8.33 FIRE HYDRANT USE AND MAINTENANCE

1.0 Authority

Section 508 of the state fire code requires inspection, testing and maintenance of fire protection water supplies which include water lines and fire hydrant systems. Fire hydrant systems shall be subject to periodic tests, maintained in an operative condition at all times and shall be repaired where defective. Additions, repairs, alterations and servicing shall comply with approved standards. Section 101 of the state fire code authorizes the city to adopt rules to implement the fire code.

2.0 Purpose

Elk River Municipal Utilities (ERMU) finds that it is in the best interest of ERMU and the City of Elk River to outline the policy and procedures for the maintenance and use of public and private fire hydrants. It is in the public interest that both public and private hydrants are inspected and maintained by qualified personnel and are repaired and maintained in good working order to protect life and property.

3.0 Objective

Define standard responsibilities, maintenance, inspection procedures and restrictions on the use of public and private fire hydrants within the City of Elk River.

4.0 General

Fire hydrants within the City of Elk River are for the exclusive use of ERMU and the City. Hydrants shall only be used for emergencies and any activities approved by ERMU. This policy applies to:

A. Public and privately owned hydrants within the City of Elk River;
B. Individuals, groups, or companies that use municipal water within the city; and
C. ERMU and the City of Elk River.
5.0 **Responsibilities**

The ERMU Water Department shall:

A. Direct and schedule all public and private hydrant maintenance and inspection activities.

B. Contract as necessary for maintenance and repair services.

C. Ensure all new hydrants installed in the City meet specifications.

D. Inspect and exercise all hydrants in the City.

E. Document hydrants needing repairs and make repairs as necessary.

6.0 **Procedures**

A. Companies and/or individuals wishing to use fire hydrants must gain approval from ERMU before using fire hydrants and pay the fees published in the ERMU Fee Schedule.

B. Companies and/or individuals needing city water for projects will be required to complete ERMU application for service prior to obtaining access to water.

C. All water obtained directly from fire hydrants will be billed at the rate specified in the ERMU Fee Schedule.

D. Isolation valves for well hydrants will be left in the off position. A section of PVC pipe will be placed inside the valve box as a reminder that the valve is off. Any inspection, maintenance, or repair of these hydrants is only at the direction of the Water Superintendent.

7.0 **Procedures**

Annually, all public and private fire hydrants directly or indirectly connected to the municipal water system shall be inspected either by ERMU personnel or a qualified contractor engaged by ERMU to do inspections, unless ERMU has granted the owner of a private hydrant(s) permission to use a different approved licensed plumber. This inspection shall include testing of the operation and flow of the hydrants. Should a private hydrant owner be granted permission to use a different contractor, the owner shall provide ERMU with written verification in advance of the inspection. Contact information for the contractor performing the inspection and date of the scheduled inspection are required.

A. ERMU staff will document any problems found during the annual inspection. Any hydrants taken out of service will be marked at the hydrant and its location provided to the Fire Department.

B. Repairs to the hydrant will be prioritized based on ERMU and/or City needs. Every attempt will be made to return non-working hydrants to service within one business day.

C. Hydrants that do not drain will be pumped dry each fall to prevent freezing and possible damage to the hydrant.
D. Fire hydrants will be painted periodically to maintain their appearance and visibility to the fire department.

8.0  Fire Hydrant Maintenance

The following items will be accomplished during annual fire hydrant maintenance:

A. An inventory of the hydrant will be accomplished to ensure that the hydrant is not missing any parts (flag, caps, chains, etc.) on an annual basis.
B. The hydrant will be exercised and flushed on an annual basis.
C. The hydrant isolation valve will be exercised periodically.
D. All nozzles will be lubricated with food grade anti-seize to prevent rusting periodically.
E. The oil reservoir will be topped off with hydrant oil periodically.
F. The hydrant will be painted periodically.
G. All fire hydrants will be painted fire hydrant red.
H. Hydrants that are plugged and do not drain will have the pumper nozzle painted black.
I. Well hydrants will have the pumper nozzle painted blue.
J. Private hydrants will have the pumper nozzle painted yellow.

9.0  Private Fire Hydrants

Private fire hydrants are defined as hydrants that are located on privately owned property. These properties are generally commercial, industrial, apartment, townhome, and condominium properties.

10.0  Inspection of Private Fire Hydrants

A. All private hydrants will be inspected by ERMU personnel or contractors as provided in Section 7.0 of this Policy.
B. ERMU will charge an annual inspection fee per the ERMU Fee Schedule for each privately owned fire hydrant. The cost of the inspection will be spread out evenly over a 12 month period.

11.0  Required Repairs of Private Hydrants

In the event that an ERMU inspection of a private hydrant indicates that repairs are required, ERMU will notify the owner of the hydrant in writing of the repairs that are needed. The repairs are the responsibility of the owner.

A. The owner may choose to have the repairs completed by a qualified contractor or by ERMU. If a contractor is selected the owner must notify ERMU as soon as the repairs are completed.
B. If the owner chooses ERMU to complete the repairs OR if repairs are not made within (30) days of initial notification, the necessary repairs will be made by
ERMU or its contractor. The cost of any materials, equipment, and labor will be billed directly to the property owner. Fees for equipment and labor are set forth in the ERMU Fee Schedule.

12.0 **Hydrant Access**

A. There shall be no less than 36” of horizontal clearance on all sides of the hydrant.

B. All hydrants are to be free of obstacles so that the hydrant may be seen by approaching fire trucks at a minimum distance of 200 feet.

C. Posts, fences, vehicles, brush, trash, flowers, or any other items may not be placed or kept near fire hydrants.

D. ERMU will not be responsible for items or landscaping within 36” of any fire hydrant.

E. In the event an excavation needs to be accomplished in order to repair the hydrant, ERMU will fill in the excavation and level out the soil. ERMU will restore any turf with either seed or sod, but will not be responsible for restoring any type of decorative landscaping (flowers beds, rocks, shrubs, etc.) to its previous condition.

F. The fire department shall not be hindered from gaining immediate access to a hydrant.