

FILE NO. 010-224

ORDINANCE NO. 165-01

1 [Ordinance amending the Fire and Housing Codes to require automatic sprinklers in
2 residential hotels.]

3 Ordinance amending the San Francisco Fire Code by adding Section 9001.1.3 and the
4 San Francisco Housing Code by amending Section 904, to require the installation of
5 automatic sprinkler systems in residential hotels, as defined in the ordinance, and
6 providing findings as to local conditions pursuant to the California Health and Safety
7 Code.

8 Note: Additions are *italic; Times New Roman*; deletions
9 are ~~strikethrough italic; Times New Roman~~
10 Board amendment additions are double underlined.
11 Board amendment deletions are ~~strikethrough normal~~.

12 Be it ordained by the People of the City and County of San Francisco:

13 Section 1. *Findings.*

14 *The City and County of San Francisco is unique among communities generally in California*
15 *with respect to its residential hotels in that, among other things, (1) due to the age of San Francisco*
16 *itself, many of the City's residential hotels are of a greater average age than those located in other*
17 *communities in California, (2) due to its relatively limited geographic area and unique topographical*
18 *conditions, San Francisco has significantly more residential hotels per square mile than found in many*
19 *other communities in California, and such hotels are typically directly adjacent to other such hotels as*
20 *well as other types of occupancies, (3) as does San Francisco itself, the City's residential hotels reflect*
21 *a wide range of construction techniques and materials, styles, and features, and therefore San*
22 *Francisco is presented with a wide range of potential fire safety risks not necessarily found throughout*
23 *California generally, and (4) San Francisco's residential hotels are intermingled with the City's*
24 *residential, commercial, industrial, and other uses to a greater extent than is generally the case in*
25

1 many other communities in California, and this also presents a variety of fire safety risks not
2 necessarily found in other areas of California.

3 Over the past several years, the City has experienced a near epidemic of residential hotel fires,
4 resulting in significant loss of life, injuries, the loss of many residential units, and significant property
5 damage. The causes of these fires, to the extent such causes have been determined, vary from case to
6 case. However, it appears that smoking and cooking by residents, and either carelessness or malicious
7 behavior by residents, ex-residents and property owners accounts for the majority of the reported fires.
8 The incidence of reported fires in residential hotels appears to be far greater than occurs in residential
9 occupancies of other types within the City.

10 In many cases, the residential hotels subject to fires were not equipped with sprinklers, or were
11 equipped with sprinklers that were inoperable or inadequate to protect human life and property. The
12 Fire Marshall, after investigation of several of these fires, has concluded that the presence of adequate
13 and operational sprinkler systems would likely have prevented or significantly mitigated the damages
14 caused by fire.

15 There is a severe shortage of decent, safe, sanitary and affordable rental housing in the City
16 and County of San Francisco and this shortage affects most severely the elderly, the disabled and low-
17 income persons. Many of the elderly, disabled and low-income persons and households reside in
18 residential hotel units. A housing emergency exists within the City and County of San Francisco for its
19 elderly, disabled and low-income households, which is exacerbated by the loss of residential hotel units
20 from the rental housing market due to fire. The loss of such residential hotel units affects those persons
21 who are least able to cope with displacement in San Francisco's housing market.

22 Recognizing the above-stated unique fire safety characteristics of San Francisco as presented
23 by the City's residential hotels, requiring the fire protection measures reflected in this ordinance is
24 intended to address the potential fire safety risks pertaining to residential hotels. Further, it is the
25 purpose of this ordinance to benefit the general public by minimizing adverse impact on the housing

1 supply and on displaced low income, elderly, and disabled persons resulting from the loss of residential
2 hotel units through fire.

3 California Health and Safety Code Section 17958.5 requires the City to furnish specific reasons
4 to the California Building Standards Commission for changes to the California Fire Code, the
5 California Building Code and/or the Uniform Housing Code, based upon local conditions. Changes to
6 the California Fire Code and California Building Code must be based upon local conditions related to
7 climatic, geologic, or topographical conditions. The Board of Supervisors finds and determines that
8 the conditions described above constitute a general summary of the most significant local conditions
9 giving rise to the need for and justifying variance from the California Fire Code, California Building
10 Code and Uniform Housing Code. Further, this legislation is more restrictive in part than the
11 California Fire Code, the California Building Code and the Uniform Housing Code, requiring existing
12 buildings to comply with current building standards. The Clerk of the Board of Supervisors is hereby
13 directed to transmit this legislation, upon its final passage, to the California Building Standards
14 Commission and the State Fire Marshal for filing, pursuant to the applicable provisions of State law.

15
16 Section 2. Article 90 of the San Francisco Fire Code is hereby amended by adding
17 Section 9001.1.3, to read as follows:

18 **9001.1.3 [for SF] Local Standards for Existing Group R, Division 1 Occupancies.**

19 **(a) Sprinklers Required.** An automatic sprinkler system shall be installed throughout the residential
20 occupancy of every residential hotel building existing on the effective date of this Section and which is
21 three or more stories in height or contains 20 or more guest rooms, as defined in the California
22 Building Code. "Residential Hotel" for purposes of this Section shall mean each and every hotel for
23 which a Certificate of Use for any residential units has been issued pursuant to San Francisco
24 Administrative Code Chapter 41.

1 (b) *Design Criteria.* The design criteria for the installation of the sprinkler system shall be approved
2 by the Fire Department and shall comply with NFPA 13 (1999 edition). Where sprinklers previously
3 have been installed in a building subject to this Section, the design criteria for such existing sprinkler
4 system may be approved or modified by the Chief.

5 (c) *Compliance Date.* Residential hotels subject to this Section must come into compliance with this
6 Section by June 30, 2002.

7
8 Section 3. Chapter 9 of the San Francisco Housing Code is hereby amended by
9 amending Section 904, to read as follows:

10 **SEC. 904. AUTOMATIC SPRINKLER SYSTEM.** (a) **Where Required.** In any
11 apartment house or hotel, any compartment or room in the basement containing more than
12 1,800 square feet of floor area, or any compartment or room in such a building used for
13 storing or using combustible or flammable materials, shall be equipped with an automatic
14 sprinkler system of a type designed and installed according to the provisions of Chapter 9 of
15 the Building Code. Automatic sprinkler systems designed and installed according to the
16 provisions of Chapter 9 of the Building Code shall be furnished and installed in all hotels as
17 required by this Code.

18 **EXCEPTIONS:**

19 (1) Any automatic sprinkler system required by this Section to be installed in an
20 existing hotel pursuant to this Code shall not be required to have an on-site water supply.

21 (2) Any automatic sprinkler system required by this Section to be installed in an
22 existing hotel pursuant to this Code may utilize existing standpipes as approved by the
23 Director and the Bureau of Fire Prevention and Public Safety.

24 (3) Any automatic sprinkler system required by this Section to be installed in a
25 maid's closet, or similar area, or a floor containing guest rooms in a hotel shall meet the

1 following criteria: (a) Such system may be connected to a domestic water system, regardless
2 of the number of maids' closets, or similar areas, in the hotel, as long as there is a minimum
3 pressure of 15 p.s.i. at each sprinkler head; (b) only one sprinkler head need be installed in
4 each such maid's closet, or similar area; and (c) no such system need be connected to the
5 building's sprinkler alarm system.

6 (4) Any automatic sprinkler system required by this Section to be installed in an
7 existing hotel pursuant to this Code (a) shall, in the event that such existing hotel is already
8 equipped with a supervised automatic sprinkler system, be connected to such existing other
9 system for purposes of supervision only, or (b) shall, in the event that such existing hotel is
10 not already equipped with a supervised automatic sprinkler system, be connected to a local
11 alarm located at the front desk or other approved location.

12 (b) **Domestic Water System.** The sprinkler system in an area having less than
13 1,800 square feet may be connected to a domestic water system if the water supply and
14 pressure conform to the provisions of Chapter 9 of the Building Code.

15 (c) **Exceptions.** (1) Boiler rooms, central heating rooms and bank vaults are
16 excluded from this Chapter. (2) Compartments or rooms in the basement of apartment houses
17 containing four or less dwelling units, provided that there are no mattresses, upholstered
18 furniture, or loose storage contained therein, are excluded from this Chapter.

19 (d) In existing Group R, Division 1 Occupancies with enclosed stairways in which an
20 approved partial automatic sprinkler system is to be installed to satisfy the requirements of the
21 Housing Code, the design of the system shall be based on all the following additional design
22 criteria:

23 (1) The computations shall be based upon the most remote locations of sprinkler
24 heads.

1 (2) The sprinkler water service size and riser size shall be determined by adding the
2 total number of sprinkler heads on the floor requiring the greatest number of heads, plus one-
3 half of the total number on the floor with the same or next greatest number of heads, plus the
4 total number of all heads in all open stairwells.

5 (3) The maximum water supply required will be that necessary to supply 13
6 sprinkler heads.

7 (4) There shall be a minimum pressure of 15 p.s.i. at each sprinkler head and
8 delivery shall be a minimum of 22 g.p.m. from each head.

9 (5) Piping and spacing of sprinkler heads shall be based on ordinary Hazard
10 Schedule of NFPA 13, in accordance with the Building Code.

11 (e) *Residential Hotels.* An automatic sprinkler system shall be installed throughout the
12 residential occupancy of every residential hotel building existing on the effective date of this Subsection
13 and which is three or more stories in height or contains 20 or more guest rooms, as defined in the
14 California Building Code. "Residential Hotel" for purposes of this Subsection shall mean each and
15 every hotel for which a Certificate of Use for any residential units has been issued pursuant to San
16 Francisco Administrative Code Chapter 41. The design criteria for the installation of the sprinkler
17 system shall be approved by the San Francisco Fire Department and shall comply with NFPA 13 (1999
18 edition). Where sprinklers previously have been installed in a building subject to this Section, the
19 design criteria for such existing sprinkler system may be approved or modified by the Chief of the San
20 Francisco Fire Department or his/her authorized representative. Residential hotels subject to this
21 Subsection must come into compliance with this Subsection by June 30, 2002.

22 APPROVED AS TO FORM:

23 LOUISE H. RENNE, City Attorney

24 By: 
25 MIRIAM L. STOMBLER
Deputy City Attorney



City and County of San Francisco

City Hall
1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place
San Francisco, CA 94102-4689

Tails

Ordinance

File Number: 010224

Date Passed:

Ordinance amending the San Francisco Fire Code by adding Section 900.1.3 and the San Francisco Housing Code by amending Section 904, to require the installation of automatic sprinkler systems in residential hotels, as defined in the ordinance, and providing findings as to local conditions pursuant to the California Health and Safety Code.

July 2, 2001 Board of Supervisors — PASSED ON FIRST READING

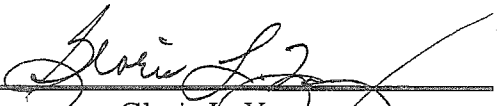
Ayes: 11 - Ammiano, Daly, Gonzalez, Hall, Leno, Maxwell, McGoldrick,
Newsom, Peskin, Sandoval, Yee

July 9, 2001 Board of Supervisors — FINALLY PASSED

Ayes: 11 - Ammiano, Daly, Gonzalez, Hall, Leno, Maxwell, McGoldrick,
Newsom, Peskin, Sandoval, Yee

File No. 010224

I hereby certify that the foregoing Ordinance was FINALLY PASSED on July 9, 2001 by the Board of Supervisors of the City and County of San Francisco.



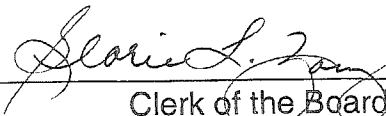
Gloria L. Young
Clerk of the Board

Date Approved

Mayor Willie L. Brown Jr.

Date: 7/20/01

I hereby certify that the foregoing ordinance, not being signed by the Mayor within the time limit as set forth in Section 3.103 of the Charter, became effective without his approval in accordance with the provision of said Section 3.103 of the Charter.



Clerk of the Board

File No.
010224