



AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY FORM

File ID: #18708

Date: 12/26/2025

Requesting Department: Department of Building

Commission Meeting Date: 03/12/2026

Sponsored By: Christine King

Type: Ordinance

District Impacted: All

Subject: Amend Code - Chapter 20 - Drainage Re-Certification Guidelines

PURPOSE OF ITEM:

AN ORDINANCE BY THE MIAMI CITY COMMISSION AMENDING CHAPTER 20 OF THE CODE OF THE CITY OF MIAMI, FLORIDA, AS AMENDED ("CITY CODE"), TITLED "FLOOD DAMAGE PREVENTION," PROVIDING GUIDELINES AND TIMELINES FOR RE-CERTIFICATION OF EXISTING DRAINAGE SYSTEMS, ESTABLISHING REPORTING CRITERIA FOR COMPLIANCE, AND ALIGNING DRAINAGE RECERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS WITH THE CITY'S BUILDING RECERTIFICATION PROGRAM; CONTAINING A SEVERABILITY CLAUSE; AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The City of Miami ("City") is increasingly vulnerable to flooding, sea level rise, and extreme weather events, making the proper operation and maintenance of drainage systems essential to public safety and flood damage prevention.

Chapter 20 of the Code of the City of Miami, Florida, as amended ("City Code"), governs flood damage prevention and includes requirements related to drainage systems in both special flood hazard areas and nonspecial flood hazard areas.

The City Commission adopted amendments to Chapter 20 under Ordinance No. 14295 on July 11, 2024, including drainage system re-certification requirements, and further clarification is necessary to ensure consistent understanding and implementation by property owners and certifying professionals.

The establishment of clear reporting criteria, standardized documentation, and defined timelines will improve compliance and administrative efficiency and ensure reliable evaluation of existing drainage systems.

Aligning drainage re-certification requirements with the City's Building Recertification Program—including phased timelines based on system age, standardized inspection protocols, and equivalent review fees—will promote consistency, clarity, and long-term infrastructure planning.

These amendments advance the City's flood resilience and climate adaptation objectives while protecting public health, safety, and welfare.

Budget Impact Analysis

Item is Related to Revenue
Item is NOT funded by Bonds
Item is NOT an Expenditure

Total Fiscal Impact:

N/A

Reviewed By

City Commission	Maricarmen Lopez	Meeting	Completed	02/26/2026 9:00 AM
Department of Building	Eduardo Santamaria	Department Head Review	Completed	02/27/2026 2:25 PM
Office of Management and Budget	Fred Pericles	Budget Analyst Review	Completed	02/28/2026 8:37 PM
Office of Management and Budget	Leon P Michel	Budget Review	Completed	03/01/2026 2:25 PM
City Manager's Office	Asael Marrero	Assistance City Manager Review	Completed	03/02/2026 2:20 PM
Legislative Division	Valentin J Alvarez	Legislative Division Review	Completed	03/02/2026 2:39 PM
Office of the City Attorney	Angelica knight	ACA Review	Completed	03/02/2026 4:30 PM
City Manager's Office	Natasha Colebrook-Williams	Approved on behalf of the City Manager	Completed	Completed
Office of the City Attorney	Xavier Alban	Deputy Attorney Review	Completed	03/03/2026 11:22 AM
Office of the City Attorney	George K. Wysong III	Approved Form and Correctness	Completed	03/03/2026 3:04 PM
City Commission	Todd B. Hannon	Meeting	Pending	03/12/2026 9:00 AM



**City of Miami
Legislation
Ordinance
Enactment Number**

City Hall
3500 Pan American Drive
Miami, FL 33133
www.miamigov.com

File Number: 18708

Final Action Date:

AN ORDINANCE OF THE MIAMI CITY COMMISSION AMENDING CHAPTER 20 OF THE CODE OF THE CITY OF MIAMI, FLORIDA, AS AMENDED (“CITY CODE”), TITLED “FLOOD DAMAGE PREVENTION,” PROVIDING GUIDELINES AND TIMELINES FOR RE-CERTIFICATION OF EXISTING DRAINAGE SYSTEMS, PROVIDING A FEE FOR THE RE-CERTIFICATION REVIEW, ESTABLISHING REPORTING CRITERIA FOR COMPLIANCE, AND ALIGNING DRAINAGE RECERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS WITH THE CITY’S BUILDING RECERTIFICATION PROGRAM; CONTAINING A SEVERABILITY CLAUSE; AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

WHEREAS, the City of Miami (“City”) is increasingly vulnerable to flooding, sea level rise, and extreme weather events, making the proper operation and maintenance of drainage systems essential to public safety and flood damage prevention; and

WHEREAS, Chapter 20 of the Code of the City of Miami, Florida, as amended (“City Code”), governs flood damage prevention and includes requirements related to drainage systems in both special flood hazard areas and nonspecial flood hazard areas; and

WHEREAS, the City Commission adopted amendments to Chapter 20 under Ordinance No. 14295 on July 11, 2024, including drainage system re-certification requirements, and further clarification is necessary to ensure consistent understanding and implementation by property owners and certifying professionals; and

WHEREAS, the establishment of clear reporting criteria, standardized documentation, and defined timelines will improve compliance and administrative efficiency and ensure reliable evaluation of existing drainage systems; and

WHEREAS, aligning drainage re-certification requirements with the City’s Building Recertification Program—including phased timelines based on system age, standardized inspection protocols, and equivalent review fees—will promote consistency, clarity, and long-term infrastructure planning; and

WHEREAS, these amendments advance the City’s flood resilience and climate adaptation objectives while protecting public health, safety, and welfare.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF MIAMI, FLORIDA:

Section 1. The recitals and findings contained in the Preamble to this Ordinance are adopted and incorporated as if fully set forth in this Section.

Section 2. Chapter 20 of the City Code is hereby amended in the following particulars:¹

“CHAPTER 20

FLOOD DAMAGE PREVENTION

* * *

Sec. 20-1. Definitions.

For the purpose of this chapter, the following words and phrases shall have the meanings respectively ascribed to them by this section:

* * *

Development. Any manmade change to improved or unimproved real estate, including, but not limited to, buildings or other structures, mining, dredging, filling, grading, paving, excavating, drilling operations, or permanent storage of materials or equipment.

Drainage re-certification. The requirement for specific inspection of existing drainage systems and the furnishing of a written report of such inspection as prescribed herein to the Building Official.

Drainage systems. The surface and subsurface system for the removal of water from or control of water on the land, including both the natural elements of streams, marshes, swales and ponds, whether of an intermittent or continuous nature, and man-made elements which include culverts, drains, ditches, channels, piping, drainage wells and storage facilities. Any system which collects, conveys, channels, holds, inhibits, diverts or treats stormwater from a given area either by drains, grading or other artificial or natural means thru the use of a drainage structure, including but not limited to a culverts, storm drains, stormwater retention or detention ponds with side slopes that must be stabilized by artificial means, French drains, or exfiltration trench/systems, which convey stormwater into the underlying soil.

Drainage System Age. The difference between (a) the present year and (b) the year-built information recorded with the County Property Appraiser for the building notwithstanding any renovations or modifications that have been made to the building or structure, or drainage system since the year built.

Elevated building. A non-basement building built to have the lowest floor elevated above the ground level by means of fill, solid foundation, perimeter walls, pilings, columns (posts and piers), shear walls, or breakaway walls.

* * *

Sec. 20-3. Development in special flood hazard areas and nonspecial flood hazard areas.

* * *

(15) Drainage systems as defined herein shall require re-certification in the manner described below once such drainage system has reached a Drainage System Age of 10 years and every 10 years thereafter. ~~every 120 months from the date of final inspection as set forth~~

¹ Words and/or figures stricken through shall be deleted. Underlined words and/or figures shall be added. The remaining provisions are now in effect and remain unchanged. Asterisks indicate omitted and unchanged material.

herein. The property owner shall be notified of the required re-certification 60 days in advance of their due date with a Notice of Required Inspection relating to the required re-certification once the Building Official has determined that a drainage system has a Drainage System Age of 10 years and every 10-year interval thereafter. Notwithstanding the foregoing, the failure by a Building Official to provide courtesy advance notices shall not affect a property owner's requirement to timely re-certify a drainage system. The re-certification review for compliance along with the issuance of the re-certification shall carry a fee which shall be set by the City Commission, by Resolution, which may be amended from time to time. A copy of the Resolution setting forth current permit fees shall be on file with the City Clerk and the Director of Planning and the Director of Zoning. An updated fee schedule shall be maintained electronically and can be accessed at the City's website. Properties with three dwelling units or fewer are exempt from this section. Residential properties with four dwelling units or more, or where the drainage systems are comprised of five or more drainage structures on the property, shall require that the drainage re-certification be completed by a registered professional engineer.

a. The owner of a property subject to re-certification shall furnish, or cause to be furnished, a written report to the Building Official certifying that each such drainage system is safe, or has been made safe, in conformity with the minimum inspection procedural guidelines as issued by the Board of Rules and Appeals. The written report shall bear the impressed seal and signature of the responsible Engineer or Architect who has performed the inspection, or signature and notarization of the responsible contractor who has performed the inspection, unless submitted electronically with a verifiable digital signature as described in F.S. Sec. 668.001. The report shall indicate the manner and type of inspection(s) forming the basis for the report and description of any matters identified as requiring remedial action, and include all relevant information on the existing drainage system, including, but not limited to, the approved as-built drawings and a detailed description of the existing drainage, including the intent of the system.

b. A site inspection of the entire drainage system to determine the general condition pursuant to the Building Code and what, if any, maintenance, modification, and/or repair work is required in order to re-certify the drainage system in accordance with the following items:

1. Catch basin grates, manhole covers and outfalls are to be free of obstructions.
2. Probe catch basins for mud, debris, silt, etc. (depth of material in a pipe shall not exceed five percent of the diameter of the pipe and the depth of material in a catch basin sump shall not exceed five percent of the distance from the bottom of the structure to the lowest pipe invert).
3. Check headwalls for deterioration and any signs of erosion.
4. Check for broken grates.
5. Check weirs and baffles installation (12 inches minimum sump clearance from bottom of structure to bottom of baffle, if applicable).
6. Check for areas of sunken or deteriorated pavement which may be a sign of a drainage problem.
7. Check for modifications to swales and retention areas.
8. Check for proper maintenance of swale and retention areas.
9. Check for alterations to original design and construction of drainage system.
- ~~10. Check for alterations to original design and construction of drainage system.~~
10. Verify that no vegetation exists over drainage system.

a. All pumps shall be inspected by a registered professional engineer irrespective of property type. All drywells, including injection wells, shall be inspected by a certified well driller irrespective of property type. Pressurized system with wells and/or pumps shall be certified that it continues to function as designed and constructed. A gravity type drainage system, such as

exfiltration systems shall require re-certification as per this section 1. through 11. 10. These systems shall be required to function as designed, constructed and/or permitted. A detailed report of inspection and proper function from a registered professional engineer or certified well driller (as applicable) shall be required for re-certification.

b. Completion of all necessary required maintenance, modification, and/or repair work as denoted by the certifying registered professional engineer as performed by a licensed contractor and verified by the certifying engineer. shall require the certifying professional who has performed the initial re-certification inspection and report to verify and provide an amended report indicating that the property has been re-certified. In the event that maintenance, modification, and/or repairs are found to be necessary as a result of the re-certification inspection, the owner shall have a total of 150 days from the date of Notice of Required Inspection in which to:

1. complete indicated maintenance, modification, and/or repairs which do not require permits; or

2. acquire any necessary permits. Maintenance, modification, and/or repairs requiring permits shall be executed in conformance with all applicable Sections of the Building Code and shall follow the timeline provided in the applicable active permit.

c. All copies of plans and drawings, together with supporting calculations and documentation submitted must be signed, sealed, and dated by a registered professional, as required by F.S. chs. 471, 472, 481 or 492, as applicable, when the design of the system requires the services of a registered professional.

d. A maintenance log, if not already kept by the property owner, will be required for any future drainage re-certifications. The maintenance log shall include records related to the operation of the drainage system, including but not limited, to an estimate of the stormwater volume passing through the system in a year, dates of inspection and copies of any associated documents that evidence inspection, and dates of repairs and/or replacements of parts with type of maintenance and parts replaced, if any.

e. Existing drainage ~~systems~~ shall be ~~inspected~~ required to undergo an initial re-certification within 24 months of the adoption of this ordinance and any amendments hereto. Subsequent re-certifications shall run from when the drainage system has reached a Drainage System Age of 10 years and every 10 years thereafter. The Building Official may revoke any re-certifications if the Building Official determines that the written re-certification report contains any misrepresentation of the actual conditions of the drainage system.

f. Should property owner be unable to meet the requirements set forth in this section then an alternative engineered solution for flood protection may be presented to the building official or his/her designee in consultation with the director of resilience and public works.

g. Drainage systems subject to the requirements in subsection 20-3(15) of this chapter where the owner fails to timely respond to the notice of required ~~recertification~~ re-certification or fails to make all required repairs, maintenance, or modifications found to be necessary by the deadline specified in the Code or any written extension granted by the building official, or designee, shall result in enforcement as provided in chapter 2, article X of the City Code in addition to any other enforcement provided in section 20-14.

* * *

Section 3. If any section, part of a section, paragraph, clause, phrase, or word of this Ordinance is declared invalid, the remaining provisions of this Ordinance shall not be affected.

Section 4. This Ordinance shall become effective ten (10) days after final reading and adoption thereof.²

² This Ordinance shall become effective as specified herein unless vetoed by the Mayor within ten (10) days from the date it was passed and adopted. If the Mayor vetoes this Ordinance, it shall become

APPROVED AS TO FORM AND CORRECTNESS:


George K. Wysocki III, City Attorney 3/3/2026

effective immediately upon override of the veto by the City Commission or upon the effective date stated herein, whichever is later.