THE CHOICE IS SIMPLE

Sprinklers are the standard. Let's put them back in Jefferson County's code.

Fire sprinklers have been part of the International Residential Code for new one- and two-family homes and townhouses since 2009. **They save lives, save water, and save money.** Jefferson County amended them out. It can restore Section R309 by resolution, at any time.

SAVE LIVES

90%

lower civilian death rate in home fires where sprinklers are present.

NFPA, U.S. Experience with Sprinklers

SAVE WATER

Up to 90%

less water used to control a home fire than fire department hoses.

FM Global and NFSA

SAVE MONEY

6x

The protection pays for itself: a system runs about $8,892 in Arvada, where the average fire loss is $55,034.

Arvada Fire Protection District

A small fire is less dangerous than a big one.

A residential fire can reach flashover in under three minutes, per NFPA 921. No fire engine can deliver water that quickly. **A sprinkler can.** It acts in a fire's first minutes, right where the fire is.

With sprinklers present, **96% of home fires stay in the room where they started**, against 72% without. That means families get out, firefighters face a smaller fire, and neighbors keep their homes.

Smoke alarms tell people to leave. **Sprinklers put water on the fire.** In most sprinklered home fires, one head near the fire, or two at most, controls it. Water goes where the fire is, not through walls and roofs.

Sprinklers also come with trade-ups for builders: single access points, steeper street grades, longer dead-end streets and T-turnarounds, wider hydrant spacing, narrower streets, and more density.

98% of fires in sprinklered one- and two-family homes **stayed inside the building** when sprinklers operated. Only 2% spread outside. A kitchen fire that never becomes a structure fire can't spark a wildfire. *NFIRS data, 2019 to 2023*

55% **lower average property loss per home fire** where sprinklers are present. Protect the home, and keep more of what makes it home. *NFPA, U.S. Experience with Sprinklers*

WHERE JEFFERSON COUNTY STANDS

Jefferson County's cities require sprinklers. The county does not.

Arvada	REQUIRED
Lakewood	REQUIRED
Westminster	REQUIRED
Golden	REQUIRED
Wheat Ridge	2027 TOWNHOMES, JAN. 2027
Unincorporated Jefferson County	NO REQUIREMENT

Residential fire sprinkler requirements for new homes.

Why restore Section R309?

1 It's a core part of the International Residential Code.

The code is the floor, not the ceiling: minimum safety standards built on decades of expert research. Jefferson County adopted those standards for everything from stairs to egress to foundations, and exceeded them for snow loads, emissions, unvented heaters, and more. **Then it amended out the section that keeps fires small or stops them altogether.**

2 Jefferson County takes fire seriously.

The Wildfire Resiliency Code, adopted March 10, 2026, requires Class A roofs, ember-resistant vents, noncombustible siding and gutters, tempered glazing, and tight garage door gaps, and keeps juniper and Gambel oak away from homes. It keeps fire from reaching a home from outside. **Sprinklers carry the same logic inside, where home fires start.**

3 Sprinklers keep house fires from becoming wildfires.

One stated purpose of the Wildfire Resiliency Code is to "mitigate structure fires from spreading to wildland fuels." A fire held to the room where it started doesn't throw embers into the tree line or onto the next home. **The county has done the hard part outside. Sprinklers complete the protection.**

4 The highest-risk areas deserve the strongest protection.

Unincorporated Jefferson County means harder terrain, stretched resources, and longer response times. Per the Evergreen Area Chamber of Commerce, "Evergreen & Conifer rank #1 in Colorado and in the top 10 nationally for catastrophic wildfire with the potential for significant loss of life." **The county's cities require sprinklers. Its foothills should, too.**

Put sprinklers back.

The next code cycle is years away. The next preventable fire is not. The Board of County Commissioners can restore Section R309 by resolution and finish the work the Wildfire Resiliency Code started. **To save money, save water, and save lives, let's make sure Jefferson County's code is up to code.**

Sources and answers: jeffco.updatethecode.org