

AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE MUNICIPAL CODE OF THE CITY OF HINESVILLE, GEORGIA, CHAPTER 8 FIRE PREVENTION AND PROTECTION, BY ADDING ARTICLE V – CITY OF HINESVILLE PRIVATELY OWNED FIRE HYDRANT ORDINANCE SECTIONS 8-146 THROUGH 8-154, IN ORDER TO ENSURE THE PROPER INSTALLATION, MAINTENANCE, AND TESTING OF PRIVATELY-OWNED FIRE HYDRANTS WITHIN THE CITY, AND TO ENHANCE FIRE SAFETY AND BETTER PROTECT THE COMMUNITY AND FIREFIGHTING PERSONNEL FROM FIRE-RELATED INJURIES AND FATALITIES.

WHEREAS, the City of Hinesville, Georgia (the “City”) is a municipality duly formed and existing pursuant to Georgia law; and the duly elected governing authority of the City is the Mayor and Council; and

WHEREAS, the Mayor and Council (“the Council”) are authorized under Article 9, Section 2, of the Constitution of the State of Georgia to enact reasonable ordinances to protect the health, safety, morals, convenience, order, propriety, and general welfare of the people of the City; and

WHEREAS, O.C.G.A. Section 25-2-13 (f), authorizes the Council to enact such ordinances as it deems necessary to perform fire safety inspections and related activities; and

WHEREAS, these regulations are designed to ensure that every privately-owned fire hydrant to which the Hinesville Fire Department (“HFP”) or other fire district connects is inspected, serviced, and maintained in accordance with the state’s minimum fire safety standards and requirements, and produces the amount of water required by firefighters to immediately respond to a fire hazard or related emergency; and

WHEREAS, the Mayor and Council have determined that it is in the best interests of the citizens of the City to adopt the following Ordinance in order to provide effective fire protection for its citizens and their property.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF HINESVILLE, GEORGIA , AS FAR AS PRIVATELY-OWNED FIRE HYDRANTS ARE CONCERNED, THE FOLLOWING SHALL APPLY:

SECTION 8-146-TITLE

The Ordinance is titled the "City of Hinesville Privately-Owned Fire Hydrant Ordinance."

SECTION 8-147-DEFINITIONS

Defines key terms used in this Ordinance, including private fire hydrant, fire department, inspection, maintenance, owner, owner's designee, qualified, record, and testing.

1. **Private Fire Hydrant/Privately-Owned Fire Hydrant:** A fire hydrant that is installed on private property for the purpose of providing a water supply for firefighting personnel and is owned and maintained by the owner of the property. A private fire hydrant also includes any fire hydrant located in a right-of-way of a public highway or easement within the City of Hinesville that is owned by a fire district or any person other than the COH.
2. **Fire Department:** The City of Hinesville Fire Department ("HFD")
3. **Inspection:** A visual examination of a private fire hydrant to verify that it appears to be in good operating condition and is free from physical damage.
4. **Maintenance:** Work performed to keep a private fire hydrant operable or to make repairs.
5. **Owner:** Any individual, corporation, partnership, or entity that holds record title to the property upon which a private fire hydrant is installed. For fire hydrants located in the right-of-way of a public highway in the city that are not owned by the City of Hinesville, the owner is the person that owns the fire hydrant itself.
6. **Owner's Designee:** When the owner is not the occupant of the premises upon which a private fire hydrant is located, the occupant, management firm, or managing individual designated by the Owner through specific provisions in the lease, written use agreement, or management contract owner to assume the responsibility to inspect, test, and maintain, correct, and repair a private fire hydrant located on the Owner's property.
7. **Qualified:** Having knowledge of the installation, construction, operation, maintenance, correction, or repair of a fire hydrant and the hazards involved.
8. **Record:** Written documentation of the inspection, testing, maintenance, correction, or repair of a private fire hydrant.
9. **Shall:** Indicates a mandatory requirement.
10. **Testing:** A procedure of periodic physical and operational checks used to determine whether a private fire hydrant is capable of being operated and of performing as intended.

SECTION 8-148-INSTALLATION OF PRIVATE HYDRANTS

1. **Approval Required:** Before installing a private fire hydrant on their property, property owners must first obtain written approval from the Chief of the HFD or his/her designee, and comply with all applicable building codes and regulations.

2. Design and Installation Standards. Private fire hydrants must be installed in accordance with the design and installation standards specified by the HFD and any relevant national or state fire protection standards.

3. Location. Property owners must install private fire hydrants in locations designated by the HFD to ensure easy access for firefighting personnel.

4. Connection to Water Supply. Private fire hydrants must be connected to an approved and sufficient water supply, and the water source must comply with all water quality and pressure standards set by the City.

SECTION 8-149-MAINTENANCE AND TESTING

1. Responsibility. The responsibility for maintaining private fire hydrants lies with the property owner or the owner's designee.

2. Maintenance Schedule. Property owners must establish a maintenance schedule, including periodic inspections, repairs, and flow testing, as required by the HFD. Qualified companies must perform inspection and maintenance annually, while flow testing is required every three (3) years.

3. Records. Property owners must maintain records of all maintenance and testing activities and make them available to the HFD.

SECTION 8-150-ACCESS AND TESTING BY THE CITY OF HINESVILLE FIRE DEPARTMENT (HFD)

1. Access: The HFD has the right to access private fire hydrants for inspection, testing, or firefighting purposes. Property owners must provide unrestricted access to the hydrants when requested by the HFD.

2. Qualifications: No person other than an authorized official of the HFD or a certified private fire hydrant contractor shall open, operate, flow, test, maintain or repair a hydrant.

3. Testing: The HFD may conduct periodic testing of private hydrants to ensure their functionality. Property owners are responsible for facilitating such tests.

4. Inspection: All private water hydrant systems shall be subject to periodic tests as required by HFD. The testing shall be performed by the HFD in accordance with the NFPA and AWWA Standards.

- A. Private fire hydrants shall be inspected annually, and after each operation; flow testing being done in accordance with AWWA Standards.
- B. Fire service main piping shall be inspected (to the extent exposed) annually, and flow tested every five (5) years.
- C. The Owner or Owner's Designee shall, at least monthly, conduct visual inspections of all private, fire, hydrants, and water sources.

5. Repair: Any fire hydrant, which fails inspection, is impaired or otherwise does not function as required by the NFPA Standards, or the manufacture's specifications shall be repaired within thirty (30) days of receiving notice thereof by a certified private fire hydrant contractor on file with the HFD, who shall certify in writing the following:

- A. The persons name, and the date the repairs were performed;
- B. The location of the fire hydrant;
- C. The repairs performed; and
- D. The service condition of the private fire hydrant.

6. Identification and Notification of Impaired Hydrant:

- A. The Owner or Owner's Designee shall notify the HFD in advance of a preplanned impairment of a private fire hydrant.
- B. The Owner or Owner's Designee shall notify the HFD immediately of an emergency impairment of a private fire hydrant.
- C. The Owner or Owner's Designee shall affix an impairment tag approved by the HFD to an impaired fire hydrant at the commencement of a preplanned impairment and at the time of discovery of an emergency impairment.
- D. Once the necessary testing confirms that the repairs have restored the fire hydrant to operational status, the Owner or Owner's Designee shall remove the impairment tag and shall notify the HFD that the hydrant is operational.

SECTION 8-151-PENALTIES AND ENFORCEMENT

1. Violation: Any violation of this Ordinance may result in penalties, including fines, required maintenance and/or repair, or other actions as determined by the HFD.

2. Enforcement: The HFD and other relevant city authorities are responsible for enforcement of this Ordinance.

SECTION 8-152-SEVERABILITY

If any provision of this Ordinance or its application to any person or circumstances is held invalid, the remainder of the ordinance or the application of the provisions to other persons or circumstances shall not be affected.

SECTION 8-153-REPEALER

All ordinances or parts of ordinances in conflict herewith are repealed only to the extent needed to give this Ordinance full force and effect.

SECTION 8-154-AMENDMENT

This Ordinance may be amended as deemed necessary by the City Council of Hinesville.

DULY ADOPTED THIS 4 DAY OF January, 2024, BY THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF HINESVILLE, GEORGIA.


Karl A. Riles, Mayor


Dexter L. Newby, Councilmember


Diana F. Reid, Councilmember


Vicky C. Nelson, Councilmember
(Mayor Pro Tempore)


Jason Floyd, Councilmember


José Antonio Ortiz, Jr., Councilmember

ATTEST:


Kenneth Howard, City Manager
Attestor