

ORDINANCE O-4939

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF KIRKLAND RELATING TO AUTOMATIC FIRE SPRINKLER REQUIREMENTS WHEN ALTERING EXISTING SINGLE-FAMILY, DUPLEX, AND TOWNHOME USES AND AMENDING SECTION 21.33.050 OF THE KIRKLAND MUNICIPAL CODE TO ADD AN EXCEPTION FOR EXTERIOR, NON-ENCLOSED SPACE.

1 WHEREAS, in 2025, the City Council adopted Ordinances O-4889 and O-4899 to
2 adopt the 2021 International Fire Code with amendments in chapter 21.20 of the Kirkland
3 Municipal Code (KMC) and to make changes to chapter 21.33 KMC relating to automatic fire
4 sprinklers; and
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6 WHEREAS, during the course of administering the Fire Code—in particular the
7 provisions at KMC 21.33.050 related to requirements for automatic sprinkler systems in certain
8 residential structures (single-family dwellings, duplexes, and townhouses)—the Fire
9 Department identified existing code language that may be ambiguous and has been subject to
10 differing interpretations; and
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12 WHEREAS, automatic sprinkler systems are intended to enhance life safety and
13 protect property, but sprinklers can be omitted from exterior spaces, such as decks and
14 canopies, because the potential for ignition and fire development in those spaces do not
15 present the same level of concern; and
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17 WHEREAS, the City Council desires to provide property owners with the option to
18 construct small exterior, non-enclosed spaces on existing buildings without triggering a
19 requirement to install automatic fire sprinklers throughout the existing home; and
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21 WHEREAS, to improve clarity and consistency in administering the automatic sprinkler
22 system requirements in the Fire Code applicable to single-family dwellings, duplexes, and
23 townhouses, the Department recommends adopting the code amendments herein; and
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25 WHEREAS, the City Council finds that these amendments to KMC 21.33.050 are
26 sufficient to protect the health, safety, and welfare of the community.
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28 NOW, THEREFORE, the City Council of the City of Kirkland do ordain as follows:
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30 Section 1. Section 21.33.050 of the Kirkland Municipal Code and the corresponding
31 portions of Ordinance No. 4491 § 4 (part) (2015) are amended to read as follows, with the new
32 text shown in underline; all other provisions of these sections remain unchanged and in full
33 force:
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35 **21.33.050 Existing buildings.**

36 (a) Existing buildings that would be required to install an automatic sprinkler system, if new,
37 shall comply with this section when an addition is made to the building.
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39 Exception 1: Buildings classified as single-family, duplex, or townhouse under the
40 International Residential Code, which would be required to be sprinklered due to
41 inadequate fire flow or fire department access, are allowed to add up to five hundred
42 square feet of enclosed space without being required to install fire sprinklers. This
43 exception shall be used one time only, and acknowledgement of its use shall be
44 recorded to run with the property title prior to building permit issuance.
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Exception 2: Buildings classified as single-family, duplex, or townhouse under the International Residential Code that would otherwise be required to be sprinklered for any reason are allowed to add up to five hundred square feet of exterior, non-enclosed space without being required to install fire sprinklers. This exception shall be used one time only, and acknowledgement of its use shall be recorded to run with the property title prior to building permit issuance. This Exception 2 and the above Exception 1 are not mutually exclusive.

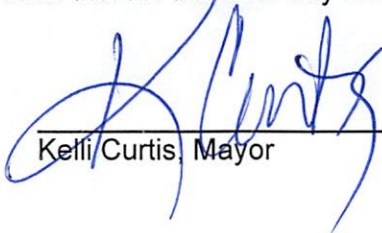
(b) Any existing building required to install an automatic sprinkler system under the provisions of this section shall install such system throughout the entire building. Subject to the approval of the fire department, a phasing plan of up to five years is permitted.

Section 2. If any provision of this ordinance or its application to any person or circumstance is held invalid, the remainder of the ordinance or the application of the provision to other persons or circumstances is not affected.

Section 3. This ordinance shall be in force and effect five days from and after its passage by the Kirkland City Council and publication as required by law, in the summary form attached to the original of this ordinance and by this reference approved by the City Council.

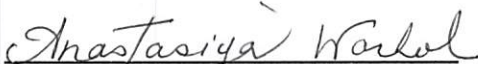
Passed by majority vote of the Kirkland City Council in open meeting this 16th day of June, 2026.

Signed in authentication thereof this 16th day of June, 2026.



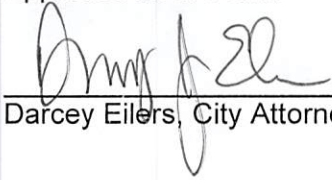
Kelli Curtis, Mayor

Attest:



Anastasiya Warhol, City Clerk

Approved as to Form:



Darcey Eilers, City Attorney

Publication Date: 06/22/2026

PUBLICATION SUMMARY
OF ORDINANCE NO. O-4939

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF KIRKLAND RELATING TO AUTOMATIC FIRE SPRINKLER REQUIREMENTS WHEN ALTERING EXISTING SINGLE-FAMILY, DUPLEX, AND TOWNHOME USES AND AMENDING SECTION 21.33.050 TO ADD AN EXCEPTION FOR EXTERIOR, NON-ENCLOSED SPACE.

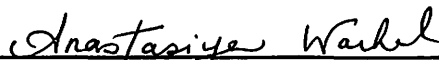
1 SECTION 1. Amends Section 21.33.050 of the Kirkland Municipal Code relating to
2 existing buildings by adding an exception to automatic sprinkler system requirements for up to
3 500 square feet of exterior, non-enclosed space.
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5 SECTION 2. Provides a severability clause for the ordinance.
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7 SECTION 3. Authorizes publication of the ordinance by summary and establishes the
8 effective date as five days after publication of summary.
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11 The full text of this Ordinance will be mailed without charge to any person upon request
12 made to the City Clerk for the City of Kirkland. The Ordinance was passed by the Kirkland City
13 Council at its meeting on the 16th day of June, 2026.
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15 I certify that the foregoing is a summary of Ordinance O-4939 approved by the Kirkland
16 City Council for summary publication.



Anastasiya Wathol, City Clerk