



2012

INTERNATIONAL  
ZONING  
CODE®

*A Member of the International Code Family®*

**IZC**<sup>®</sup>



This is a preview. [Click here to purchase the full publication.](#)



# 2012 INTERNATIONAL ZONING CODE®

*A Member of the International Code Family®*

# 2012 IZC®

Become a **Building Safety Professional Member** and Learn More about the Code Council

**GO TO [WWW.ICCSAFE.ORG](http://WWW.ICCSAFE.ORG)** for All Your Technical and Professional Needs Including:

- › Codes, Standards and Guidelines
- › Membership Benefits
- › Education and Certification
- › Communications on Industry News

This is a preview. [Click here to purchase the full publication.](#)

2012 International Zoning Code®

First Printing: April 2011

ISBN: 978-1-60983-060-1 (soft-cover edition)

COPYRIGHT © 2011  
by  
INTERNATIONAL CODE COUNCIL, INC.

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED. This 2012 *International Zoning Code*® is a copyrighted work owned by the International Code Council, Inc. Without advance written permission from the copyright owner, no part of this book may be reproduced, distributed or transmitted in any form or by any means, including, without limitation, electronic, optical or mechanical means (by way of example, and not limitation, photocopying, or recording by or in an information storage retrieval system). For information on permission to copy material exceeding fair use, please contact: Publications, 4051 West Flossmoor Road, Country Club Hills, IL 60478-5795. Phone 1-888-ICC-SAFE (422-7233).

Trademarks: “International Code Council,” the “International Code Council” logo and the “International Zoning Code” are trademarks of the International Code Council, Inc.

PRINTED IN THE U.S.A.

This is a preview. [Click here to purchase the full publication.](#)

# PREFACE

## Introduction

Internationally, code officials recognize the need for consistent and uniform zoning ordinances. The *International Zoning Code*<sup>®</sup>, in this 2012 edition, is designed to meet this need through model code regulations that safeguard the public health and safety in all communities, large and small.

This comprehensive zoning code establishes minimum regulations for zoning ordinances. This 2012 edition is fully compatible with all of the *International Codes*<sup>®</sup> (I-Codes<sup>®</sup>) published by the International Code Council (ICC)<sup>®</sup>, including the *International Building Code*<sup>®</sup>, *International Energy Conservation Code*<sup>®</sup>, *International Existing Building Code*<sup>®</sup>, *International Fire Code*<sup>®</sup>, *International Fuel Gas Code*<sup>®</sup>, *International Green Construction Code*<sup>™</sup> (to be available March 2012), *International Mechanical Code*<sup>®</sup>, *ICC Performance Code*<sup>®</sup>, *International Plumbing Code*<sup>®</sup>, *International Private Sewage Disposal Code*<sup>®</sup>, *International Property Maintenance Code*<sup>®</sup>, *International Residential Code*<sup>®</sup>, *International Swimming Pool and Spa Code*<sup>™</sup> (to be available March 2012), and *International Wildland-Urban Interface Code*<sup>®</sup>.

The *International Zoning Code* provides many benefits, among which is the model code development process that offers an international forum for code officials and other interested parties 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 Zoning Code* (1998) was the culmination of an effort initiated in 1996 by a code development committee appointed by ICC and consisting of representatives of the three statutory members of the International Code Council at that time: 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 zoning regulations for jurisdictions that have a need for a zoning ordinance and desire that it be compatible with the model codes adopted by the jurisdiction. This 2012 edition presents the code as originally issued, with changes reflected through the previous 2009 edition. A new edition of the code is promulgated every three years.

This code is founded on principles intended to establish provisions consistent with the scope of a zoning 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 Zoning Code* is available for adoption and use by jurisdictions internationally. Its use within a governmental jurisdiction is intended to be accomplished through adoption by reference in accordance with proceedings establishing the jurisdiction's laws. At the time of adoption, jurisdictions should insert the appropriate information in provisions requiring specific local information, such as the name of the adopting jurisdiction. These locations are shown in bracketed words in small capital letters in the code and in the sample ordinance. The sample adoption ordinance on page xi addresses several key elements of a code adoption ordinance, including the information required for insertion into the code text.

## Maintenance

The *International Zoning 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 both through 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 Zoning Code* assures the highest degree of care, 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 or Definitions)

In each code development cycle, proposed changes to the code are considered at the Code Development Hearings by the International Property Maintenance/Zoning Code Development Committee, whose action constitutes a recommendation to the voting membership for final action on the proposed change. Proposed changes to a code section that has a number beginning with a letter in brackets are considered by a different code development committee. For example, proposed changes to definitions that have [B] in front of them (e.g., [B] DWELLING UNIT) are considered by one of the International Building Code Development Committees (IBC-General) at the code development hearings.

The content of sections or definitions in this code that begin with a letter designation is maintained by another code development committee in accordance with the following:

[A] = Administrative Code Development Committee and

[B] = International Building Code Development Committee (IBC—Fire Safety, General, Means of Egress or Structural).

Note that, for the development of the 2015 edition of the I-Codes, there will be two groups of code development committees and they will meet in separate years. The groupings are as follows:

<b>Group A Codes (Heard in 2012, Code Change Proposals Deadline: January 3, 2012)</b>	<b>Group B Codes (Heard in 2013, Code Change Proposals Deadline: January 3, 2013)</b>
International Building Code	Administrative Provisions (Chapter 1 all codes except IRC and ICC PC, administrative updates to currently referenced standards, and designated definitions)
International Fuel Gas Code	International Energy Conservation Code
International Mechanical Code	International Existing Building Code
International Plumbing Code	International Fire Code
International Private Sewage Disposal Code	International Green Construction Code
	ICC Performance Code
	International Property Maintenance Code
	International Residential Code
	International Swimming Pool and Spa Code
	International Wildland-Urban Interface Code
	International Zoning 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 will meet in different years, it is possible that some proposals for this code will be heard by a committee in a different year than the year in which the primary committee for this code meets.

For example, the definition of “dwelling unit” in Section 202 is designated as the responsibility of the International Building Code Development Committee. This committee will hold its code development hearings in 2012 to consider all code change proposals to the *International Building Code*. Therefore, any proposals to this definition in Chapter 2 will be needed to be submitted by January 3, 2012, for consideration in 2012 by the appropriate International Building Code Committee (IBC-General).

Note that 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 code hearings. This committee will hold its code development hearings in 2013 to consider all code change proposals for Chapter 1 of this code and proposals for Chapter 1 of all I-Codes except the *International Residential Code* and the *ICC Performance Code*. Therefore, any proposals received for Chapter 1 of this code will be deferred for consideration in 2013 by the Administrative Provisions Committee.

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 web site at [www.iccsafe.org/scoping](http://www.iccsafe.org/scoping).

## Marginal Markings

There have been no technical revisions between the 2009 and 2012 editions of this code. Therefore, there are no marginal markings in this edition.

## Italicized Terms

Selected terms set forth in Chapter 2, Definitions, are italicized where they appear in code text. 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 which the user should read carefully to facilitate better understanding of the code.



# EFFECTIVE USE OF THE INTERNATIONAL ZONING CODE

## Effective Use of the International Zoning Code

The *International Zoning Code* (IZC) is a model code that regulates minimum zoning requirements for new buildings.

The IZC is a planning and community development document. The IZC is intended to provide for the arrangement of compatible buildings and land uses and establish provisions for the location of all types of uses, in the interest of the social and economic welfare of the community.

## Arrangement and Format of the 2012 IZC

Before applying the requirements of the IZC, it is beneficial to understand its arrangement and format. The IZC, like other codes published by ICC, is arranged and organized to follow sequential steps that generally occur during a plan review or inspection. The IZC is divided into 14 different parts:

Chapters	Subjects
1	Scope and Administration
2	Definitions
3	Use Districts
4	Agricultural Zones
5	Residential Zones
6	Commercial and Commercial/Residential Zones
7	Factory/Industrial Zones
8	General Provisions
9	Special Regulations
10	Sign Regulations
11	Nonconforming Structures and Uses
12	Conditional Uses
13	Planned Unit Development
14	Referenced Standards

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

**Chapter 1 Scope and Administration.** This chapter contains provisions for the application, enforcement and administration of subsequent requirements of the code. In addition to establishing the scope of the code, Chapter 1 identifies which buildings and structures come under its purview. Chapter 1 is largely concerned with maintaining “due process of law” in enforcing the zoning criteria contained in the body of the code. Only through careful observation of the administrative provisions can the building official reasonably expect to demonstrate that “equal protection under the law” has been provided.

**Chapter 2 Definitions.** All terms that are defined in the code are listed alphabetically in Chapter 2. While a defined term may be used in one chapter or another, the meaning provided in Chapter 2 is applicable throughout the code.

Additional definitions regarding signs are found in Chapter 10. These are not listed in Chapter 2.

Where understanding of a term's definition is especially key to or necessary for understanding of a particular code provision, the term is shown in *italics* wherever it appears in the code. This is true only for those terms that have a meaning that is unique to the code. In other words, the generally understood meaning of a term or phrase might not be sufficient or consistent with the meaning prescribed by the code; therefore, it is essential that the code-defined meaning be known.

Guidance regarding tense, gender and plurality of defined terms as well as guidance regarding terms not defined in this code is provided.

**Chapter 3 Use Districts.** Chapter 3 identifies classifications for typical zoning districts and provides for the application of minimum district areas, in order to regulate and restrict the locations for uses and locations of buildings designated for specific areas and to regulate the minimum required areas or yards and courts and important open-areas property.

This chapter also requires coordination of the established zoning districts with approved zoning maps. Further, this chapter also contains information on the minimum requirements for conditional use areas, which includes particular considerations as to their proper location to adjacent, established or intended uses, or to the planned growth of the community.

Chapter 3, along with Chapters 4 through 7 establish the criteria to classify properties into compatible use districts.

**Chapter 4 Agricultural Zones.** Chapter 4 identifies three divisions of agricultural zones including any area to be designated as open space, agricultural uses and land used for public parks and similar uses. After the specific zoning areas are established, this chapter provides minimum bulk zoning regulations to establish lot area, structure-to-open space density, lot dimensions, and setback and building height requirements.

For example, within an agricultural zone 2 there is a limit of one dwelling unit per 10 acres with a minimum lot area of 10 acres. Lot dimensions are required to be 400 feet wide by 400 feet deep minimum for this parcel of ground.

**Chapter 5 Residential Zones.** The objective of Chapter 5 is to define residential uses for a jurisdiction to utilize in arranging compatible land uses in order to achieve the maximum social and economic benefit for the community. This chapter identifies three divisions of residential zones including single-family, two-family and multiunit residential uses. Once the particular zones are established, provisions for the minimum bulk zoning regulations, such as lot area, structure-to-open-space density, lot dimensions, setback and building height requirements, are indicated. For example, based on Table 502.1, a Division 2b residential lot would restrict the overall building height to 35 feet and establish a minimum front yard of 15 feet, side yard of 5 feet, and rear yard of 20 feet while requiring a minimum overall lot size of 6,000 square feet.

**Chapter 6 Commercial and Commercial/Residential Zones.** Chapter 6 identifies four divisions of commercial zones, including C1, which includes minor automotive repair and automotive fuel dispensing facilities; C2, which includes light commercial and group care facilities; C3, which includes amusement centers including bowling alleys, golf driving ranges, miniature golf courses, ice skating rinks, pool and billiard halls; and C4, which includes major automotive repair, manufacturing and commercial centers. This chapter also contains two divisions of commercial/residential zones that accommodate residential uses in light and medium commercial zones (Divisions 1 and 2). Once the particular zones are established, Chapter 6 provides specific minimum bulk zoning restrictions to include lot area, structure-to-open-space density, lot dimensions, and setback and building height requirements.

**Chapter 7 Factory/Industrial Zones.** The objective of Chapter 7 is to define factory/industrial uses for a jurisdiction to utilize in arranging compatible land uses for the social and economic welfare of the community. This chapter identifies three divisions of factory/industrial zones including a range of factory/industrial zones from light manufacturing or industrial, such as warehouses and auto body shops (Division 1), to heavy manufacturing or industrial, such as automotive dismantling and petroleum refineries (Division 3). Once the particular zones are established, Chapter 7 provides minimum bulk zoning regulations that establish lot area, structure-to-open-space density, lot dimensions, and setback and building height requirements.