

ORDINANCE NO.

AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE BUILDING OFFICIAL TO EXEMPT CERTAIN ELECTRICAL ACTIVITIES FROM THE ELECTRICAL PERMIT REQUIREMENT; EXTENDING THE DEADLINE FOR CERTAIN PERMIT APPLICATIONS; WAIVING THE ELECTRICAL CODE'S REGISTRATION REQUIREMENT; AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF AUSTIN:

PART 1. FINDINGS.

- (1) On January 31, 2023, a Winter Storm Warning was issued for the Austin area due to forecasted severe winter weather posing an imminent threat of widespread and severe property damage, injury, and loss of life due to a combination of prolonged freezing temperatures and rain resulting in heavy ice accumulation on freeways, surface roads and trees.
- (2) From January 31, 2023, through February 2, 2022, the City experienced prolonged freezing temperatures and freezing rain which resulted in significant ice accumulation on freeways, surface roads and trees ("2023 Winter Weather Event").
- (3) During the 2023 Winter Weather Event, there was significant damage to electric infrastructure. It is expected that much of the electrical infrastructure damage will require small-scale repairs.
- (4) The City's Electrical Code requires an individual to obtain a permit for most electrical activities. In this instance, the Building Official expects that the number of small-scale electrical activities will be significant. As a result, the permit requirement may, in some circumstances, result in delays that are counter to the City's health and safety interests, which include preventing further damage to structures.
- (5) Because the number of structures that will require emergency repairs and replacements is significant, it will take additional time for individuals and entities to submit permit applications.

32 **PART 2. BUILDING OFFICIAL’S AUTHORITY.**

33 (A) The city council authorizes the Building Official to exempt certain electrical
34 activities from the permit requirement established in Article 4 (*Electrical*
35 *Code*) of Chapter 25-12 (*Technical Code*).

36 (B) The exemptions authorized in Subsection (A) apply to electrical activities
37 started on or after January 31st, 2023.

38 **PART 3. PERMIT APPLICATIONS.**

39 An activity that is not exempt under Part 2 of this ordinance or Chapter 25-12
40 (*Technical Codes*) shall submit a permit application within five business days from the
41 date the activity starts if the activity is:

- 42 (1) an emergency repair or replacement; and
43 (2) started in response to the 2023 Winter Weather Event.

44 **PART 4. REGISTRATION.**

45 A person who is authorized under Texas law to repair, replace, or install electrical
46 fixtures or systems is not required to register with the City before performing any work
47 regulated by the Electrical Code.

48 **PART 5. EXPIRATION.**

49 This ordinance expires on March 31, 2023.

50 **PART 6. EFFECTIVE DATE.**

51 Based on Part 1 of this ordinance, the city council finds that small-scale
52 electrical repairs need to be addressed quickly to avoid further damage to a
53 structures; and the volume of expected repairs necessitates additional application
54 submittal time. Because of this emergency, this ordinance takes effect immediately
55 on its passage for the preservation of the public peace, health, and safety.

PASSED AND APPROVED

_____, 2023

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Kirk Watson
Mayor

APPROVED: _____

Anne L. Morgan
City Attorney

ATTEST: _____

Myrna Rios
City Clerk