

Seattle Fire Department Building Code Revision Records, 1977-1983

Overview of the Collection

Creator	Seattle (Wash.). Fire Dept.
Title	Seattle Fire Department Building Code Revision Records
Dates	1977-1983 (inclusive) 1977 1983
Quantity	1.2 cubic feet, (3 boxes)
Collection Number	2810-07
Summary	Records from the Fire Marshal's Office related to the update and revision of Seattle's high rise building codes.
Repository	Seattle Municipal Archives Seattle Municipal Archives Office of the City Clerk City of Seattle PO Box 94728 98124-4728 Seattle, WA Telephone: 206-233-7807 Fax: 206-386-9025 archives@seattle.gov
Access Restrictions	Records are open to the public.
Languages	English
Sponsor	Funding for processing this record series was provided through a grant from the National Historical Publications and Records Commission.

Historical Note

A Fire Department was established by City Charter in 1883. It provided for equipment purchases, but not for hiring of firefighters. Following the Great Fire of 1889, a professional fire department was created with five district fire stations and purchase of a fire boat. The first Fire Chief of the professional department was Gardner Kellogg who served 1890-1892 and 1895-1901. A Board of Fire Commissioners was established by the 1890 City Charter to prescribe rules and regulations for the Department. The Board's responsibilities included enforcing rules violations, and appointing the Fire Chief and all subordinate officers. The Board was abolished with passage of a new City Charter in 1896. The position of Fire Marshal was established in 1901 with responsibility for inspecting buildings to insure they were in compliance the ordinances related to building construction and fire protection. The Fire Marshal also inspects all fires and reports on the causes. The Department's mission is to curtail loss of life and property by fire through inspection and certification of building safety systems, public education, regulation of hazardous material storage, and fire suppression.

Content Description

Records from the office of the Fire Marshal related to the update and revision of Seattle's high rise building codes in the early 1980s. On November 21, 1980, the MGM Grand Hotel in Las Vegas, Nevada, was destroyed by a fire that resulted in the deaths of 85 people. Due to a lack of sprinkler systems throughout most of the casino and other factors pertaining to the local building code exemptions, the fire spread within the hotel in anywhere from one to ten minutes, according to the initial report given by SFD Chief B. L. Hansen in his memorandum to SFD Chief R. L. Swartout. As a result of this fire, the City of Seattle together with the Fire Department drafted and passed Ordinance 110299 adding Article 93 to the Uniform Fire Code, to the Seattle Fire Code in order to facilitate improved safety conditions to building occupants. Included in the collection are drafts of the Ordinance and Article 93, reports, research notes and memoranda. Also in the collection are letters from business owners and citizens concerning the effect the new codes would have on low-income residents, as well as reports and other details concerning the financial impact on low-income housing. Records related to the changes made to the State Building Code are also included, as is information about the MGM Grand Hotel fire.

Use of the Collection

Preferred Citation

[Item and date], Seattle Fire Department Building Code Revision Records, Record Series 2810-07. Box [number], Folder [number]. Seattle Municipal Archives.

Administrative Information

Detailed Description of the Collection

The following section contains a detailed listing of the materials in the collection.

2810-07: Seattle Fire Department Building Code Revision Records, 1977-1983

Container(s)	Description	Dates
Box/Folder		
1/1	Article 93 - Common Ground Reports on Low-Income Housing and High Rise Building Codes	1981-1982
1/2	Article 93 - High Rise Minimums Drafts	1980-1981

Container(s)	Description	Dates
1/3	Article 93 - High Rise Minimums Drafts	1981
1/4	Article 93 - Notes on Draft Sent to City Council October 20, 1982	1982
1/5	Article 93 - Building Code Advisory Board - Research and Notes	1981-1982
1/6	Article 93 - Building Code Advisory Board - Research and Notes	1981-1982
1/7	Article 93 - Building Code Recommended Changes	1980
1/8	Article 93 - Building Code Recommended Changes	1980
1/9	Article 93 - Building and Fire Prevention Code Advisory Board - Minutes and Notes	1981
1/10	Article 93 - Building and Fire Code Proposed Revisions - City Council Briefing	1980
2/1	City Council Meeting - October 20 and 25 - Captain Fletcher's Notes	1982
2/2	Correspondence - Building Owners and Managers Association re: Article 93	1982-1983
2/3	Correspondence - Effect of Article 93 on Low-Income Housing	1982
2/4	Definition and Fire Loss History	1977-1980
2/5	Article 93 - Draft of Uniform Fire Code - October 28, 1981	1981
2/6	Article 93 - Draft of Uniform Fire Code - October 12, 1982	1982
2/7	Article 93 - Draft of Uniform Fire Code - November 2, 1982	1982
2/8	Article 93 - Fire Prevention Code Advisory Board - Minutes	1982
2/9	High Rise Fire Alarm Systems	1980
2/10	International Conference of Building Officials - Notes	1981

Container(s)	Description	Dates
2/11	Article 93 - Low-Income Housing Committee Meeting - Minutes	1982
2/12	Article 93 - Low-Income Housing Committee Meeting - Minutes and Notes	1982
2/13	Article 93 - Low-Income Housing Committee Meeting - Minutes and Notes	1982
2/14	Memorandum - Article 93 Report - Chief Swartout to Mayor Royer	1982
2/15	Memorandum - Meeting Minutes SFD/DCD - Low-Income Housing and Article 93	1983
2/16	M. G. M. Grand Hotel Fire - Press Release Notes	1980
2/17	New York Process for High Rise Buildings Equal to 1807	1981
2/18	New York Equivalency for Alternatives - Local Law 5	1980
2/19	Press Release - Funds for Updating Fire Codes in Low-Income High Rise Buildings	1983
2/20	Report and Materials Related to M. G. M. Grand Hotel Fire - Building and Fire Code Revisions	1980
2/21	Report and Materials Related to M. G. M. Grand Hotel Fire - Building and Fire Code Revisions	1980
3/1	Article 93 - Seattle High Rise - Minimums and Equivalency Survey Wrap Up	1981
3/2	Article 93 - Seattle High Rise - Minimums and Equivalency Citizens Recommendations	1980
3/3	Article 93 - Seattle High Rise - Minimums and Equivalency Informatinon on Exisiting Codes	1981
3/4	Article 93 - Seattle High Rise - Minimums and Equivalency Hotel/Lodging Association Correspondence	1981
3/5	Article 93 - Seattle High Rise - Minimums and Equivalency Input from Owners and Industry	1980-1981

Container(s)	Description	Dates
3/6	Article 93 - Seattle High Rise - Minimums and Equivalency Input from Owners and Industry	1980-1981
3/7	State Building Code Changes	1980-1981
3/8	State Code Advisory Committee - Chief Fletcher's Notes	1981
3/9	State Code Advisory Committee - Minutes and Notes	1981
3/10	State Code Advisory Committee - Revisions and Notes	1980
3/11	State Fire Chief Committee Hours - Captain Fletcher	1981
3/12	Washington Administrative Code and Article 93 Comparisons	1981
3/12	Submitted Building Code Change	1981

Names and Subjects

Subject Terms :

Building laws--Washington (State)--Seattle
 Fire prevention--Washington (State)--Seattle

Corporate Names :

Seattle (Wash.). Fire Dept.
 Seattle (Wash.). Fire Marshal

Geographical Names :

Seattle (Wash.).

Finding aid prepared by Linnet Blumenthal
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