

POLICY

Dorset Fire District #1 exists to promote the welfare of this Town; to provide fire protection and water service to those within the fire and water districts; to be a good community neighbor providing such emergency aid, search and rescue services within the Fire District as well as mutual aid to neighboring fire districts, as is practical; and to educate our citizens and school children in the rules of fire prevention and safety.

FIRE DISTRICT

Boundaries

1. The boundaries of the Fire District are delineated as follows: to the north by Danby; the west by Rupert; the south by Manchester; the east by a line running from Manchester north through the center of Eagle Ridge Road to Morse Hill Road thence following the ridge line north to Danby.

Powers

2. The Fire District shall have all of the powers, so far as the same may be applicable, now given by Chapter 171 of Title 20, Vermont Statutes Annotated and Chapters 89 and 129 of Title 24 of Vermont Statutes Annotated. These include but are not limited to: asset management of the Fire Department and water Company; providing efficient fire protection; insuring a pure and adequate water supply; entering into inter-local contracts or other similar private contracts to provide fire services, emergency aid, and search and rescue services to others; and levying a tax and assessing annual water use fees, and infrastructure availability fees, subject to a vote at annual or special meetings of the Fire District. It shall be governed by a Prudential Committee.

Election

3. The Prudential Committee shall consist of five persons who shall be elected by a majority vote of the legal voters present at an annual or special meeting called for that purpose. Three members shall be elected for three-year terms and two members for one year terms, without limitation. A Clerk, a Treasurer, a Collector of Delinquent Taxes, a Moderator, one member for a 3-year term and two members for a 1-year term, all without limitation, shall be elected yearly. If prudential members initially elected for one (1) year terms are so elected at a special meeting called for that purpose, their terms shall run until the next annual meeting.

Legal Voters

4. Persons residing within the limits of the Fire District, who are legal voters in the Town of Dorset, shall be voters at Fire District meetings.

Amendments or Changes to the Bylaws

5. Bylaws of the Fire District and Water District may be amended or changed at a duly warned annual meeting or special meeting called for that purpose by a majority vote of the legal voters attending the meetings. Said amendments or changes shall take effect upon passage unless otherwise stated.

PRUDENTIAL COMMITTEE

Members

6. The affairs and assets of the Fire District shall be governed by a Prudential Committee of five (5) members, who shall reside within the fire district and will be served by it. The Officers of the District shall include a Clerk, a Treasurer, a Collector of Delinquent Taxes, and a Moderator. Said positions may be held by one or more persons. The Committee shall elect its own Chairman annually. The members shall have duties and shall be elected as hereinafter provided.

Duties

7. The elected officers will have the following duties:

Clerk: shall attend all meetings of the Prudential Committee and shall keep the official minutes and accurate records thereof. In case of absence of the Clerk at any meeting, the Chairperson shall appoint a Clerk Pro Tempore, who may be a member of the Committee. The clerk shall be custodian of all books, records, charts and papers of the Fire District except those financial records kept by the Treasurer.

Treasurer: shall be the custodian of all monies, deliver statements for fire taxes and Water use fees and other bills due the Fire District with the responsibility for the Collection of same, and shall keep the accounts and financial records of said Fire District. The Treasurer shall prepare checks monthly, secure the authorized signatures and promptly pay all bills. The Treasurer shall be required to give surety bond in an amount no less than \$20,000.

Collector of Delinquent Taxes: shall be responsible, upon written direction of the Prudential Committee, for collecting delinquent taxes and billings due the Fire District. The Collector shall have the powers and be subject to the duties imposed By Vermont law and be compensated as allowed by statute.

Moderator: shall run the annual meeting.

It shall be the responsibility of the Prudential Committee to allocate costs and expenses between Fire District taxes and water charges paid only by property owners connected to the water system.

Vacancy

8. A vacancy in the Prudential Committee may be filled for the balance of the term by a qualified resident of the Fire District at an annual meeting, or at a special meeting called for that purpose, or the Selectmen of the Town of Dorset may fill a vacancy in the Committee until the election. The Committee may recommend a candidate for the position. A vacancy in any other office cited herein may be filled by appointment of the committee.

Assessment Rate

9. The Prudential Committee will prepare and recommend an annual budget for the Fire District and the Water District, which will be submitted for approval at the annual meeting. The tax rate will be set by the Prudential Committee after the listers have finalized the Grand List for the Town. The water use assessments will be evaluated as necessary.

Payment of Water Fees, Infrastructure Availability Fees, and Fire Taxes

10. Fire taxes, water fees and infrastructure availability fees shall be mailed on or about September 1st of each year and quarterly thereafter. They are due and payable as stated in the notices. Property owners are responsible for the payment of water fees, fire taxes, infrastructure availability fees and any other costs properly payable to the Fire District. Property owners are also responsible for notifying the Fire District of any change in mailing address and failure to receive a bill does not relieve the owner of the obligation for payment of penalties and/or interest for late payment. Change in ownership of a property does not relieve the owner of any charges accrued for fire or water services, fees, penalties and/or interest for late payment with the Fire District.

Signatures

11. All checks drawn by the fire District and all other financial transactions shall require two signatures, one of whom may be the Treasurer and the other a member of the Prudential Committee who has been so authorized. All unusual work and purchase orders or those above an amount stipulated by the Prudential Committee, shall require prior approval by the Committee. All bills shall be authorized for payment by the Prudential Committee.

Annual Audit

12. A certified public accountant shall be appointed by the Prudential Committee to make a yearly review of the accounts of the Fire District. This person shall submit a report to the Committee, and shall also prepare a summary of same for distribution at the annual meeting.

FIRE DEPARTMENT

Fire Chief

13. A Fire Chief (Chief Engineer) and two Assistants shall be appointed annually by, and thereby be responsible to, the Prudential Committee. These appointments may

be based upon recommendation(s) from the Fire Department members delivered, in writing, to the Prudential Committee.

Duties

14. The Fire Chief shall be responsible for the fire apparatus, equipment and accessories owned or operated by the Fire District and for the housing, care and maintenance of the same. The Fire Chief and his/her assistants shall also be responsible for the direction, training and conduct of a fire fighting organization to carry out the duties of a fire department. He/she or one of his/her assistants shall attend each regularly scheduled meeting of the Prudential Committee and report to the same.

FIRE ALARM ORDINANCE

15. Purpose

- a. This ordinance is adopted to regulate fire alarm devices in homes and businesses of the fire district. By holding property owners responsible to maintain their fire alarm system this ordinance will minimize malfunctions resulting in false alarms. Thereby, the Dorset Fire District #1 can more effectively provide for the common safety of its citizens.

16. Definitions

- a. Fire Alarm Systems: Any fire alarm device which is supposed to notify electronically or otherwise the Fire Department of a fire emergency existing on the property. This is also to include any alarm device which automatically emits an audible, visual or other response of a fire emergency on a property, even if it does not automatically notify the Fire Department or an emergency security company.
- b. False Alarm: The activation of a fire alarm through the negligence of a person, improper installation, mechanical failure or any cause which results in the Fire Department responding to a call where no fire emergency has occurred.
- c. Fire Emergency Number: Any telephone number designation by the Fire Chief as the telephone number the public is to call to report a fire emergency.
- d. Transmitting Devices: All alarms with automatic transmitting devices or using emergency service companies shall only use the emergency telephone number designated by the Fire Chief to transmit a fire emergency message.

17. Transmitting Devices

All alarms with automatic transmitting devices or using emergency service companies shall only use the emergency telephone number designated by the Fire Chief to transmit a fire emergency message.

No property shall have installed an alarm that when activated will contact the Fire Department more than once for the same fire emergency.

All fire alarm systems shall have installed a device which will automatically deactivate the alarm after 12 minutes of the alarm going off.

If the alarm system fails to deactivate after 12 minutes, the Fire Chief, or his designee, shall have the right to take all necessary steps to deactivate the alarm, including entry in to the property.

18. Penalties

Any person who fails to comply with the provisions of this ordinance shall be liable as follows.

- a. The first false alarm receives a verbal warning from the Fire Chief, or his designee.
- b. The second false alarm receives a written warning from the Secretary of Dorset Fire District #1 giving the dates of the first and second false alarms and the penalty for a third.
- c. The third false alarm within a year from the first shall result in a \$300.00 fine to the property owner and another \$300.00 for each false alarm the defective system causes within the year of the first false alarm.

19. Limitation of Liability

The Dorset Fire District #1 or any members of the fire company shall not be under any obligation or duty to the alarm user or to any other person hereunder of this bylaw. The Dorset fire District #1 specifically disclaims liability for any damages which may be caused by failure to respond to an alarm.

20. Severability

If any part or parts of this bylaw are for any reason held to be invalid, such decisions shall not affect the validity of the remaining portions of this by law.

MEETINGS

21. Meetings: The Prudential Committee shall meet monthly on the second Monday, except in May when it will be the first Monday to allow for the annual meeting. The time of the meetings will be 7:00 PM and are open to the public, except such portions of said meetings as may be deemed "executive sessions" under Vermont law. Special or emergency meetings of the Prudential Committee may be called in accordance with the requirements of other municipal boards as set forth in 1 VSA §312(c) and (d).

22. Special Meetings: Special Meetings of the Fire District may be called upon application in writing of five percent of the voters of the district and shall be warned by the clerk, or, in the clerk's absence or neglect, by one of the prudential

committee. A warning for a special fire district meeting shall state the business to be transacted. The time and place of holding the meeting shall be posted in two or more public places in the district not more than 40 days nor less than 30 days before the meeting and recorded in the office of the clerk before the same is posted.

23. Annual Meeting: the annual meeting of the Fire District shall be held on the second Monday in May, unless otherwise voted, at such hour and place as is given in the legal warning of said meeting. Persons residing within the limits of the Fire District who are legal voters in the Town of Dorset shall be eligible voters in Fire District and Water District meetings.

ORDER OF MEETINGS

Annual Meeting

24. Meetings will be opened by the Moderator.
 - a. Fire and Water District
 1. Reading of minutes of previous annual meeting.
 2. Reports of officers and of Prudential Committee.
 3. Election of officers and Prudential Committee members.
 4. Unfinished business.
 5. General business.
 6. Vote the budget and receive authorization to set tax rate.

Special Meeting

25. Meetings will be opened by the Moderator.

WATER DISTRICT

Water District Definition

1. The Water District is defined by all users presently being legally connected and furnished water through the mains of the Fire District.

Certified Public Water System Operator

2. The Prudential Committee shall appoint a Certified Public Water System Operator. This person shall be responsible for monitoring those areas needing compliance to rules as affect the water system and as are dictated by the various State and Federal Agencies dealing with water resources, and may be compensated for his/her services as determined by the Prudential Committee.

New Installations

3. No new water installations nor further connections shall be made to the water mains subsequent to September 1, 1984, unless expressly approved by the Prudential Committee. Should a new connection be authorized, the connection

will commence at the Corporation Cock. No multiple connections will be made or authorized from this new connection without approval from the Prudential Committee.

Inspection

4. The Prudential Committee or any authorized agent shall have the right at any reasonable and proper time, with due notice, to enter the premises for the purposes of inspection of the pipes and fixtures thereof.

Water Line Maintenance and Policies

5. The cost of installing, maintaining, repairing and disconnecting any water service mains from the Corporation Cock on the System Main to the point of use shall be borne by the owner. All such work must comply with District specifications and the pipe(s) shall not be covered or buried until inspected and approved by the District.
6. Should two or more users be connected by a pipe extending from the Corporation Cock, the repair to that pipe will be the responsibility of all home owners who are connected to that pipe. These repairs may be made in any manner considered reasonable and in compliance with paragraph 5 above. If the users cannot agree on the method to be employed, the Prudential Committee may, if it deems necessary, disconnect all the homes being served until all of the repairs have been completed by the owners to the satisfaction of the Prudential Committee.
7. The District may shut the water system or individual services off at any time for the purpose of effecting repairs, alterations, in the case of accident(s), for violations of District rules (excluding non-payment of bills) or the laws of the State of Vermont. The Prudential Committee will attempt to give notice prior to shutting down the system. The District shall not be liable or responsible for any damage caused thereby.
8. The Prudential Committee may turn off individual water user connections for non-payment in accordance with Vermont Statutes.
9. Water shall not be allowed to run to waste through any faucet, fixture, or outlet to prevent freezing unless authorized in writing by the District, nor shall water be kept running any longer than is reasonably necessary for its proper use.
10. Leaks shall not be permitted to run uncorrected. Depending on the nature (severity) of the leak, the owner, at the discretion of the Prudential Committee, may be allowed up to fifteen (15) days to effect repairs. Failure to make timely repairs may result in water service shut off. The District, at its option, may make the repairs and bill the owner(s).
11. If a Service Main has had more than two (2) leaks, the Prudential Committee may require the owner to replace the entire service main from the Corporation Cock to

the point of use.

12. The Prudential Committee may, from time to time, as a situation warrants, limit the use of water throughout the District.
13. Swimming pools may be filled, but only once with the proper written authorization of the Prudential Committee and only in the Spring. Makeup water is allowed except during restricted periods.
14. Multi-connections now existing on a Service Main will be allowed to remain only until the next overhaul or major repair. If the System Main is substantially repaired, Corporation Cocks will be installed and connected to the existing Service Main in preparation of providing individual service at the next Service Main overhaul.
15. On all new construction or substantial overhaul of the plumbing system or major renovation of a building, a Vacuum Breaker must be installed to prevent backflow in the event of a system shut down. A standard check valve is not considered sufficient.
16. All Service Mains will be fitted with a Curb Cock valve provided and installed by the owner(s). If not currently fitted they shall be fitted at the next System Main or Service Main overhaul, whichever is first. The valves used shall be to the Water Company standards and shall be maintained operable and accessible.
17. If service “shut off” is required by action of the Prudential Committee it may be accomplished by using the Curb Cock or the Corporation Cock at its discretion and all costs shall be borne by the property owner(s) involved. These costs include but are not limited to: location of service, any necessary digging, road opening and closing, back filling and landscape repair.

Disconnection

18. No properties connected to the system shall be permitted to voluntarily disconnect. Any water user who converts to a private water source shall continue to pay an infrastructure availability fee equal to the then-current total annual water fee for that property as established by the District for providing water service.
19. All water service is subject to involuntary disconnection as a delinquent collection procedure under the terms of Chapter 129, Title 24, of the Vermont Statutes Annotated (Uniform Water and Sewer Disconnect) as amended from time to time.
20. Should a user elect to disconnect from the system, the disconnection will occur at the Corporation Cock. In the event that a user is connected with other homes from a pipe after the Corporation Cock the disconnection and closure will take place only at the point where the user’s pipe connects to the pipe line leading to the next

user. All costs to effect this disconnection will be borne by the user requesting the disconnection as per paragraph number 5 of these bylaws.

21. If a user maintains a private water source, the water lines from the alternative private source may not be connected in any manner to the lines of the water system including shunt valves or switchovers where any possibility of cross contamination can occur.

Abandoned Connections

22. Any abandoned systems and/or connections must be properly capped at the System Main. All costs will be the responsibility of the owner.

ORDINANCE AGAINST VIOLATIONS OF RESTRICTED WATER USE NOTICES

Purpose: This ordinance is to set out penalties to be imposed against persons who violate water restrictions imposed during periods of water shortages by this Fire District.

Definition:

Water Shortages: shall be defined as when the demand for water is consistently greater than the ability of the springs of the Dorset Village Water System to supply that water. The net effect of this is a falling water level at the Dorset Village Reservoir.

Water Restrictions: are those restrictions set out by Dorset Fire District #1 on signs set out in front of the Dorset Post Office and Dorset Union Store.

Penalties: These penalties are only to be imposed on those property owners who draw their water from the Dorset Village Water System run by this Fire District. These penalties are:

- a. Any property owner or their representative who knowingly or unknowingly violates these restrictions shall initially receive a verbal and written warning from the Fire District.
- b. If that same property owner or their representative shall violate water restrictions for a second time a fine of \$300.00 shall be levied against that property owner.
- c. If that same property owner or their representative shall violate this restriction for a third time their water will be shut off until the water shortage is over. In addition, any cost incurred in either shutting it off or turning it back on shall be incurred by the property owner.

Limitation of Liability

Dorset Fire District #1 shall not be under any obligation or duty to users of the Dorset Village Water System or to any other person hereunder of this Ordinance. Dorset Fire District #1 specifically disclaims liability for any Damages which may be caused by a violator having their water cut off.

Severability

If any part or parts of this ordinance are for any reason held to be invalid, such Decisions shall not affect the validity of the remaining portions of this law.

NOTES: Information on fire taxes, water fees, fire protection and other matters pertaining to Dorset Fire District #1 may be obtained by writing the District at PO Box 341, Dorset, VT 05221.

Upon request, a copy of these Bylaws shall be available free of charge to any person residing in the District. Copies are also available to others for a nominal fee.

WATER DISTRICT DEFINITIONS

WATER SYSTEM: All pipes, valves, fittings, hydrant connections, etc., comprising the collection, storage, and distribution mains up to and including the service valve (Corporation Cock).

SYSTEM MAIN: The underground distribution piping upstream from the Corporation Cock, owned and maintained by the Water District. It does not include any piping, valves, or fittings downstream of the Corporation Cock.

CORPORATION COCK: A stop valve directly connected to the system main underground and usually located at the main. (Not to be confused with the Curb Cock/Curb Stop).

CURB COCK/CURB STOP: A customer installed outside underground stop valve located on the Service Main, usually fitted with a reach rod to allow operation without digging at ground level.

SERVICE MAIN/SERVICE DROP: A customer installed small diameter (usually ¾") pipeline connecting the Corporation Cock through the Curb Cock to the building connection.

VACUUM BREAKER: A device to protect the house and water system from backflow of water out of the house into the system during periods of shutdown or low pressure. It is especially useful to protect water heaters against burnout.

COCK: A valving device usually operating from full open to full closed with only a quarter turn of the handle.