

## ARTICLE V. - FLOATING HOMES

### Sec. 14-181. - Definition.

The following words, terms and phrases, when used in this article, shall have the meanings ascribed to them in this section, except where the context clearly indicates a different meaning:

*Floating home* means any structure designed to be waterborne and which is used primarily as a dwelling, but not including vessels used primarily as mobile waterborne vessels for transportation.

(Code 1986, § 31.051)

*Vessel, Houseboat, etc. means:*

- (1) Proper current registration documents issued by a valid governmental agency within the United States.
- (2) Marine power for navigational purposes.
- (3) A control center located forward on the vessel that provides fully operational steering and throttle control of the vessel during navigation.
- (4) All legally required navigational lights, aides, and equipment as proscribed by the relevant governmental agency appropriate for the size and type of vessel.

**Cross reference**— Definitions generally, § 1-2.

### Sec. 14-182. - Intent.

The intent of this article is to bring floating homes within the scope of the regulatory scheme applicable to land based dwellings, making modifications necessary to accommodate the unique features of floating homes.

(Code 1986, § 31.050)

### Sec. 14-183. - Violation; penalty.

Any violation of this article shall be punishable as provided in section 1-15.

(Code 1986, § 31.062)

### Sec. 14-184. - Certificate of occupancy.

- (a) No floating home shall be occupied as a dwelling unless a certificate of occupancy has been issued by the building official. Cooking and sleeping facilities within a floating home shall be prima facie evidence that it is occupied as a dwelling. The building official shall issue a certificate of occupancy when the following conditions are fulfilled:
  - (1) Compliance with structural requirements.
  - (2) Compliance with minimum housing standards.
  - (3) Compliance with moorage requirements.
  - (4) Payment of the certificate fee.

However, a certificate of occupancy shall not be granted unless the planning department issues a determination of eligibility under the city's rate of growth ordinance (ROGO).

- (b) The initial fee for certification shall be \$25.00. The fee for recertification of a floating home moved to another moorage berth shall be \$10.00.

- (c) Certification shall be valid until revoked and may be revoked by the building official for violation of the terms of this article.

(Code 1986, § 31.052)

Sec. 14-185. - Compartmentation and flotation devices.

- (a) *Compartmentation of devices.* Watertight pontoons, floats, hulls or other devices used to keep the floating home afloat shall be fitted with transverse or longitudinal watertight bulkheads which provide compartmentation sufficient to keep the fully loaded floating home afloat with positive stability with any one compartment flooded. This subsection may be waived by the building official upon certification by a competent architect or engineer familiar with such devices that design, materials and construction of the hull or other flotation device is such that the possibility of rupture is extremely remote.
- (b) *Construction generally.* Flotation devices shall be structurally sound and securely fastened to the floating home superstructure. Flotation devices shall be constructed so that access to each compartment is readily available from the first floor level of the completed floating home. The external surfaces of all flotation devices shall be watertight and thoroughly protected from corrosion from saltwater, solvents and weather.
- (c) *Bilge pump.* Where permanent-type flotation such as Styrofoam or plastic foam is not provided, an adequate portable bilge pump shall be maintained in proper working order.
- (d) *Holding tank.* Flotation and decking shall provide access to the sewage pump.
- (e) *Material.* All material, such as decking, siding and subflooring, which is subjected to moisture or water splash shall be of a type not adversely affected by moisture or shall be treated.

(Code 1986, § 31.053)

Sec. 14-186. - Electrical wiring and service.

- (a) *Scope.* This section covers the electric conductors and equipment installed within or on floating homes and the conductors that connect floating homes to the supply of electricity.
- (b) *Branch circuits, feeders and calculations.* Branch circuits, feeders and calculations shall correspond to requirements for a single unit of a multifamily dwelling and shall comply with the building code in effect in this city.
- (c) *Services.* Services shall be provided as follows:
  - (1) Service equipment shall be placed ashore and shall comply with the electrical code and the building code in all applicable respects. The power supply from the dock or shore to a floating home shall be cord type S-SO or ST, installed in compliance with the electrical code with one conductor in the cord for grounding only, in addition to the neutral conductor.
  - (2) Individual cord overcurrent protection shall not exceed 50 amperes. Not more than two cords may be installed to supply one vessel. Cords shall be fitted with an approved separable connector at the shore end and directly connected at the vessel distribution panel. The cord shall be supported with a corrosion-resistant, mesh-type strain relief device at the vessel end.
- (d) *Grounding.* The neutral terminal block of the vessel's distribution panel shall not be grounded to the metal parts of the vessel. The grounding conductor of the supply cord shall be terminated on a grounding bus in the distribution panel. The hull, if metal, and electrical equipment metallic piping, exposed metal structural members, metal railing, ladders, etc., shall be effectively bonded to the ground bus. If the hull is built of material other than metal, a ground electrode of corrosion-resistant metal shall be so located as to be in contact with the water and shall be connected with no. 6 AWG copper wire to the ground bus. The electrode shall be of bronze or brass and not smaller than one-quarter inch in diameter and 18 inches in length.
- (e) *Wiring methods.* Installation in wood frame construction shall be in accordance with the electrical code and the building code.

(Code 1986, § 31.054)

**Cross reference—** Utilities, ch. 74.

**Sec. 14-187. - Plumbing.**

The plumbing of all floating homes shall comply with the requirements of the plumbing code adopted by the city in section 14-356, except as follows: plastic piping, A.B.C. drainage, waste and vent piping and PVC drainage, waste and vent piping conforming to the product and installation standards of the International Association of Plumbing and Mechanical Officials will be permitted as an alternate method of construction when first approved by the building official. Plastic pipe in floating homes or other structures shall be limited to that part within the walls of the floating home or other structure.

(Code 1986, § 31.055)

**Sec. 14-188. - Inboard sewage device.**

An approved sewage receiving tank and ejection device shall be installed aboard every floating home or other floating structure. The device shall consist of an approved tank with a liquid capacity of not less than 30 gallons nor more than 40 gallons and shall be equipped with a 1½-inch or larger discharge line and a one-half-horsepower pump. The inboard sewage device shall be connected to an approved moorage sewage collection system or shall have the capability of being pumped out into a sewage tank truck.

(Code 1986, § 31.056)

**Sec. 14-189. - Fuel gas piping.**

All gas piping installed in a floating home or in any other floating structure shall be installed in accordance with the building code with the following exception: exposed piping. All gas piping installed in a floating home or other floating structure which is exposed to corrosion shall be provided with an approved protective coating or shall be galvanized and painted.

(Code 1986, § 31.057)

**Sec. 14-190. - Building heights.**

The building height of a floating home shall not exceed two stories, and the total height measured from the first deck to the highest point on the roof ridge or gable shall not exceed 22 feet.

(Code 1986, § 31.058)

**Sec. 14-191. - Exit facilities.**

The facilities of all exits of a floating home shall comply with the requirements for dwellings as set forth in the building code except as follows: exterior exits. Stairways or ramps from the floating home to the mooring deck or float shall be at least 36 inches in width and shall be provided with guardrails on both sides.

(Code 1986, § 31.059)

**Sec. 14-192. - Guardrails.**

(a) Guardrails at least 36 inches in height shall be provided in the floating home in the following locations:

- (1) Both sides of all exterior stairways and ramps.
- (2) All edges of occupied roof areas.
- (3) Edges of all decks not encompassed by the exterior walls of the floating home superstructure.

- (b) Guardrails shall be designed to withstand a load of 20 pounds per foot applied at the top of the rail. In open-type railings, intermediate members shall not be spaced more than nine inches apart.

(Code 1986, § 31.060)

Sec. 14-193. - Moorage standards; parking; density of land site.

- (a) Moorage berths for floating homes shall be connected to a public street by land or by walkway not less than four feet wide. Walkways and berths shall be illuminated at an average intensity of two footcandles.
- (b) One off-street parking space shall be available for the exclusive use of the occupants of each filled moorage berth.
- (c) Floating home moorages shall not cause the density limitation applicable to the land site to which the moorage is connected to be exceeded.

(Code 1986, § 31.061)