Code Council's regular updates to its model codes and subsequent amendments that are adopted at the state level.

The fire code and most of the provisions for SFD's permits and services are contained in Subtitle VI of Title 22 of the SMC. Changes to the fire code require changes that reflect the ways in which SFD will administer that code and charge for the services it prescribes.

Summary

The bill includes the following changes of note related to permit and services provision:

- Codifies new permitting provisions that apply to the food truck industry (consistent with the 2018 fire code) and addresses SFD's participation in a new regional food truck inspection program that seeks to lessen the administrative burden for food truck operators that do business in two or more jurisdictions.
- Adds installation permit types for new technologies and practices that involve potentially hazardous materials (consistent with the 2018 fire code).
- Updates the requirements that apply to those who inspect fire protection, extinguishing, and suppression systems, aligning them with the 2018 fire code and State-level regulations.
- Expands the definition of alternative extinguishing systems (consistent with the 2018 fire code).
- Clarifies current SFD practice regarding the fees that include a free re-inspection if necessary and adds language allowing the department to levy a charge for time when its re-inspection costs exceed the fee amount.

- Clarifies the titles of various Special Events permits.
- Clarifies the inclusion of short plat review in SFD Plan Review service and the basis for Plan Review fee structure.

The legislation includes an effective date of March 1, 2022, which will allow time for Seattle IT to make the requisite changes in the City's permitting system (Accela).

Next Steps

If the Committee votes on the legislation at its meeting on December 14, 2021, final action could occur at the City Council meeting on January 3, 2022, or January 10, 2022.

Please contact Ann Gorman if you have questions about the proposed legislation.

cc: Esther Handy, Director
Dan Eder, Deputy Director
Aly Pennucci, Policy and Budget Manager