

**ARLINGTON COUNTY CODE**

**Chapter 18**

**PLUMBING AND GAS CODES**

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**§ 18-1. Title and Scope.**

A. *Title.* This chapter shall be known as the "Arlington County Plumbing and Gas Code," and may be so cited.

B. *Scope.* Plumbing Systems or Gas Systems:

This Code shall apply to all plumbing and gas systems and to parts thereto which are hereafter installed in buildings of the occupancy classifications enumerated in The Virginia Uniform Statewide Building Code.

C. *Plugging, capping and sealing of abandoned sewer laterals.* When a building is razed or a new sewer connection is provided for an existing building, the abandoned sewer lateral shall be plugged or capped at, or outside of, the property line, and tightly sealed with an approved material. A permit for this work must be obtained before the work is started. Where evidence of an abandoned sewer later is found on a vacant lot or in an abandoned building, it shall be plugged and sealed after proper notice to the owner. Should the owner or agent for the premises ordered to perform this work neglect or refuse to comply with the order within thirty (30) days, it shall be the duty of the Inspections Division Chief to arrange to have this work performed and the cost charged as a recorded lien against the property.

(Ord. No. 89-25, 9-23-89; Ord. No. 95-14, 8-8-95; Ord. No. 07-13, 9-18-07, effective 10-1-07; Ord. No. 08-08, 4-19-08, effective 7-1-08; Ord. No. 09-11, 04-28-09, effective 07-01-09)

**§ 18-2. Definitions.**

The following words and terms, when used in this chapter, shall have the following meanings unless the context clearly indicates otherwise:

“Building Official” means the Inspection Services Division Chief of Arlington County or his designee.

“Construction Code Inspector” means the qualified person charged with the inspections of all plumbing and gas work performed in the County.

“Division Chief” means the Building Official of Arlington County.

“License” means the license to engage in the business of plumbing or gasfitting issued by Arlington County.

“Thoroughfare” means any street on which the vehicle count exceeds five thousand (5,000) vehicles per day.

(Ord. No. 86-11, 5-17-86; Ord. No. 88-8, 4-30-88; Ord. No. 89-25, 9-23-89; Ord. No. 95-14, 8-8-95; Ord. No. 07-13, 9-18-07, effective 10-1-07; Ord. No. 08-08, 4-19-08, effective 7-1-08; Ord. No. 09-11, 04-28-09, effective 07-

01-09)

**§ 18-3. Availability of Codes.**

There is hereby made available by the County Board of the County of Arlington, Virginia, the Virginia Uniform Statewide Building Code, latest edition, of which copies of each are on file in the office of the Inspection Services Division, 2100 Clarendon Boulevard, and may be examined during the hours between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. on their regular business days.

(Ord. No. 86-11, 5-17-86; Ord. No. 89-25, 9-23-89; Ord. No. 07-13, 9-18-07, effective 10-1-07; Ord. No. 08-08, 4-19-08, effective 7-1-08; Ord. No. 09-11, 04-28-09, effective 07-01-09)

**§ 18-4. Administration and Enforcement.**

A. *Generally.* The administration and enforcement of this Code shall be the duty of the Building Official who is hereby authorized to take such actions, including the promulgation of rules and regulations, as may be reasonably necessary to enforce the provisions of this Code. Such persons may be appointed and authorized as assistants or agents of the Building Official as may be necessary to carry out the provisions of this Code.

B. *Powers and duties.* It shall be the duty of the Building Official or his designee to cause all plumbing and gas work in or on any building, structure or premises in the County of Arlington to be inspected from time to time, in order to ascertain whether due to the construction, installation or the condition thereof such plumbing and gas work is dangerous to health and safety.

When the use of any plumbing or gas work shall be found dangerous to health and safety, the Building Official or his designee is hereby authorized to order it removed or made safe as may be deemed necessary.

C. *Responsibility of owner or occupant:*

1. Every building, structure or part thereof, shall be kept in good plumbing repair by the owner.
2. It shall be unlawful for any person to knowingly have any plumbing or gas work done on premises under his control or on premises owned by him, except in accordance with the provisions of this Code.

D. *Saving provisions.* Should any clause, sentence, paragraph or part of this Code, or the application thereof to any person or circumstance, be adjudged by a court of competent jurisdiction to be unconstitutional or invalid, said judgment shall not affect, impair or invalidate the remainder of this Code or the application of such provision to other persons or circumstances, but shall be confined in its application to the clause, sentence, paragraph or part thereof, directly involved in the controversy in which said judgment shall have been rendered, and to the person or circumstance involved.

E. The owner of a building or structure, registered plumbing contractor or master plumber may appeal from a decision of the Building Official on his interpretation and enforcement of the provisions of this chapter to the Building Code Board of Appeals as provided herein.

(Ord. No. 86-11, 5-17-86; Ord. No. 88-8, 4-30-88; Ord. No. 89-25, 9-23-89; Ord. No. 95-14, 8-8-95; Ord. No. 07-13, 9-18-07, effective 10-1-07; Ord. No. 08-08, 4-19-08, effective 7-1-08; Ord. No. 09-11, 04-28-09, effective 07-01-09)

**§ 18-5. Registration of Contractors and Certification Requirements.**

Registration and certification.

*Street permit bond and financial responsibility.* Any contractor qualified and registered under State law shall file with the Inspection Services Division a street permit bond in the sum of five thousand dollars (\$5,000.00) to permit the cutting of the surface of streets or highways of the County or tunneling under the same for the purpose

of sewer connections. The registered contractor shall file with the Inspection Services Division a public liability insurance policy with minimum limits of forty thousand dollars (\$40,000.00) or furnish satisfactory evidence of financial responsibility to satisfy claims to the extent of forty thousand dollars (\$40,000.00) of damage to person or property suffered by reason of operation in the public highway.

(Ord. No. 86-11, 5-17-86; Ord. No. 89-25, 9-23-89; Ord. No. 90-33, 10-6-90; Ord. No. 95-14, 8-8-95; Ord. No. 07-13, 9-18-07, effective 10-1-07; Ord. No. 08-08, 4-19-08, effective 7-1-08; Ord. No. 09-11, 04-28-09, effective 07-01-09)

#### § 18-6. Permits and Fees.

A. *Permit required:*

1. *Issuance; compliance, exceptions.* No person shall do plumbing or gas work, except minor repair work as herein defined, until he or she shall have filed an application and received a permit therefor from the Inspection Services Division. No plumbing permits or gas permits shall be issued to any person other than a licensed master plumber or master mechanical worker, except that any permit required by this section may be issued to a person to do any work regulated by this chapter in a single-family dwelling or townhouse used exclusively for residence purposes, including the usual accessory buildings and quarters in connection with such building, provided that the person is the bona fide owner or agent of the owner of such dwelling and the work is done in compliance with all requirements of this Code.
2. *Card.* The plumbing permit card shall be posted on the job in such a manner that it will be clearly visible from the street and shall not be removed, defaced or altered.
3. *Permit application.* Application for a plumbing or gas permit shall be made on forms furnished by the Inspection Services Division. No person shall present any fraudulent information in making application for a plumbing or gas permit, nor shall he or she use the name of another person in order to secure a plumbing or gas permit, except when regularly employed by and authorized to act as agent for a master plumber or master mechanical worker.
4. *Plans required.* Plans must be submitted and approved before permits will be issued for any plumbing work involving new buildings. Every plot plan for structures or premises which will have plumbing shall show the location and size of the public water main and also the location, size, and depth of the public sewer. If no sewer is available, the location and size of the private disposal system shall be shown. If no public water supply is reasonably available to the premises, the location and nature of the private source of supply shall be shown on the plot plan. Complete mechanical plans including fixture layout and spacing, size, material and location of all building sewers, building drains, storm sewers, drains, soil, waste, and vent piping and water supply, piping for the installation of, alteration of, or addition of the plumbing, sewage and/or drainage system of any building or premises shall be submitted to Inspection Services Division and approved by the construction plans examiner prior to the issuance of any plumbing permit. The master plumber or master mechanical worker shall file in the Inspection Services Division detailed sketches of the work proposed to be done before permits will be issued for major plumbing alterations or repairs in existing buildings. The permit shall not be issued until the plans or sketches have been approved. A copy of the approved plans shall be on the construction site and available during inspections. All work shall be installed in accordance with the approved plans and any approved amendments thereto.
5. *Abandoned or discontinued work:*
  - a. Should any person to whom a permit has been issued for plumbing or gas work abandon the installation for any reason, he or she shall immediately notify the Inspection Services Division.

- b. If an installation has been partially completed, the permit grantee, upon abandoning the installation, shall notify the Inspection Services Division and request an inspection. A record shall be kept of the results of the inspection.
- c. If a permit grantee abandons an installation after work has been started, the work shall be inspected and a notice of any violations shall be sent to the permit grantee and the bonding company. The master plumber or master mechanical worker, who then proceeds with the installation, shall secure a permit for the entire job and shall be responsible for all work.
- d. In case of abandonment or withdrawal of any permit, seventy percent (70%) of the fee shall be refunded to the applicant, provided that he or she makes a written request before the work is commenced. If work has commenced, the applicant may return the permit with a written request for cancellation and a pro-rata refund of the fee will be made based on the remaining incomplete work; provided further that such request is made within six (6) months after the date the permit is issued.
- e. Before proceeding with any plumbing or gas work which has been started by any other person, an owner or master plumber or master mechanical worker shall make request for an inspection of the installation, and shall secure a permit for the entire job and shall be responsible for all work.
- f. An owner who has secured a plumbing or gas permit may transfer said permit to the master plumber or master mechanical worker, provided he or she notified the Inspection Services Division of his or her intention and receives inspection of the work performed to date.

B. *Fee schedule.* All fees shall be paid prior to release of the permit and in accordance with the fee schedule adopted by the Board. (Ord. No. 86-11, 5-17-86; Ord. No. 87-9, 3-21-87; Ord. No. 88-8, 4-30-88; Ord. No. 89-25, 9-23-89; Ord. No. 90-6, 7-1-90; Ord. No. 91-17, 7-1-91; Ord. No. 92-1, 2-1-92; Ord. No. 93-4, 7-1-93; Ord. No. 95-8, 4-29-95; Ord. No. 98-10, 7-1-98; Ord. No. 07-13, 9-18-07, effective 10-1-07; Ord. No. 08-08, 4-19-08, effective 7-1-08; Ord. No. 09-11, 04-28-09, effective 07-01-09; Ord. No. 10-12, 4-24-10)

#### § 18-7. General Provisions.

A. *Buildings erected over public sewers.* No building shall be erected over a public storm or sanitary sewer, except in cases of undue hardship, limiting the full use of the property, in which case permission may be granted by the County Manager or his designee for storm sewers and sanitary sewers, to construct a limited portion of a building over a public storm or sanitary sewer, provided the plans for such buildings are approved by the Building Official, or his designee. Arlington County will not be responsible for damage to any structure built over a public storm or sanitary sewer if it becomes necessary to excavate under or near such structure to maintain the public storm or sanitary sewer.

B. *Maintenance of trap seals, fixtures and piping.* The plumbing system of any structure shall be maintained so as to prevent sewer or drain air from entering the building. Vent piping and stacks shall be kept free from stoppages; vacant portions of structures or vacated structures which contain plumbing shall have the normal water seal replaced with nonvolatile, nontoxic liquid, such as waste engine oil or glycerin, or the tapped fixture or device shall be disconnected and its drain opening capped or plugged. Fixtures and devices which discharge to the drainage system, if broken or damaged so liquid seals cannot be maintained, shall be replaced or removed and their drain openings capped or plugged. Broken or deteriorated piping which leaks, or emits soil or waste materials, or drain air, shall be replaced if in service, or if out of service, removed and the system closed until such time as restored use and/or service requires its replacement.

C. *Connection to public sewer.* All taps into a sanitary sewer shall be made under the supervision of a

Construction Code Inspector. The connection of a house sewer to a public sanitary sewer shall be made using an approved saddle. The maximum size house sewer which may be connected to an eight (8) inch public sanitary sewer shall be five (5) inches. The maximum size house sewer, which may be connected to a ten (10) inch or larger public sanitary sewer is six (6) inches. All other connections of a house sewer to a public sanitary sewer require the installation of an approved manhole, at the property owner's expense. Taps into the public sanitary sewer shall be at least three (3) feet apart. Taps into sanitary sewer manholes are prohibited, except by permission of the County Manager or his designee. Such taps will be made at the master plumber's expense. Taps into public storm sewers shall be made as directed by the County Manager or his designee. Trenches and excavations at taps into public storm or sanitary sewers shall be maintained in a safe condition and shall be kept free from water to permit adequate inspection.

D. *Work in public right-of-way.* All construction performed within a public right-of-way or easement area shall conform to the requirements contained in the Arlington County Department of Environmental Services Construction Standards and Specifications for Streets, Storm Sewers, Water Mains, and Sanitary Sewers, copies of which are available upon request from the Department of Environmental Services.

E. *Easements for sewers.* Unless a right-of-way or easement is recorded with the County Clerk of Arlington County, Virginia, no sewer or drain from any building or premises shall be installed on any adjacent property or premises, even though at the time of the proposed installation the adjacent properties are under common ownership. Any plumbing permits hereafter issued without such record of easement for installation as indicated in the previous paragraph shall be null and void, and installations made without such record of easement shall be removed in case of inability on the part of the person desiring right-of-way to secure an easement or right-of-way within thirty (30) days after notice of violation.

F. *Method of sewage disposal:*

1. For a one- or two-family dwelling, a public sanitary sewer shall be deemed available when such sewer abuts the premises on which the dwelling is located, any part of the building is within three hundred (300) feet of sewer, and a connection may be made lawfully thereto according to local jurisdictional requirements.
2. For buildings of any other occupancies, a public sanitary sewer shall be deemed available when such sewer is within five hundred (500) feet of the premises on which the building is located, measured along a street, alley or easement, and a connection may be made lawfully thereto according to local jurisdictional requirements. Any extension of public sewer required hereby shall be made at the expense of the owner of the premises to be served. Such extension shall conform to County regulations and will be inspected by the Department of Environmental Services. This section shall not preclude installation of an extension of greater length if required by, or approved by, the County Manager or his designee.
3. Disposal of radioactive wastes shall conform to rules and regulations of Title 10 Atomic Energy Commission Part 10--Standards of Protection Against Radiation Paragraph 20-203 Disposal by Release into Sanitary Sewerage System, or as required by administrative authority having jurisdiction.
4. *Sewers required.* Every building or separate business establishment having an outside entrance shall have an independent building sewer connection with a public or private sewer, except where one (1) building stands in the rear of another building on the same lot and no public or private sewer is available or can be constructed to the rear building through adjoining alley, court, yard or driveway, the house drain from the front building may be extended to the rear building and the whole may be considered as one (1) house drain.
5. Cooperative apartments, apartment buildings, condominium apartments or office buildings, and office buildings designed for rental purposes may have one (1) common building sewer, provided that other utilities (water, gas and electricity) are supplied to the building through common meters.

In shopping centers and warehouses, each rental unit in one-story buildings to be considered as one (1) building.

*Exception:* Commercial buildings under one (1) roof containing several different units where the landlord is responsible for the maintenance and repair of plumbing, may be served by one (1) system upon written request by the owner so long as separate units within said buildings are not subdividable under both the Zoning and Building Codes. Semi-detached houses, attached houses, or attached condominium houses, shall have one (1) public sewer connection for each living unit.

G. *Source of water supply:*

1. For a one- or two-family dwelling a public water supply system shall be deemed available when such system abuts the premises on which the dwelling is located, any part of the building in within three hundred (300) feet of system, and a connection may be made lawfully thereto.
2. For buildings of any other occupancies, a public water supply system shall be deemed available when such system is within five hundred (500) feet of the premises in which the building is located, measured along a street, and a connection may be made lawfully thereto.
3. *Water service required.* Every building or separate business establishment having an outside entrance, shall have an independent water connection with a public or private water main, except where one building stands in the rear of another building on an interior lot and no public or private water supply main is available or can be installed to the rear building through an adjoining alley, court, yard or driveway, the water supply from the front building may be extended to the rear building and the whole may be considered as one water service. Water service required for buildings under a single covenant, such as garden apartments, cooperative apartments, apartment buildings, condominium apartments or office buildings, and office buildings designed for rental purposes may have one (1) common water service, provided that other utilities (gas and electricity) are supplied to the building through common meters. In shopping centers and warehouses, each rental unit in one-story buildings shall be considered as one (1) building.

*Exception:* Commercial buildings under one (1) roof containing several different units where the landlord is responsible for the maintenance and repair of plumbing, may be served by one (1) system upon written request by the owner so long as separate units within said building are not subdividable under both the Zoning and Building Codes. Semi-detached houses, attached houses or attached condominium houses shall have separate water service for each living unit.

H. *Water conservation:*

1. *Car wash installation.* Car wash installation shall be equipped with an approved water recycling system. This clause shall be retroactive and all existing car wash installations shall be equipped with such recycling devices by not later than one (1) year of the effective date of this section.
2. *Coin-operated car washes or similar devices.* No coin-operated car wash may be permitted to be installed and used until plans have been submitted to and approved by the administrative authority. The plans must show the method of connection to an approved sanitary sewer system, disposal of rain subsurface water and the protection of the potable water system.

(Ord. No. 86-11, 5-17-86; Ord. No. 88-8, 4-30-88; Ord. No. 99-9, § 1, 4-14-99; Ord. No. 04-22, 10-2-04; Ord. No. 07-13, 9-18-07, effective 10-1-07; Ord. No. 08-08, 4-19-08, effective 7-1-08; Ord. No. 09-11, 04-28-09, effective 07-01-09)