

Chapter 84

FIRE PREVENTION

[HISTORY: Adopted by the Town Council of the Town of Grottoes 2-3-1970 as Title 11 of the 1970 Ordinances of the Town of Grottoes. Amendments noted where applicable.]

GENERAL REFERENCES

Building construction — See Ch. 63.

ARTICLE I

Fire Department

§ 84-1. Fire company.

The Grottoes Volunteer Fire Department, Incorporated, previously established in accordance with the law of the Commonwealth of Virginia, is recognized as the Fire Department of the Town of Grottoes. The Fire Department shall consist of the officers and members of the Fire Company.

§ 84-2. Fire Chief.

The Fire Department shall be subject to the management and control of the Fire Chief, in accordance with the constitution and bylaws of the Fire Department. Election of the Fire Chief shall be confirmed by the Council.

§ 84-3. Authority of Department.

The Grottoes Volunteer Fire Department, Incorporated, shall operate and shall be clothed with such authority and perform such duties as provided for by its constitution and bylaws and the laws of the commonwealth.

§ 84-4. Fire lines.

The Fire Department and police officers of the Town have the authority to stretch lines around any fire area, and no person shall be allowed within this enclosure except persons connected with the fire or police forces of the Town, Town officials, persons holding passes signed by the Chief and the owner or occupants of the building. Any unauthorized person who shall be found within any such enclosure shall be immediately arrested and punished by a fine as provided in § 84-15.

§ 84-5. Firehouse.

No person other than members of the Fire Department and the officers of the Town shall enter the room in which is kept the engine and fire apparatus belonging to the Town,

except by invitation or permission of the officers of the Town or members of the Fire Department.

ARTICLE II
General Regulations

§ 84-6. Emergency vehicles.

- A. Upon the approach of any police, ambulance or Fire Department vehicle giving audible signal by siren or exhaust whistle, the driver of every other vehicle shall immediately drive the same to a position at or near as possible and parallel to the right-hand edge or curb, clear of any intersection of highways, and shall stop and remain in such position unless otherwise directed by a police or traffic officer until the police, ambulance or Fire Department vehicle shall have passed. This provision shall not operate to relieve the driver of a police, ambulance or Fire Department vehicle from the duty to drive with due regard for the safety of all persons using the highway, nor shall it protect the driver of any such vehicle from the consequences of an arbitrary exercise of such right-of-way.
- B. It shall be unlawful for the driver of any vehicle other than one on official business to follow any fire apparatus traveling in response to a fire alarm closer than one block, or to drive into or park such vehicle within the block where fire apparatus has stopped in answer to a fire alarm.

§ 84-7. Prohibited acts.

- A. No vehicle shall be driven over any unprotected hose of a Fire Department when laid down on any street, highway or private driveway to be used at any fire or alarm of fire or fire drill or practice drill, without the consent of the Fire Department official in command.
- B. No person shall interfere with any firefighter in the discharge of his or her duty.
- C. No person shall knowingly give false alarm of fire or wantonly break, destroy or otherwise disfigure or damage any fire apparatus or equipment. No one not a member of the Town Fire Department shall use, manipulate or tamper with the fire plugs or hydrants of the Town unless by order of the Fire Chief.

§ 84-8. Inspection of premises. [Amended 7-8-1996]

The Fire Chief shall have the right at any reasonable hour to examine into and upon any building or premises not at that time occupied and used as a dwelling house, for examination as to combustible material or flammable conditions in any such building or premises. Whenever he or she shall find in any such building or upon any premises combustible or flammable materials dangerous to the safety of such building or premises or other property, he or she shall order the same to be removed or remedied by the owner or occupant of said building or premises within such reasonable time as he or she may fix. Upon failure of the owner or occupant to comply with said notice and remove and

remedy the combustible substance and flammable conditions, he or she shall be fined as provided in § 84-15.

ARTICLE III
Public Halls, Theaters and Opera Houses

§ 84-9. Exits.

Pursuant to § 27-51 of the Code of Virginia, all owners or lessees of public halls, theaters or opera houses situated in the Town of Grottoes shall provide suitable and sufficient exits from such buildings. The doors to the exits shall remain unlocked during all performances or public gatherings in the buildings and shall in all cases open outwardly and not inwardly.

§ 84-10. Inspection of buildings. [Amended 7-8-1996]

- A. Pursuant to § 27-52 of the Code of Virginia, the Mayor and two members of the Council to be selected by the Mayor may, as a committee of three, inspect all buildings described in the preceding section and see that the provisions of the preceding section are complied with. Any such building as to which such provisions have not been complied with may be closed by order of the Mayor of the Town until the provisions are complied with.¹
- B. An authorized representative of the Fire Department may inspect all public halls, theaters or opera houses situated within the Town and may inspect said premises as often as may seem proper in order to see that there is no wastepaper, rubbish or other flammable material on the premises. Such representative shall order the occupant to have the same immediately removed, and should the occupant fail to remove the same within 24 hours after having been so ordered, he or she shall be fined as provided for in § 84-15.

ARTICLE IV
Accumulation and Storage of Materials

§ 84-11. Combustible materials.

- A. No person shall permit shavings, straw or any other combustible or flammable matter of any nature or kind to collect about his or her premises so as to endanger from fire his or her own or neighboring premises. Any person violating any provision of this section, upon conviction thereof, shall be fined as provided for in § 84-15. Each 24 hours that such articles remain after their owner or custodian has been notified to remove them shall constitute a separate offense, and in addition thereto the Fire Chief may have such combustible matter removed at the expense of the property owner or custodian. [Amended 7-8-1996]

¹. Editor's Note: Original Section 11-14, dealing with penalties, which immediately followed this subsection, was deleted 7-8-1996.

- B. No person shall keep hay, fodder, sheaf oats, shavings or straw or other combustible material in a dwelling or adjacent to a dwelling or other house in which fire is usually made.

§ 84-12. Blasting powder; gunpowder.

- A. It shall be unlawful for any person to have on his or any premises or in his buildings within the Town more than five canisters of black or blasting powder and more than 50 pounds of gunpowder, unless the same is kept in a steel receptacle, preferably cylindrical in shape, mounted on wheels and fitted with a lock, which receptacle shall have conspicuously displayed on it the words "POWDER - DANGER."
- B. Any person desiring to have or keep any of such powder shall first secure from the Fire Chief or the Assistant Fire Chief a permit to do so.
- C. Every person having such powder in buildings or on premises shall, in writing, notify the Fire Chief as to the location of such powder and shall cause to be displayed conspicuously a clear and legible sign bearing the words "POWDER - DANGER" at such places.
- D. Should any person desire to handle percussion or dynamite caps, such caps shall be kept in a receptacle as described in Subsection A of this section.
- E. Upon receipt of information that any person is storing such powder in the Town, it shall be the duty of the Fire Chief to examine the premises to ascertain that the provisions of this section are complied with. Upon report of the Fire Chief, the Town Manager, for good cause, shall have the right to cancel any permit until conditions are made satisfactory to him or her. [Amended 2-8-2010]

§ 84-13. Dynamite.

- A. It shall be unlawful for any person to have on his or her or any premises or in his or her buildings in the Town more than 50 pounds of dynamite and this amount, or less, may be held only under the following conditions:
 - (1) Any person desiring to have or to use dynamite shall first secure from the Chief of Police a permit to do so.
 - (2) Any person desiring to handle dynamite for any purpose shall store the same in a steel receptacle, preferably cylindrical in shape, mounted on wheels and fitted with a lock. Such receptacle shall be of not less than three-eighths-inch steel plate and shall have conspicuously displayed on it the words "DYNAMITE - DANGER."
 - (3) Any person handling dynamite and keeping the same in a building or on any premises shall, in writing, notify the Fire Chief as to the location of such dynamite and shall there cause to be displayed conspicuously a clear and legible sign bearing the words "DYNAMITE - DANGER."
- B. Upon receipt of information from anyone storing such dynamite in the Town, it shall be the duty of the Fire Chief to examine the premises and see that the

provisions of this section are complied with. The Fire Chief, for good cause, shall have the right to cancel any permit, until conditions are made satisfactory to him or her.

- C. Under no conditions shall anyone be permitted to store percussion or dynamite caps in the same receptacle with dynamite.

§ 84-14. Storage magazines.

No person shall use any building or premises within the Town or within one mile of the corporate limits thereof as a magazine for storing powder dynamite or other explosives, except as is specifically provided for in §§ 84-12 and 84-13.²

§ 84-15. Violations and penalties. [Added 7-8-1996]

Any person who violates any provisions of this chapter shall, upon conviction, be guilty of a Class 1 misdemeanor, with penalties as provided in § 1-7, General penalty, of Chapter 1, General Provisions.

ARTICLE V
Open Burning
[Added 9-10-2001]

§ 84-16. Authorization.

Open burning shall be permitted with prior notification to the Town Superintendent and upon receipt of written permission from the Town of Grottoes, provided that any conditions specified in the permission are followed for:

- A. Disposal of hazardous or toxic material where the EPA determines that there is no practical alternative method of disposal;
- B. Instruction in methods of fire-fighting or for research in control of fires, in emergency or other extraordinary circumstances for any purpose determined to be necessary by the Town of Grottoes.

². Editor's Note: Original Part 2, Fireworks, which immediately followed this section, was deleted 7-8-1996.