

LEGISTAR #56834 – Version 1

DRAFTER'S ANALYSIS: Section 29.22 is created to incentivize the installation of home fire sprinklers and allow builders and homeowners greater flexibility in the design and construction of one- and two-family dwellings. The Uniform Dwelling Code ("UDC") currently requires basements and ground floors used for sleeping must be provided with at least two exits. Builders and homeowners may choose to install fire sprinklers throughout their home in lieu of a second exit from sleeping areas in basements.

Home fire sprinklers are proven to save lives, property and the environment. The current UDC requirements recognize home fire sprinklers as an alternative to a second exit from habitable floor levels above the second floor. The proposal is not more or less restrictive than the UDC. It offers the builder and homeowner an alternative to a second exit. The option allows greater flexibility in the code to address site conditions that are unfavorable for a second exit of egress window.

Note: This amendment will become effective upon approval by DSPS.

The Common Council of the City of Madison do hereby ordain as follows:

Section 29.22 entitled "Exits From Basements and Ground Floors Used for Sleeping" of the Madison General Ordinances is created to read as follows:

"29.22 EXITS FROM BASEMENTS AND GROUND FLOORS USED FOR SLEEPING.

(1) In this section:

"Basement" refers to that portion of a dwelling below the first floor or ground floor with its entire floor below grade.

"Fire sprinklers" means an automatic fire suppression or control device that operates automatically when its heat-activated element is heated to its thermal rating or above, allowing water to discharge over a specified area.

"First floor" means the first floor level above any ground floor or basement or, in the absence of a ground floor or basement, means the lowest floor level in the dwelling.

"Ground floor" means that level of a dwelling, below the first floor, located on a site with a sloping or multilevel grade and which has a portion of its floor line at grade.

(2) The following is in addition to the requirements of Wis. Admin. Code ch. 321:

a. Wis. Adm. § SPS 321.03(5)(b)1. shall be amended to add the following exception:

i. A second exit from a basement or ground floor used for sleeping is not required if the dwelling is fully protected by fire sprinklers in accordance with NFPA 13R or 13D."

EDITOR'S NOTE: Wis. Adm. § SPS 321.03(5)(b)1. reads as follows:

"(b) Basements and ground floors used for sleeping.

1. Basements and ground floors used for sleeping shall be provided with at least 2 exits."