Building Code Essentials

Based on the 2018 International Building Code®

International Code Council
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### Preface

- About the International Building Code: x
- Acknowledgments: x
- About the Author: xi
- About the International Code Council: xii

### PART I: CODE ADMINISTRATION AND ENFORCEMENT

#### Chapter 1: Introduction to Building Codes

- History of Codes: 3
- Code Development: 4
- Construction Codes: Scope and Limitations:
  - International Building Code: 6
  - International Mechanical Code: 7
  - International Fuel Gas Code: 7
  - International Plumbing Code: 8
  - International Energy Conservation Code: 8
  - International Fire Code: 8
  - International Property Maintenance Code: 8
  - International Existing Building Code: 9
  - International Residential Code: 9
  - International Swimming Pool and Spa Code: 9
  - International Green Construction Code: 9
- Existing Buildings: 10
  - International Existing Building Code: 10
  - Prescriptive Method Compliance: 11
  - Work Area Compliance Method: 12
  - Performance Method: 14
- Using the IBC: 14
  - Revisions: 15

#### Chapter 2: Legal Aspects, Permits and Inspections

- Code Adoption: 18
  - Codes versus standards: 18
  - Standards used in the *International Building Code*: 18
- Authority: 19
  - Alternate materials and methods of construction: 21
- Permits: 23
  - Submittal requirements: 24
  - Plan review process: 25
- Inspections: 26
  - Footing and foundation inspection: 26
  - Concrete slab and under-floor inspection: 26
  - Lowest floor elevation: 27
  - Frame inspection: 27
  - Lath and gypsum board inspection: 27
  - Weather-exposed balcony and walking surface waterproofing: 27
## Contents

- Fire-resistant penetrations .................................................. 28
- Energy efficiency inspections .............................................. 28
- Final inspection .................................................................... 29
- Third-party inspections ....................................................... 29
- Board of Appeals .................................................................. 29
- Definitions ............................................................................ 30

### PART II : BUILDING PLANNING

#### Chapter 3: Building Use ..................................................... 32
- Basic Occupancies .................................................................. 33
  - Assembly occupancies ...................................................... 35
  - Business occupancies .................................................... 35
  - Educational occupancies .............................................. 36
  - Factory/Industrial occupancies ........................................ 36
  - Hazardous occupancies ................................................ 36
  - Institutional occupancies ............................................. 37
  - Mercantile occupancies ............................................... 37
  - Residential occupancies .............................................. 38
  - Storage occupancies .................................................... 38
  - Utility occupancies .......................................................... 39

#### Chapter 4: Construction Types .......................................... 40
- Combustible Versus Noncombustible .................................... 41
- Protected Versus Unprotected ............................................. 42

#### Chapter 5: Building Size .................................................... 45
- Building Height .................................................................... 46
- Building Area ....................................................................... 48
- Interior Dimensions ............................................................ 53

#### Chapter 6: Special Uses and Considerations ........................ 55
- Multi-Use Buildings ............................................................... 56
  - Separated occupancies .................................................... 56
  - Nonseparated occupancies ............................................ 57
  - Accessory occupancies .................................................. 58
  - Incidental uses ................................................................ 59
- High-Rise Buildings ............................................................. 60
- Atriums ............................................................................... 63
- Vehicles in Buildings .......................................................... 63
  - Private garages ................................................................. 64
  - Public parking garages ................................................... 64
  - Repair garages ................................................................. 65
- Hazardous Materials ............................................................ 65
  - Maximum allowable quantities ..................................... 66
  - Control areas ................................................................. 66
- Live/Work Units .................................................................... 68
- Healthcare Occupancies ..................................................... 68
- Ambulatory Care Facilities .................................................. 71
- Storm Shelters ..................................................................... 72
**PART III : FIRE SAFETY**  
73

**Chapter 7: Fire and Smoke Protection**  
...74

- Spread of Fire within a Building  
- Spread of Fire from Building to Building  

**Chapter 8: Passive Fire Protection**  
...77

- Determination of Fire-Resistance-Rated Construction  
  - Testing  
  - Documentation  
- Types of Fire Assemblies  
  - Protection of the structure  
  - Exterior walls  
  - Fire walls  
  - Fire barriers  
  - Fire partitions  
  - Horizontal assemblies  
  - Vertical openings  
  - Shafts  
  - Penetrations  
  - Opening protection  
- Interior Finishes  
- Stopping Heated Air and Fire Movement  
  - Fireblocking  
  - Draftstopping  

**Chapter 9: Active Fire Protection**  
...92

- Automatic Sprinkler Systems  
  - Where are automatic sprinklers required?  
  - Sprinkler credits  
- Fire Standpipes  
  - Where are standpipes required?  
- Fire Alarms  
  - Where are fire alarms required?  
  - Single-station smoke alarms  
- Controlling Smoke  
  - Smoke-control methods  
- Carbon Monoxide Detectors  

**PART IV : LIFE SAFETY**  
105

**Chapter 10: Getting People Out**  
...106

- Design of Egress Systems  
  - Number of people  
  - Areas without fixed seating  
  - Areas with fixed seating  
  - Number of ways out  
  - Exits from spaces  
  - Exits from buildings  
  - Exit paths  

| Contents |
|-------------------|-------------------|
| Making it wide enough | .112 |
| Horizontal travel | .113 |
| Vertical travel | .113 |
| Path identification | .115 |
| **Means of Egress Components** | .116 |
| Doors | .116 |
| Stairways | .117 |
| Ramps | .119 |
| **Chapter 11: Getting People In** | .121 |
| Federal Regulations | .122 |
| Accessibility | .122 |
| Accessible path | .123 |
| Into the building | .123 |
| Through the building | .124 |
| Ramps | .124 |
| Elevators | .124 |
| Usable spaces | .125 |
| Toilet and bathing facilities | .125 |
| Water closets | .125 |
| Lavatories and sinks | .127 |
| Kitchens | .127 |
| Assembly seating areas | .128 |
| **Residential Accessibility** | .130 |
| **Chapter 12: Building Safety** | .135 |
| Protection from Falling | .136 |
| Guards | .136 |
| Stairways | .136 |
| Ramps | .138 |
| Window-sill height | .138 |
| **Safety Glazing** | .139 |
| **Swimming Pools** | .142 |
| **PART V : HEALTH SAFETY** | .143 |
| **Chapter 13: Weather Protection** | .144 |
| Exterior Walls | .145 |
| Keeping the water out | .145 |
| Drainage plane | .146 |
| Flashing | .146 |
| Vapor retarders | .147 |
| Materials | .148 |
| **Roofing** | .151 |
| Flashing | .152 |
| Low-slope roofs | .152 |
| Steep roofs | .154 |
| Asphalt shingles | .154 |
| Clay and concrete tiles | .156 |
Chapter 14: Interior Environment ......................................... 157
  Light and Ventilation ....................................................... 158
    Natural and artificial lighting .................................. 158
    Natural ventilation ............................................... 159
    Exhaust systems .................................................. 160
  Temperature ................................................................. 160
  Moisture Control .......................................................... 161
    Roof ventilation .................................................. 161
    Under-floor ventilation .................................... 162
  Plumbing Facilities .......................................................... 162
    Minimum plumbing facilities .......................... 162
    Location of toilet facilities ......................... 164
    Toilet/bathing room finishes ....................... 164

PART VI : STRUCTURAL SAFETY ........................................ 167

Chapter 15: Structural Design ........................................... 168
  Basic Loads ................................................................. 169
    Live loads ..................................................... 169
    Dead loads ..................................................... 170
    Deflection ...................................................... 171
    Environmental loads ........................................ 172
      Snow loads .................................................. 172
      Wind loads ............................................... 173
      Earthquake loads .................................... 174
      Flood loads .............................................. 175
  Soils ........................................................................... 176
    Excavation ....................................................... 177
    Grading ........................................................... 178

Chapter 16: Materials ....................................................... 179
  Structural Materials ...................................................... 180
    Concrete construction .................................... 180
      National standards ..................................... 180
      Durability requirements .............................. 181
      Foundations ................................................. 182
      Formwork ................................................... 182
      Reinforcement ........................................... 183
      Quality control ........................................ 184
    Masonry construction .................................... 186
      Foundations ................................................. 187
      Materials .................................................... 187
      Quality control ........................................ 188
    Steel construction .............................................. 189
      Protection ................................................... 189
      Connections ............................................... 190
      Quality control ........................................ 190
    Wood ............................................................. 191
      Protection ................................................... 191
Grade marks .................................................. 193
Cutting, boring and notching ....................... 194
Floor construction ........................................ 195
Walls .......................................................... 197
Ceilings and roofs ........................................ 199
Crawl space and attic access ....................... 201
Engineered wood products ......................... 202
Trusses ....................................................... 202

Nonstructural Materials ................................. 203
Gypsum board ............................................. 203
Plastics ....................................................... 204

Glossary ...................................................... 205

A 209
Construction of buildings has progressed over the centuries from stone buildings to the steel and concrete monuments to the industrial revolution and technology today. People have an expectation that when they enter a building, it has been constructed in such a manner that if an emergency situation occurs in the building, they will be protected. As new building practices improve and new building technologies are developed, the complexity of the buildings has increased. As these complexities increase, building regulations must keep up with the technology. The codes adopted by governmental agencies should not prohibit or limit the use of new materials or technologies. However, buildings must be constructed to be safe for the occupants. Therefore, the building code has had to keep up with the complex building practices and has become a complex document in itself. The codes and standards used to regulate the construction of buildings can overwhelm the casual user of the code. Navigating the complex and detailed provisions of the code can be daunting. Not all of the provisions apply to every building.

This text, *Building Code Essentials*, has been written to provide an easy-to-read overview of the *International Building Code*® (IBC). It is an illustrated look at the most common code provisions. This text provides an overall understanding of the provisions of the building code. It is presented in a user-friendly manner with emphasis on the technical accuracy and clear noncode language. This book targets readers who have a basic understanding of architecture and construction but a limited knowledge of the code requirements.

Anyone who is involved in the design, construction or regulatory aspects of building construction can gain from this book. People with all levels of experience can profit from the information provided. The user will be able to use this document for learning the fundamental provisions and intents of the building code. The most common and most used provisions of the 2018 *International Building Code* have been addressed.

The information in *Building Code Essentials* has been organized by the different purposes of the code. It discusses the administrative provision that building departments use to enforce the provisions of the building code. The provisions used to design the overall building use, construction, size, and specific occupancy requirements are covered in the building planning portion of the code. The fire safety topics include the use of passive and active fire protection. The discussion of life safety issues includes the methods used in the design and construction to ensure that occupants are provided with a safe means of evacuating a building in an emergency. It also provides the provisions that allow people with physical disabilities to access buildings. Health safety provisions regarding weather protection and interior environment have been provided. Finally, the structural provisions of the code have been put into easy-to-understand language.
This book is not intended to cover all of the provisions of the building code or all of the acceptable materials and methods of construction. This is not to say that the information not included in this book is not important. This book should be used with the 2018 International Building Code, which should be referenced for more details and information. This book only provides a basic understanding of a very complex document and referenced standards.

Building Code Essentials includes full-color photos and illustrations to help the reader understand the provisions and application of the building code requirements. It provides examples, simplified tables, and highlights to explain the fundamental requirements of the International Building Code and to gain compliance with its regulations. References to the applicable sections or standards have been provided to assist the reader in locating more detailed and complete information in the code. A glossary of code and construction terms clarifies the meaning of the technical provisions.

ABOUT THE INTERNATIONAL BUILDING CODE

The IBC covers all buildings except detached one- and two-family dwellings and townhouses not more than three stories in height. This comprehensive code features time-tested safety concepts; structural, fire and life safety provisions covering means of egress; interior finish requirements; comprehensive roof provisions; seismic engineering provisions; innovative construction technology; occupancy classifications; and the latest industry standards in material design. It is founded on broad-based principles that make possible the use of new materials and new building designs.

The IBC is one of the codes in the family of International Codes published by the International Code Council® (ICC). All of these codes are maintained and updated through an open code-development process and are available internationally for adoption by the governing authority to provide consistent enforceable regulation for the built environment.

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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Mr. Thomas has over 30 years of experience in building code plan review, inspection and administration. He is currently the president of Colorado Code Consulting, LLC. He served as the Building Official for the City of Glendale, Colorado, for 18 years. Starting a building code consulting firm in 1999, his firm provides building department services for governmental agencies, code consulting services for architectural clients and building code education across the country. Mr. Thomas served on ICBO Code Development Committees and the ICBO Chairman’s Advisory Committee for Small Jurisdictions. He currently serves as a member and the Chair of the ICC Means of Egress Code Development Committee. He currently serves on the ICC Codes and Standards Council and is very involved in code development. Mr. Thomas received his bachelor of science in business administration degree from the University of Phoenix. Mr. Thomas is a Certified Building Official and holds nine other ICC certifications.
ABOUT THE INTERNATIONAL CODE COUNCIL

The International Code Council® (ICC®) is a member-focused association dedicated to helping the building safety community and construction industry provide safe, sustainable and affordable construction through the development of codes and standards used in the design, build and compliance process. Most U.S. communities and many global markets choose the International Codes®. ICC Evaluation Service (ICC-ES), a subsidiary of the International Code Council, has been the industry leader in performing technical evaluations for code compliance fostering safe and sustainable design and construction.

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