CHAPTER 36

HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCE SPILLS

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36.01 PURPOSE. In order to reduce the danger to the public health, safety and welfare from the leaks and spills of hazardous substances, these regulations are promulgated to establish responsibility for the treatment, removal and cleanup of hazardous substance spills within the City limits.

36.02 DEFINITIONS. For purposes of this chapter the following terms are defined:

1. "Cleanup" means actions necessary to contain, collect, control, identify, analyze, clean up, treat, disperse, remove or dispose of a hazardous substance.

(Code of Iowa, Sec. 455B.381[1])

2. "Hazardous condition" means any situation involving the actual, imminent or probable spillage, leakage, or release of a hazardous substance onto the land, into a water of the State or into the atmosphere which creates an immediate or potential danger to the public health or safety or to the environment.

(Code of Iowa, Sec. 455B.381[4])

3. "Hazardous substance" means any substance or mixture of substances that presents a danger to the public health or safety and includes, but is not limited to, a substance that is toxic, corrosive, or flammable, or that is an irritant or that generates pressure through decomposition, heat, or other means. "Hazardous substance" may include any hazardous waste identified or listed by the administrator of the United States Environmental Protection Agency under the Solid Waste Disposal Act as amended by the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act of 1976, or any toxic pollutant listed under section 307 of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act as amended to January 1, 1977, or any hazardous substance designated under Section 311 of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act as amended to January 1, 1977, or any hazardous material designated by the Secretary of Transportation under the Hazardous Materials Transportation Act.

(Code of Iowa, Sec. 455B.381[5])

4. "Responsible person" means a person who at any time produces, handles, stores, uses, transports, refines, or disposes of a hazardous substance, the release of which creates a hazardous condition, including bailees, carriers, and any other person in control of a hazardous substance when a hazardous condition occurs, whether the person owns the hazardous substance or is operating under a lease, contract, or other agreement with the legal owner of the hazardous substance.

(Code of Iowa, Sec. 455B.381[7])

36.03 CLEANUP REQUIRED. Whenever a hazardous condition is created by the deposit, injection, dumping, spilling, leaking or placing of a hazardous substance, so that the hazardous substance or a constituent of the hazardous substance may enter the environment or be emitted into the air or discharged into any waters, including ground waters, the responsible person shall cause the condition to be remedied by a cleanup, as defined in the preceding section, as rapidly as feasible to an acceptable, safe condition. The costs of cleanup shall be borne by the responsible person. If the responsible person does not cause the cleanup to begin in a reasonable time in relation to the hazard and circumstances of the incident, the City may, by an authorized officer, give reasonable notice, based on the character of the hazardous condition, said notice setting a deadline for accomplishing the cleanup and stating that the City will proceed to procure cleanup services and bill the responsible person for all costs associated with the cleanup if the cleanup is not accomplished within the deadline. In the event that it is determined that immediate cleanup is necessary as a result of the present danger to the public health, safety and welfare, then no notice shall be required and the City may proceed to procure the cleanup and bill the responsible person for all costs associated with the cleanup. If the bill for those services is not paid within thirty (30) days, the City Attorney shall proceed to obtain payment by all legal means. If the cost of the cleanup is beyond the capacity of the City to finance it, the authorized officer shall report to the Council and immediately seek any State or Federal funds available for said cleanup.

36.04 LIABILITY FOR CLEANUP COSTS. The responsible person shall be strictly liable for all of the following:

1. The reasonable cleanup costs incurred by the City as a result of the failure of the responsible person to clean up a hazardous substance involved in a hazardous condition.

2. The reasonable costs incurred by the City to evacuate people from the area threatened by a hazardous condition caused by the person.

3. The reasonable damages to the City for the injury to, destruction of, or loss of City property, including parks and roads, resulting from a hazardous condition caused by that person, including the costs of assessing the injury, destruction or loss.

36.05 NOTIFICATIONS.

1. A person manufacturing, storing, handling, transporting, or disposing of a hazardous substance shall notify the State Department of Natural Resources and the Police Chief of the occurrence of a hazardous condition as soon as possible but not later than six (6) hours after the onset of the hazardous condition or discovery of the hazardous condition. The Police Chief shall immediately notify the Department of Natural Resources.

2. Any other person who discovers a hazardous condition shall notify the Police Chief, who shall then notify the Department of Natural Resources.

36.06 POLICE AUTHORITY. If the circumstances reasonably so require, the law enforcement officer or an authorized representative may:

1. Evacuate persons from their homes to areas away from the site of a hazardous condition, and

2. Establish perimeters or other boundaries at or near the site of a hazardous condition and limit access to cleanup personnel.

No person shall disobey an order of any law enforcement officer issued under this section.

36.07 LIABILITY. The City shall not be liable to any person for claims of damages, injuries, or losses resulting from any hazardous condition, unless the City is the responsible person as defined in Section 36.02[4].

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