



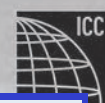
IBC[®]

2015

INTERNATIONAL CODES[®]

INTERNATIONAL Building Code[®]

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PREFACE

Introduction

Internationally, code officials recognize the need for a modern, up-to-date building code addressing the design and installation of building systems through requirements emphasizing performance. The *International Building Code*®, in this 2015 edition, is designed to meet these needs through model code regulations that safeguard the public health and safety in all communities, large and small.

This comprehensive building code establishes minimum regulations for building systems using prescriptive and performance-related provisions. It is founded on broad-based principles that make possible the use of new materials and new building designs. This 2015 edition is fully compatible with all of the *International Codes*® (I-Codes®) published by the International Code Council (ICC)®, including the *International Energy Conservation Code*®, *International Existing Building Code*®, *International Fire Code*®, *International Fuel Gas Code*®, *International Green Construction Code*®, *International Mechanical Code*®, *ICC Performance Code*®, *International Plumbing Code*®, *International Private Sewage Disposal Code*®, *International Property Maintenance Code*®, *International Residential Code*®, *International Swimming Pool and Spa Code*™, *International Wildland-Urban Interface Code*® and *International Zoning Code*®.

The *International Building Code* provisions provide many benefits, among which is the model code development process that offers an international forum for building professionals to discuss performance and prescriptive code requirements. This forum provides an excellent arena to debate proposed revisions. This model code also encourages international consistency in the application of provisions.

Development

The first edition of the *International Building Code* (2000) was the culmination of an effort initiated in 1997 by the ICC. This included five drafting subcommittees appointed by ICC and consisting of representatives of the three statutory members of the International Code Council at that time, including: Building Officials and Code Administrators International, Inc. (BOCA), International Conference of Building Officials (ICBO) and Southern Building Code Congress International (SBCCI). The intent was to draft a comprehensive set of regulations for building systems consistent with and inclusive of the scope of the existing model codes. Technical content of the latest model codes promulgated by BOCA, ICBO and SBCCI was utilized as the basis for the development, followed by public hearings in 1997, 1998 and 1999 to consider proposed changes. This 2015 edition presents the code as originally issued, with changes reflected in the 2003, 2006, 2009 and 2012 editions and further changes approved by the ICC Code Development Process through 2014. A new edition such as this is promulgated every 3 years.

This code is founded on principles intended to establish provisions consistent with the scope of a building code that adequately protects public health, safety and welfare; provisions that do not unnecessarily increase construction costs; provisions that do not restrict the use of new materials, products or methods of construction; and provisions that do not give preferential treatment to particular types or classes of materials, products or methods of construction.

Adoption

The International Code Council maintains a copyright in all of its codes and standards. Maintaining copyright allows the ICC to fund its mission through sales of books, in both print and electronic formats. The *International Building Code* is designed for adoption and use by jurisdictions that recognize and acknowledge the ICC's copyright in the code, and further acknowledge the substantial shared value of the public/private partnership for code development between jurisdictions and the ICC.

The ICC also recognizes the need for jurisdictions to make laws available to the public. All ICC codes and ICC standards, along with the laws of many jurisdictions, are available for free

in a nondownloadable form on the ICC's website. Jurisdictions should contact the ICC at adoptions@iccsafe.org to learn how to adopt and distribute laws based on the *International Building Code* in a manner that provides necessary access, while maintaining the ICC's copyright.

Maintenance

The *International Building Code* is kept up to date through the review of proposed changes submitted by code enforcing officials, industry representatives, design professionals and other interested parties. Proposed changes are carefully considered through an open code development process in which all interested and affected parties may participate.

The contents of this work are subject to change through both the code development cycles and the governmental body that enacts the code into law. For more information regarding the code development process, contact the Codes and Standards Development Department of the International Code Council.

While the development procedure of the *International Building Code* ensures the highest degree of care, the ICC, its members and those participating in the development of this code do not accept any liability resulting from compliance or noncompliance with the provisions because the ICC does not have the power or authority to police or enforce compliance with the contents of this code. Only the governmental body that enacts the code into law has such authority.

Code Development Committee Responsibilities (Letter Designations in Front of Section Numbers)

In each code development cycle, code change proposals to this code are considered at the Code Development Hearings by 11 different code development committees. Four of these committees have primary responsibility for designated chapters and appendices as follows:

IBC – Fire Safety

Code Development Committee [BF]: Chapters 7, 8, 9, 14, 26

IBC – General

Code Development Committee [BG]: Chapters 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 12, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33,
Appendices A, B, C, D, K

IBC – Means of Egress

Code Development Committee [BE]: Chapters 10, 11, Appendix E

IBC – Structural

Code Development Committee [BS]: Chapters 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25,
Appendices F, G, H, I, J, L, M

Code change proposals to sections of the code that are preceded by a bracketed letter designation, such as [A], will be considered by a committee other than the building code committee listed for the chapter or appendix above. For example, proposed code changes to Section [F] 307.1.1 will be considered by the International Fire Code Development Committee during the Committee Action Hearing in the 2016 (Group B) code development cycle.

Another example is Section [BF] 1505.2. While code change proposals to Chapter 15 are primarily the responsibility of the IBC – Structural Code Development Committee, which considers code change proposals during the 2016 (Group B) code development cycle, Section 1505.2 is the responsibility of the IBC – Fire Safety Code Development Committee, which considers code change proposals during the 2015 (Group A) code development cycle.

The bracketed letter designations for committees responsible for portions of this code are as follows:

[A] = Administrative Code Development Committee;

[BE] = IBC – Means of Egress Code Development Committee;

- [BF] = IBC – Fire Safety Code Development Committee;
- [BG] = IBC – General Code Development Committee;
- [BS] = IBC – Structural Code Development Committee;
- [E] = International Energy Conservation Code Development Committee (Commercial Energy Committee or Residential Energy Committee, as applicable);
- [EB] = International Existing Building Code Development Committee;
- [F] = International Fire Code Development Committee;
- [FG] = International Fuel Gas Code Development Committee;
- [M] = International Mechanical Code Development Committee; and
- [P] = International Plumbing Code Development Committee.

For the development of the 2018 edition of the I-Codes, there will be three groups of code development committees and they will meet in separate years. Note that these are tentative groupings.

Group A Codes (Heard in 2015, Code Change Proposals Deadline: January 12, 2015)	Group B Codes (Heard in 2016, Code Change Proposals Deadline: January 11, 2016)	Group C Codes (Heard in 2017, Code Change Proposals Deadline: January 11, 2017)
International Building Code – Fire Safety (Chapters 7, 8, 9, 14, 26) – Means of Egress (Chapters 10, 11, Appendix E) – General (Chapters 2-6, 12, 27-33, Appendices A, B, C, D, K)	Administrative Provisions (Chapter 1 of all codes except IRC and IECC, adminis- trative updates to currently referenced standards, and designated definitions)	International Green Construction Code
International Fuel Gas Code	International Building Code – Structural (Chapters 15-25, Appendices F, G, H, I, J, L, M)	
International Existing Building Code	International Energy Conservation Code	
International Mechanical Code	International Fire Code	
International Plumbing Code	International Residential Code – IRC - Building (Chapters 1-10, Appendices E, F, H, J, K, L, M, O, R, S, T, U)	
International Private Sewage Disposal Code	International Wildland-Urban Interface Code	
International Property Maintenance Code		
International Residential Code – IRC - Mechanical (Chapters 12-24) – IRC - Plumbing (Chapters 25-33, Appendices G, I, N, P)		
International Swimming Pool and Spa Code		
International Zoning Code		

Note: Proposed changes to the ICC Performance Code will be heard by the code development committee noted in brackets [] in the text of the code.

Code change proposals submitted for code sections that have a letter designation in front of them will be heard by the respective committee responsible for such code sections. Because different committees hold code development hearings in different years, proposals for this code will be heard by committees in both the 2015 (Group A) and the 2016 (Group B) code development cycles.

For instance, every section of Chapter 16 is the responsibility of the IBC – Structural Committee, and, as noted in the preceding table, that committee will hold its committee action hearings in 2016 to consider code change proposals for the chapters for which it is responsible. Therefore any proposals received for Chapter 16 of this code will be assigned to the IBC – Structural Committee, which will consider code change proposals in 2016, during the Group B code change cycle.

As another example, every section of Chapter 1 of this code is designated as the responsibility of the Administrative Code Development Committee, and that committee is part of the Group B portion of the hearings. This committee will hold its committee action hearings in 2016 to consider all code change proposals for Chapter 1 of this code and proposals for Chapter 1 of all I-Codes except the *International Energy Conservation Code*, *International Residential Code* and *ICC Performance Code*. Therefore, any proposals received for Chapter 1 of this code will be assigned to the Administrative Code Development Committee for consideration in 2016.

It is very important that anyone submitting code change proposals understand which code development committee is responsible for the section of the code that is the subject of the code change proposal. For further information on the code development committee responsibilities, please visit the ICC website at www.iccsafe.org/scoping.

Marginal Markings

Solid vertical lines in the margins within the body of the code indicate a technical change from the requirements of the 2012 edition. Deletion indicators in the form of an arrow (➡) are provided in the margin where an entire section, paragraph, exception or table has been deleted or an item in a list of items or a table has been deleted.

A single asterisk [*] placed in the margin indicates that text or a table has been relocated within the code. A double asterisk **[**] placed in the margin indicates that the text or table immediately following it has been relocated there from elsewhere in the code. The following table indicates such relocations in the 2015 edition of the *International Building Code*.

2015 LOCATION	2012 LOCATION
712.1.13.2	711.3.2
903.3.8 through 903.3.8.5	903.3.5.1.1
915	908.7
1006	1014.3, 1015, 1021
1007	1015.2, 1021.3
1019.3	1009.3
1504.2	1711.2
2111.2	2101.3.1
Table 2308.5.11	Table 2304.6
2514	1911
2902.3.6	1210.4
3002.9	3004.4
3006	713.14.1 and 713.14.1.1

Coordination between the International Building and Fire Codes

Because the coordination of technical provisions is one of the benefits of adopting the ICC family of model codes, users will find the ICC codes to be a very flexible set of model documents. To accomplish this flexibility some technical provisions are duplicated in some of the model code documents. While the *International Codes* are provided as a comprehensive set of model codes for the built environment, documents are occasionally adopted as a stand-alone regulation. When one of the model documents is adopted as the basis of a stand-alone code, that code should provide a complete package of requirements with enforcement assigned to the entity for which the adoption is being made.

The model codes can also be adopted as a family of complementary codes. When adopted together there should be no conflict of any of the technical provisions. When multiple model codes are adopted in a jurisdiction, it is important for the adopting authority to evaluate the provisions in each code document and determine how and by which agency(ies) they will be enforced. It is important, therefore, to understand that where technical provisions are duplicated in multiple model documents, the enforcement duties must be clearly assigned by the local adopting jurisdiction. ICC remains committed to providing state-of-the-art model code documents that, when adopted locally, will reduce the cost to government of code adoption and enforcement and protect the public health, safety and welfare.

Italicized Terms

Selected terms set forth in Chapter 2, Definitions, are italicized where they appear in code text (except those in Sections 1903 through 1905, where italics indicate provisions that differ from ACI 318). Such terms are not italicized where the definition set forth in Chapter 2 does not impart the intended meaning in the use of the term. The terms selected have definitions that the user should read carefully to facilitate better understanding of the code.

EFFECTIVE USE OF THE INTERNATIONAL BUILDING CODE

The *International Building Code*® (IBC®) is a model code that provides minimum requirements to safeguard the public health, safety and general welfare of the occupants of new and existing buildings and structures. The IBC is fully compatible with the ICC family of codes, including: *International Energy Conservation Code*® (IECC®), *International Existing Building Code*® (IEBC®), *International Fire Code*® (IFC®), *International Fuel Gas Code*® (IFGC®), *International Green Construction Code*® (IgCC®), *International Mechanical Code*® (IMC®), *ICC Performance Code*® (ICCPC®), *International Plumbing Code*® (IPC®), *International Private Sewage Disposal Code*® (IPSDC®), *International Property Maintenance Code*® (IPMC®), *International Residential Code*® (IRC®), *International Swimming Pool and Spa Code*™ (ISPSC™), *International Wildland-Urban Interface Code*® (IWUIC®) and *International Zoning Code*® (IZC®).

The IBC addresses structural strength, means of egress, sanitation, adequate lighting and ventilation, accessibility, energy conservation and life safety in regard to new and existing buildings, facilities and systems. The codes are promulgated on a 3-year cycle to allow for new construction methods and technologies to be incorporated into the codes. Alternative materials, designs and methods not specifically addressed in the code can be approved by the code official where the proposed materials, designs or methods comply with the intent of the provisions of the code (see Section 104.11).

The IBC applies to all occupancies, including one- and two-family dwellings and townhouses that are not within the scope of the IRC. The IRC is referenced for coverage of detached one- and two-family dwellings and townhouses as defined in the exception to Section 101.2 and the definition for “Townhouse” in Chapter 2. The IRC can also be used for the construction of Live/Work units (as defined in Section 419) and small bed and breakfast-style hotels where there are five or fewer guest rooms and the hotel is owner occupied. The IBC applies to all types of buildings and structures unless exempted. Work exempted from permits is listed in Section 105.2.

Arrangement and Format of the 2015 IBC

Before applying the requirements of the IBC, it is beneficial to understand its arrangement and format. The IBC, like other codes published by ICC, is arranged and organized to follow sequential steps that generally occur during a plan review or inspection.

Chapters	Subjects
1-2	Administration and definitions
3	Use and occupancy classifications
4, 31	Special requirements for specific occupancies or elements
5-6	Height and area limitations based on type of construction
7-9	Fire resistance and protection requirements
10	Requirements for evacuation
11	Specific requirements to allow use and access to a building for persons with disabilities
12-13, 27-30	Building systems, such as lighting, HVAC, plumbing fixtures, elevators
14-26	Structural components—performance and stability
32	Encroachment outside of property lines
33	Safeguards during construction
35	Referenced standards
Appendices A-M	Appendices

The IBC requirements for hazardous materials, fire-resistance-rated construction, interior finish, fire protection systems, means of egress, emergency and standby power, and temporary structures are directly correlated with the requirements of the IFC. The following chapters/sections of the IBC are correlated to the IFC:

IBC Chapter/Section	IFC Chapter/Section	Subject
Sections 307, 414, 415	Chapters 50-67	Hazardous materials and Group H requirements
Chapter 7	Chapter 7	Fire-resistance-rated construction (Fire and smoke protection features in the IFC)
Chapter 8	Chapter 8	Interior finish, decorative materials and furnishings
Chapter 9	Chapter 9	Fire protection systems
Chapter 10	Chapter 10	Means of egress
Chapter 27	Section 604	Standby and emergency power
Section 3103	Chapter 31	Temporary structures

The IBC requirements for smoke control systems, and smoke and fire dampers are directly correlated to the requirements of the IMC. IBC Chapter 28 is a reference to the IMC and the IFGC for chimneys, fireplaces and barbecues, and all aspects of mechanical systems. The following chapters/sections of the IBC are correlated with the IMC:

IBC Chapter/Section	IMC Chapter/Section	Subject
Section 717	Section 607	Smoke and fire dampers
Section 909	Section 513	Smoke control

The IBC requirements for plumbing fixtures and toilet rooms are directly correlated to the requirements of the IPC. The following chapters/sections of the IBC are correlated with the IPC:

IBC Chapter/Section	IPC Chapter/Section	Subject
Chapter 29	Chapters 3 & 4	Plumbing fixtures and facilities

The following is a chapter-by-chapter synopsis of the scope and intent of the provisions of the *International Building Code*.

Chapter 1 Scope and Administration. Chapter 1 establishes the limits of applicability of the code and describes how the code is to be applied and enforced. Chapter 1 is in two parts, Part 1—Scope and Application (Sections 101-102) and Part 2—Administration and Enforcement (Sections 103-116). Section 101 identifies which buildings and structures come under its purview and references other ICC codes as applicable. Standards and codes are scoped to the extent referenced (see Section 102.4).

The building code is intended to be adopted as a legally enforceable document and it cannot be effective without adequate provisions for its administration and enforcement. The provisions of Chapter 1 establish the authority and duties of the code official appointed by the jurisdiction having authority and also establish the rights and privileges of the design professional, contractor and property owner.

Chapter 2 Definitions. An alphabetical listing of all defined terms is located in Chapter 2. Defined terms that are pertinent to a specific chapter or section are also found in that chapter or section with a reference back to Chapter 2 for the definition. While a defined term may be listed in one chapter or another, the meaning is applicable throughout the code.

Codes are technical documents and every word, term and punctuation mark can impact the meaning of the code text and the intended results. The code often uses terms that have a unique