

**Chapter 15.20
FIRE SAFETY STANDARDS**

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15.20.005 Definitions. General Rules For Interpretation. Unless the context otherwise requires, the following definitions shall be used in the interpretation and construction of this chapter and words used in the present tense shall include the future; the singular number shall include the plural, and the plural the singular; the word "used" shall include arranged, designed, constructed, altered, converted, or intended to be used, and the word "shall" is mandatory and not directory. Whenever reference is made to any portion of this Chapter or any other ordinance or law, the reference shall apply to all amendments and additions now or hereafter made.

- A. "CBC" is the acronym for the California Building Code as adopted by the County of Tuolumne in section 15.04.010 of this code.
- B. "Defensible Space" is the area within the perimeter of a parcel where basic wild-land fire prevention practices and measures are to be implemented and maintained, including but not limited to removing brush, flammable vegetation, or combustible growth that is located from 30 feet to 100 feet from a building or structure measured from the eaves, porches, decks and balconies to the property line, to provide the key point of defense from an approaching wildfire or an escaping structure fire.
- C. "Driveway" shall have the same meaning as provided in Section 11.02.110 of this Code.
- D. "Driveway, common" shall have the same meaning as provided in Section 11.02.120 of this Code.
- E. "Hydrant" refers to a fire hydrant which is an approved upright device which delivers water

through a distribution system for the control of extinguishment of fires. In order for a fire hydrant to be of legal type it shall be approved by a nationally recognized testing agency, and be connected to an approved distribution system which delivers water through an underground piping system with main distribution lines of a minimum of six (6) inches in diameter using an approved type of piping and having a minimum residual pressure remaining on the system of twenty (20) pounds per square inch while flowing a 2 ½ inch hydrant opening in the full open position.

- F. "Inspection Authority" refers to the Fire Prevention Division of the Tuolumne County Fire Department.
 - G. "Jurisdiction" as used in the portions of the California Fire Code adopted by this Chapter shall mean the County. Whenever the term "corporation counsel" is used it shall mean the County Counsel and whenever the term "Chief" is used it shall mean the County Fire Marshal or his/her authorized representative.
 - H. "Wildland" is an area in which development is essentially non-existent, except for roads, railroads, powerlines and similar transportation facilities. Structures, if any, are widely scattered and are primarily for recreation purposes. Wildland Includes large ranches and forests managed for timber production.
- (Ord. 3241 § 3, 2013; Ord. 3151 § 8, 2010; Ord. 2579 § 5, 2004; Ord. 2410 § 2, 2001)

15.20.010 Commercial and industrial standards.

As a condition of the granting of a Building Permit under this Title, or the Certificate of Occupancy for commercial or industrial structures as defined in the currently adopted California Building Code, the improvements set forth herein shall be installed.

- A. Fire Flow Requirements. Fire flow meeting the standards set forth in the California Fire Code, 2016 Edition, shall be available, except as follows:
 - 1. Where State condemnation for highway purposes dislocates a business, which business desires to relocate to a parcel where water meeting the required standards is not available but is expected to be available by virtue of a proposed water project, then such business may relocate to such parcel provided the owners enter into an agreement with the County which provides for the following:
 - a. Adequate interim water supply.
 - b. Hookup to the new water system when available.
 - c. If the new system is not available within a given period of time, the owners will either personally meet the water standards or cease business operations at that location.
 - d. Extension of time for hook up by mutual agreement where hook up to the new water system is delayed through no fault of the owners.
 - 2. Interior or exterior remodeling of existing commercial and industrial structures is permitted without meeting the Fire Flow Standards provided that the remodeling will not increase the square footage of the structure.
 - 3. Temporary and seasonal structures of less than five hundred (500) square feet are exempt from the Fire Flow Standards contained subject to approval by the Fire Prevention Division and fire safety conditions as are deemed appropriate by the Fire Prevention Division.
- B. Standards for Fire Protection Appliances. Required fire protection appliances shall meet the requirements of the California Fire Code, National Fire Protection Association, or National Fire Codes.
- C. Water Mains.
 - 1. Water mains shall be looped or cross-connected and dead ends avoided insofar as it is practical.
 - 2. The diameter of water mains on which fire hydrants are served shall be a

minimum of six (6) inches and larger where necessary to provide required fire flow.

- D. Water Supply Standards.
 - 1. Water storage for fire flow requirements will be sufficient to supply the required rate for two (2) hours in addition to maximum average daily consumption. The distribution system shall be designed and constructed so that it will deliver the required fire flow at any hydrant in the system while the system is in normal operation without reducing the residual pressure in any part of the system below twenty (20) pounds per square inch.
 - 2. The water supply shall be adequate to meet the maximum daily consumption needs and recover to minimum fire standards from a complete (two hour) fire flow draw down within ninety-six (96) hours.
 - 3. Water storage shall be required to assure the required minimum duration fire flow with the single most serious interruption to power lines, water mains or pump units.
- E. Building Construction Plans and Specifications. Plans and specifications shall be submitted to the Tuolumne County Fire Prevention Division for review and approval prior to construction/installation. These plans shall include a plot plan and floor plan.
- F. Building Height Limitations. The maximum height and number of stories of any building shall not exceed thirty (30) feet or two (2) stories in height except as provided in the following provisions:
 - 1. The limit set forth above may be increased by one (1) story if the building is provided with an approved Automatic Engineered Fire Sprinkler and Automatic Electronic Fire Alarm System throughout. Other alternative measures may be approved by the Tuolumne County Fire Prevention Division. This increase allowance shall not apply to the following.
 - a. Hazardous material occupancies as defined in the currently adopted CBC.
 - b. Where an increase in floor area beyond that allowed in the currently adopted CBC was allowed based upon installation of Automatic Engineered Fire Sprinklers.
 - c. Where Automatic Engineered Fire Sprinklers were substituted for one (1) hour fire resistive construction.

Exceptions for towers, steeples and spires as provided for in the currently adopted CBC will be allowed.

(Ord. 3305 § 4, 2016; Ord. 3241 § 3, 2013; Ord. 3151 § 9, 2010; Ord. 3016 §§ 9 & 10, 2009; Ord. 2579 § 6, 2004; Ord. 2410 § 3 (part); Ord. 2353 § 5, 2000; Ord. 2314 §§ 51 & 52, 1999; Ord. 2160 § 2, (part), 1996; Ord. 2052 § 3, 1994; Ord. 1874 § 2 (part), 1991).

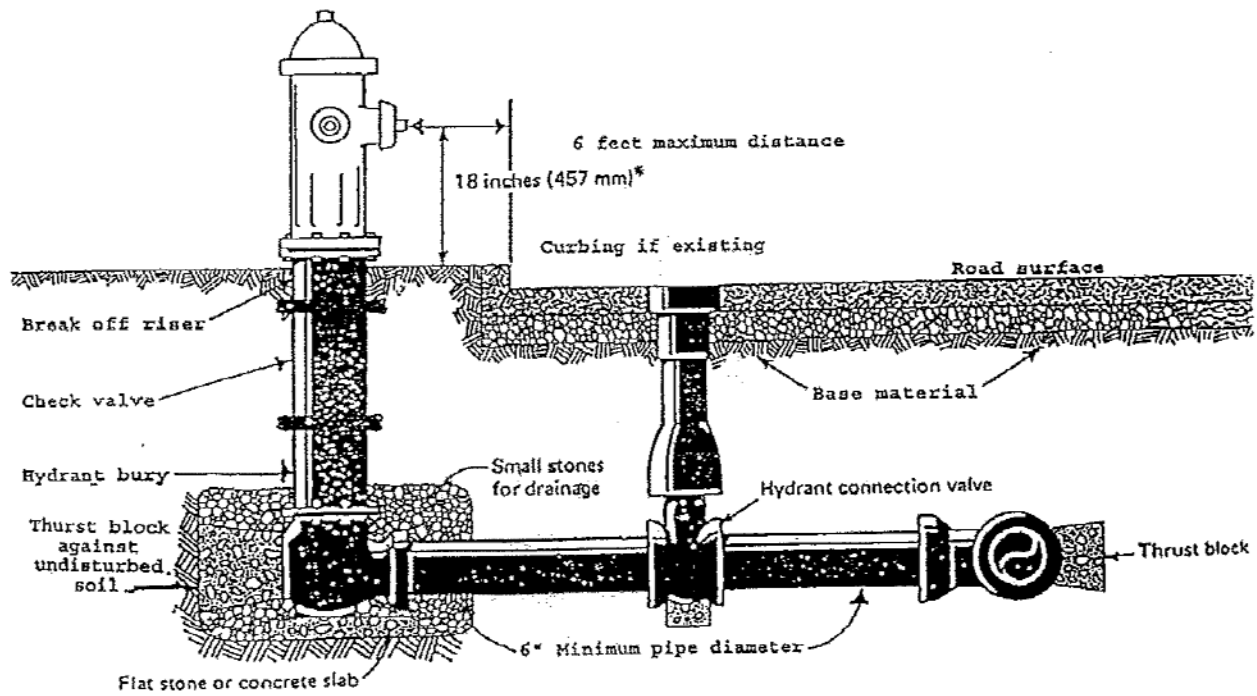
15.20.020 Residential Standards. (REPEALED BY ORD. 3241 § 3, 2013) (Ord. 2160 § 2 (part), 1996; Ord. 1874 § 2 (part) 1991).

15.20.030 Fire hydrant installation standards.

- A. Fire hydrant installations with required fire flow and locations in commercial, industrial and residential areas shall meet the following standards:
1. Fire hydrants shall be placed no closer than four (4) feet nor farther than twelve (12) feet from a roadway.
 2. Fire hydrants in residential areas shall be so placed that no point along the front of any parcel being served by the water distribution system will be located more than three hundred (300) feet from a fire hydrant.
 3. Fire hydrants located in commercial and industrial areas shall be so placed that the furthest portion of the building being served by the water distribution system shall be no more than three hundred (300) feet from a fire hydrant. Distances shall be measured along a primary or paved access road by way of travel by fire equipment to the building.
 4. The center of the fire hydrant discharge (steamer) shall be eighteen (18) inches above grade.
 5. Where fire flows of five hundred (500) gallons per minute or more are required, fire hydrants shall be a dry barrel, self-draining type with the valve in the base and painted bright yellow. Each hydrant shall be equipped with the following outlets:
 - a. Two, 2½ inch outlets
 - b. One, 4½ inch outletThreads on the outlets shall be National Standard Threads (NST). Fire hydrants shall be on a minimum six (6) inch riser.
 6. Fire hydrants shall be installed so that they are visible for a minimum distance

of fifty (50) feet front the right hand lane of the road.

7. Whenever possible, fire hydrants shall be placed on the cut side of the roadway and in a location where fire apparatus using it will not block the roadway.
- B. Fire Hydrant Installation Reference. The following diagram shall be used for hydrant installation reference: (Ord. 3298 § 13, 2016; Ord. 3241 § 3, 2013; Ord. 2160 § 2 (part), 1996; Ord. 1874 § 2 (part), 1991).



WHERE PAVED GUTTERS ARE INSTALLED THE CENTER OF THE HYDRANT SHALL BE NO MORE THAN 6 FEET FROM THE CENTER OF THE DIKE, INCLUDING SIDEWALKS.

15.20.040 Identification of buildings. All residential, commercial, and industrial buildings/complexes existing or newly constructed shall be numbered in accordance with and shall meet all requirements of Chapter 12.12, Uniform Property Numbering System of this code. This section replaces Section 505.1, Address Numbers, of the California Fire Code, 2016 Edition. (Ord. 3309 § 2, 2017; Ord. 3305 § 5, 2016; Ord. 3241 § 3, 2013; Ord. 3151 § 10, 2010; Ord. 3016 § 12, 2009; Ord. 2353 § 6, 2000; Ord. 2160 § 2 (part), 1996; Ord. 1874 § 2 (part), 1991)

15.20.045 Off site street signing.

- A. Requirements for a Final Inspection. As a condition precedent to the granting of a Final Inspection, the applicant shall demonstrate that the street signing meeting the requirements of Section 11.12.050 Street Signing of this Code exists. This section replaces Section 505.2, Street or Road Signs, of the California Fire Code, 2016 Edition.
- B. Existing Street Signing. If street signing is not in place at the time a Building Permit is applied for the applicant shall:
 - 1. For County maintained streets, contact the Roads Division of the Community Resources Agency and request that a street sign be installed for streets within the County Road Maintenance System.
 - 2. For privately maintained streets, purchase and have signs installed to the nearest signed street of the same size, type and materials as those in present use by the Roads Division of the Community Resources Agency prior to the Final Inspection of a Building Permit.

(Ord. 3305 § 6, 2016; Ord. 3241 § 3, 2013; Ord. 3151 § 11, 2010; Ord. 3016 § 13, 2009; Ord. 2353 § 7, 2000; Ord. 2160 § 2 (part), 1996).

15.20.050 Residential driveways.

- A. Granting of a Building Permit. As a condition precedent to the granting of a Building Permit, the applicant must demonstrate that the driveway, from the access road to the building, can be constructed to meet the requirements set forth herein. As a condition precedent to the granting of a Final Inspection, the applicant must demonstrate that the driveway is constructed in a manner that meets these standards which are in addition to Section 503, Fire Department Access Roads, of the California Fire Code, 2016 Edition.
- B. Driveway Installation. All residential buildings shall have a driveway designed and installed

in accordance with Title 11 of the Tuolumne County Ordinance Code.

- C. Exceptions. In the event that a driveway cannot be designed and installed to meet the requirements due to seasonal access, topographic or geologic conditions, exceptions may be allowed by the inspection authority, where the exception provides the same overall practical effect as these regulations towards providing safe access for emergency personnel.
- D. Request for an Exception. Request for an exception shall be made in writing prior to the issuance of a Building Permit to the inspection authority by the applicant or the applicant's authorized representative. The request shall state the specific section(s) for which an exception is requested, material facts supporting the contention of the applicant, the details of the exception or alternative measure proposed, and a map showing the proposed location and siting of the exception or alternative measure.
- E. Replacement Buildings or Additions. In cases where Building Permits are for replacement buildings or additions to existing buildings and increased use is not anticipated, these requirements may be waived by the inspection authority.
- F. Security Agreement. In the event a project developer wishes to receive a Final Inspection from the Building and Safety Division of the Community Resources Agency prior to the satisfactory completion of all conditions of an entitlement, the developer may request, and the County may agree, that occupancy be allowed if an agreement for completion is executed and security is provided.

This agreement is designed to accommodate projects which are normally reviewed by the Fire Prevention Division of the Tuolumne County Fire Department and the Planning and Engineering Divisions of the Community Resources Agency and includes driveway improvements. The amount of security shall be up to a maximum of 175 percent of the estimated construction costs. Acceptable types of security include:

- 1. Cash - Payment by cash or check must have owners name and Assessor's Parcel Number on the check. If such security is posted, the interest earned on the deposit will be accrued as follows: Average rate of return earned by County minus one (1) percentage point.

2. Assignment of a Personal Savings Account - Assigning a personal savings account is an acceptable form of security when placed in owner's name and assigned to the County. Such a security must consist of the actual savings passbook and a separate Notice of Assignment. Included on the Notice of Assignment shall be the owner's name, account number, Assessor's Parcel Number and the amount of the assignment.
3. Letter of Credit - This security must be in the owner's name, irrevocable and be documented by a letter or statement from a bank showing the following information: the owner of the property, the Assessor's Parcel Number, the amount of the credit, and documentation required by the bank to collect (usually a letter signed by the County indicating the proper steps have not been taken as agreed). The letter or statement must clearly state that the County is the beneficiary of the credit amount.
4. Hold on a Personal Savings Account or Certificate of Deposit - Placing a hold on a personal savings account or certificate of deposit is acceptable security. Such security must be documented by a letter written by a bank or savings institution in which the owner of the account, Assessor's Parcel Number, amount of hold, and account number are clearly identified. The letter must state that the amount is set aside solely for the purpose of security and is available to the holder.
5. Certificate of Deposit - A Certificate of Deposit (CD) is an acceptable form of security when placed in the owner's name and made payable to the County. CDs should have an open maturity date, be automatically renewed, or should be for the full term of the agreement. Included on the CD shall be the owner's name and Assessor's Parcel Number. Interest earned on the account may be payable or available to the holder.
6. Faithful Performance Bond - Such security is acceptable only when in the form set forth in Government Code section 66499.1.

Security will be released only after satisfactory completion of all conditions described in the agreement are demonstrated by the owner and the owner makes his/her request in writing. (Ord. 3309 § 3, 2017; Ord. 3305 § 7, 2016; Ord. 3298 § 14,

2016; Ord. 3241 § 3, 2013; Ord. 3151 § 12, 2010; Ord. 3016 § 14, 2009; Ord. 2410 § 4 (part), 2001; Ord. 2353 § 8, 2000; Ord. 2314 § 53, 1999; Ord. 2061 § 2 (part), 1996; Ord 1874 § 2 (part), 1991).

15.20.055 Gate entrances.

- A. Final Inspection. As a condition precedent to the granting of a Building Permit, the applicant must demonstrate that the Gate Entrance requirements as set forth in Chapter 11.12 of this Code, can be met and constructed to meet the requirements set forth herein. As a condition precedent to the granting of a "Final Inspection," the applicant must demonstrate that the gate entrance is constructed in a manner that meets these standards.
- B. Replacement Dwellings. In cases where Building Permits are for replacement dwellings or additions to existing dwelling units and increased use is not anticipated, these requirements may be waived by the inspection authority.
- C. Existing Gates. In cases where a gated access is already existing and the alteration or removal of the existing gated entrance cannot be designed and installed to meet these requirements due to topographic or geologic conditions, upon request by the applicant or his/her authorized representative, exceptions to the standards within this subsection may be allowed by the inspection authority, where the exception provides for the same overall practical effect as these regulations towards providing a safe area for emergency vehicles to park while trying to gain gate access to the applicants parcel.
- D. Exceptions. Request for an exception shall be made in writing to the inspection authority by the applicant or the applicant's authorized representative. The request shall state the specific section(s) for which an exception is requested, material facts supporting the contention of the applicant, the details of the exception, and a map showing the proposed location and siting of the exception or alternative measures. (Ord. 3298 §§ 15 & 16, 2016; Ord. 3241 § 3, 2013; Ord. 3151 § 13, 2010; Ord. 2410 § 5 (part), 2001; Ord. 2353 § 9, 2000; Ord. 2061 § 2 (part), 1996).

15.20.060 Setbacks, defensible space and fuel modification.

- A. Setbacks. Notwithstanding Sections 17.52.050, 17.56.020 and 17.56.040 of the Tuolumne County Ordinance Code, setbacks for structure defensible space shall comply

with Title 14 California Code of Regulations section 1276.01, as amended from time to time, and this Section.

- B. Defensible space shall be provided around all buildings and accessory buildings on parcels located in areas that are classified as moderate, high or very high by CalFire's Fire and Resource Assessment Program.
- C. Fuel modification. Fire hazard reduction plans, as required by Section 16.08.030 of the Tuolumne County Ordinance Code, shall be developed to reduce the intensity of a wildfire by reducing the volume and density of flammable vegetation through the strategic siting of fuel modification and greenbelts to provide increased safety for emergency fire equipment and evacuating civilians and a point of attack or defense from a wildfire.
- D. The provisions of subsections B and C shall not apply to single specimens of trees, ornamental shrubbery, or similar plants which are used as ground cover. Trees do not need to be removed, but must be limbed up to 6' to 8' above ground level, provided that pruning of live branches does not extend up the tree trunk more than ½ the height of the tree or remove more than one-third of the live crown.
- E. Exceptions. A request for an exception to Setback and Fuel Modification requirements shall be made in writing to the inspection authority by the applicant or the applicant's authorized representative. The request shall state the specific section(s) for which an exception is requested, material facts supporting the contention of the applicant, the details of the exception or alternative measures proposed, and shall include a map showing the proposed location of the exception or alternative measures and a written summary of the exception or alternatives. Exceptions or alternative measures shall be limited to the following:
 - 1. Setbacks may be reduced when the applicant or his/her authorized representative submits a comprehensive fuel reduction plan to the inspection authority. Once the fuel reduction plan is approved by the inspection authority, the plan shall be implemented and completed prior to approval of the Final Parcel or Subdivision Map, or prior to conducting a final inspection under a building permit, or issuing a building permit. Implementation and completion shall be documented and approved by the inspection authority.
 - 2. Fuel breaks or maintained green belts with other alternative built-in fire protection

measures based upon certain modifications of the California Building Code standards for one-hour fire resistive construction installed on the exterior of a structure including the eaves, decks and porches may be granted by the inspection authority when setback requirements are physically impossible to meet and the alternative measures substantially reduce the fire hazard to a level equivalent to that of the setback, are agreed upon by the applicant prior to the issuance of a Building Permit and are completed prior to the final inspection or the issuance of a certificate of occupancy for the Building Permit:

- 3. Setbacks shall not be reduced to less than six (6) feet from the overhang of the eaves on the affected side requiring the setback.
- F. Disposal of Flammable Vegetation and Fuels. Disposal of flammable vegetation and fuels, including chipping, burying, burning or removal to an approved disposal facility, caused by development and construction, and fuel modification shall be completed prior to completion of road construction or final inspection of a Building Permit, except that flammable vegetation and fuel may be stored to be burned at a later date as long as the material is stored outside the required Defensible Space. (Ord. 3285 § 1, 2015; Ord. 3241 § 3, 2013; Ord. 3151 § 14, 2010; Ord. 2579 § 7, 2004; Ord. 2410 § 6 (part), 2001; Ord. 2160 § 2 (part), 1996; Ord. 1874 § 2 (part), 1991).

15.20.070 Appeals. For Sections 15.20.050, 15.20.055, and 15.20.060, where an exception is not granted by the inspection authority, the applicant may, within ten (10) days of the date of the decision, appeal to the Board of Supervisors. The appeal shall set forth in writing the reasons for the appeal and shall be submitted to the Clerk of the Board along with the appeal fee set forth in Chapter 3.40. A copy of the appeal shall be submitted to the inspection authority by the appellant. The Clerk shall schedule the matter for public hearing before the Board within thirty (30) days and give notice of hearing. Within forty-five (45) days of receipt of the appeal, the Board shall consider the public record, receive testimony, and make all findings and determinations necessary to approve, conditionally approve or deny the exception. (Ord. 3298 § 17, 2016)

15.20.080 Fireworks. In addition to the provisions of the California Fire Code, Chapter 56, fireworks

shall be regulated as follows:

- A. Except as provided in subdivision B, no person shall possess, sell, use, display or explode any device containing flammable or combustible material, such as a safe and sane firework, party popper, snap cap, rocket, firecracker, roman candle, squib, torpedo, torpedo cane, fire balloon, wire core sparkler, wooden core sparkler, black cartridge or other combustible device or explosive substance or any kind of fireworks, by whatsoever name known, within the County.
- B. Professional public displays of fireworks may be permitted where such displays will take place under the supervision and direction of State of California licensed pyrotechnic operator subject to approval of a fireworks display permit by the Fire Prevention Division as follows:
 1. The applicant shall apply for a permit at least fourteen (14) days in advance of the date of the display for which the permit is sought. The application shall be in the form as set forth by the California State Fire Marshal (CSFM), and shall include a current copy of the pyrotechnic operators license with a photo issued by the CSFM and be accompanied by a non-refundable fee as established in Chapter 3.40 of this Code.
 2. The Fire Prevention Division may approve, conditionally approve or deny the application for a permit. The denial shall be based upon a finding that approval of a permit would be contrary to the health, safety and welfare of the public. The decision of the Fire Prevention Division shall be in writing and shall be mailed to the applicant.
 3. Every applicant shall agree to hold the County, its elected and appointed officials, officers, employees, agents and volunteers harmless from any and all claims for damages or other costs arising out of the activity authorized by the permit. (Ord. 3285 § 2, 2015; Ord. 3241 § 3, 2013; Ord. 3151 § 15, 2010; Ord. 3016 § 16, 2009; Ord. 2579 § 8, 2004)

15.20.085 Division of duties. The division of duties for the implementation of the codes referenced in this Chapter shall correspond with the duties and responsibilities of the County Fire Marshal and the County Fire Warden as defined within their

respective job descriptions adopted by the Board of Supervisors. (Ord. 3241 § 3, 2013; Ord. 2579 § 9, 2004)

15.20.090 Violation; enforcement. A violation of this Chapter shall be enforced as provided for in Chapter 1.10 of the Tuolumne County Ordinance Code. (Ord. 3241 § 3, 2013; Ord. 2296 § 6, 1999).

15.20.095 Violation penalty. An applicant for a permit to legalize a violation of this Chapter, after service of a notice and order in accordance with Chapter 1.10 of the Tuolumne County Ordinance Code, shall pay a violation penalty and associated abatement costs as established by the Board of Supervisors and set forth in Chapter 1.10 of the Tuolumne County Ordinance Code. The penalty and abatement costs shall be paid in addition to the regular permit processing fee. (Ord. 3241 § 3, 2013; Ord. 2612 § 13, 2005)

15.20.100 Enforcement responsibility. The provisions of this Chapter shall be enforced by the Fire Prevention Division of the Tuolumne County Fire Department. (Ord. 3241 § 3, 2013; Ord. 3151 § 16, 2010; Ord. 2296 § 20, 1999).

15.20.110 Adoption of codes. Pursuant to Sections 18941.5 and 50022.2 of the Health and Safety Code, the following codes published by the International Code Council, 500 New Jersey Avenue NW, Sixth Floor, Washington D.C., 20001, and the National Fire Protection Association, 1 Batterymarch Park, Quincy, MA 02169, are adopted for the purpose of prescribing regulations within the unincorporated area governing conditions hazardous to life and property from fire and explosion:

- A. The California Fire Code, 2016 Edition, with the Appendices, as amended as follows:
 1. Section 505.2, Street or Road Signs, of Chapter 5 is amended as described in Section 15.20.045(A), Off Site Street Signing, of this Code.
 2. Section 505.1, Address Identification, of Chapter 5 is amended as described in Section 15.20.040, Identification of Buildings, of this Code.
- B. The National Fire Codes, 2016 Edition. (Ord. 3305 § 8, 2016; Ord. 3241 § 3, 2013; Ord. 3151 § 17, 2010; Ord. 3016 § 17, 2009; Ord. 2579 § 4, 2004)