

Jamaican Standard
2024 Jamaica Property Maintenance Code

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PREFACE

Introduction

The *Jamaica Property Maintenance Code* (JPMC) establishes minimum requirements for the maintenance of existing buildings and structures through model code regulations that contain clear and specific property maintenance and property improvement provisions. This code emphasizes that the minimum conditions on which a building or structure was originally granted Occupancy Certification shall not be lowered by maintenance or repairs or alteration or replacement activity carried out during the life of the building or structure. To ensure that there is no lowering of the minimum specifications of the building codes used for the construction of the building or structure, the specifications in this code are replicas of the other codes. This 2024 edition can therefore be described as fully compatible with all of the *Jamaica Codes* published by the International Code Council® (ICC®) and the Bureau of Standards, including the *Jamaica Building Code*, *Jamaica Energy Conservation Code*, *Jamaica Existing Building Code*, *Jamaica Fire Code*, *Jamaica Fuel Gas Code*, *Jamaica Green Construction Code*, *Jamaica Mechanical Code*, *Jamaica Plumbing Code*, *Jamaica Private Sewage Disposal Code*, and *Jamaica Small/Building Residential Code*.

This 2024 edition of the *Jamaica Property Maintenance Code* is the first amalgamated rendering of this code and combines all applicable clauses of the *International Property Maintenance Code*® (IPMC®), the Jamaica Application Document as well as clauses from the 2018 Building Act of Jamaica and its Regulations. Prior to this 2024 version of the *Jamaica Property Maintenance Code*, a code user had to consult four documents to get a full understanding of some code requirements. This made usage of the code unwieldy and discourageable to the plethora of building construction stakeholders needed to become code users. With the vastly improved user friendliness of the JPMC, further local customization of the IPMC provisions as well as the growth in scope of this code usage is expected to increase exponentially. This growth and development of the codes will save many lives, prevent many major and catastrophic property damage and lower risks to the insurers of property that may ultimately result in lower property insurance cost.

The JPMC is a set of regulations that form part of the Building Laws of Jamaica and so will be enforced by the Government of Jamaica through its Local Authorities (Municipal Corporations). Permits for conducting maintenance operations shall be procured from the Municipal Corporations. Applications for such permit under this code shall state the code(s) from which the work specification will be drawn.

The I-Codes and their Jamaican counterparts, including this *Jamaica Property Maintenance Code*, are being used in a variety of ways in both the public and private sectors. Most building industry professionals are familiar with the I-Codes/J-Codes as the basis of building laws and regulations in Jamaica. However, the impact of the codes extends well beyond the regulatory arena, as they are being used in a variety of nonregulatory settings, including:

- Voluntary compliance programmes such as those promoting sustainability, energy efficiency and disaster resistance.
- The insurance industry, to estimate and manage risk, and as a tool in underwriting and rate decisions.
- Certification and credentialing of individuals involved in the fields of building design, construction and safety.
- Certification of building and construction-related products.
- Facilities management.
- “Best practices” benchmarks for designers and builders, including those who are engaged in projects.
- College, university and professional school textbooks and curricula.
- Reference works related to building design and construction.

In addition to the codes themselves, the code development process brings together building professionals on a regular basis. It provides an international forum for discussion and deliberation about building design, construction methods, safety, performance requirements, technological advances and innovative products.

Development

This 2024 edition of the code is based on the 2018 edition of the *International Property Maintenance Code*[®], with changes reflected in the 2003 through 2015 editions and further changes developed through the 2003 and 2015 editions of the Jamaica Application Documents. From now onwards a new edition of the code is planned for promulgation every 6 years.

This code is intended to establish provisions that adequately protect public health, safety and welfare; that do not unnecessarily increase construction costs; that do not restrict the use of new materials, products or methods of construction; and that do not give preferential treatment to particular types or classes of materials, products or methods of construction except where such use of materials, products or methods of construction cannot result in a building or structure that can successfully resist the forces of the likely natural hazards to which they may be subjected.

Maintenance

The *Jamaica Property Maintenance Code* will be kept up to date through the review of proposed changes submitted by code enforcement 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 BSJ and ICC Code Development Process reflects principles of openness, transparency, balance, due process and consensus, that are embodied in documents such as the OMB Circular A-119, which governs the U.S. federal government's use of private-sector standards. Both the ICC and BSJ code development process is open to anyone; there is no cost to participate, and people can participate without travel cost through their Internet availability of the document over a stipulated period for public comment. A broad cross section of interests are represented in both the BSJ and ICC Code Development Processes. The codes, which are updated periodically, include safeguards that allow for emergency action when required for health and safety reasons.

In order to ensure that organizations with a direct and material interest in the codes have a voice in the code development process, both the BSJ and ICC have developed partnerships with key industry segments that support the BSJ's and ICC's public safety mission. Some code development committee members were nominated by the following industry partners:

- Jamaica Institute of Architects (JIA)
- Jamaica Institution of Engineers (JIE)
- Construction Industry Council (CIC)
- The Ministry of Local Government and Community Development (MLGCD)
- Municipalities

Both the BSJ's and ICC's code development committees [known as the Building Code Technical Review Committee (BCTRC) for the BSJ] evaluate and make recommendations regarding proposed changes to the codes or draft codes prepared by contracted consultants. Their recommendations are then subject to public comment and approval by the BSJ's Standards Council and by council-wide votes in the ICC's case. The ICC's governmental members—public safety officials who have no financial or business interest in the outcome—cast the final votes on proposed changes. In the BSJ's case the Minister of Industry and Commerce gives final approval for the codes and their publication as national standards.

The contents of this work are subject to change through the code development cycles and by any governmental entity 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 or the Director of Standards at the BSJ.

While the J-Codes and I-Codes development procedures are thorough and comprehensive, the BSJ, ICC, its members and those participating in the development of the codes disclaim any liability resulting from the publication or use of the J-Codes or I-Codes, or from compliance or noncompliance with their provisions. Neither the BSJ nor the ICC has the power or authority to police or enforce compliance with the contents of this code.

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

In each code development cycle, proposed changes to this code are considered at the Building Code Technical Review Committee (BCTRC), which is tasked with the following responsibilities:

1. Consider the proposed changes to the code and decide whether they are technically sound and implementable in Jamaica without creating widespread disruption in the construction industry, the real estate market and the manufacturing industry.
2. Consider the advantages of the proposed changes and whether they represent real improvement on what exists.
3. Are the changes acceptable to the diverse stakeholders that committee members represent?
4. Are the proposed changes to be accepted as proposed, rejected or altered?
5. Are there other changes which should be considered beyond those presented by the consultants?

In establishing the BCTRC the Standards Act requires that the broadest stakeholder's representation be built into this committee. The committee has been made large to facilitate the diverse codes and subject matter to be reviewed, ensure that meetings have the best chance of a quorum whenever they are called and the mandatory virtual meetings which the Covid Pandemic has imposed. The following are the persons who served on the BCTRC and the organization they represented:

1. Mr. Roosevelt DaCosta—Chief Code Consultant, Endacosta Limited
2. Mrs. Lise Walter—Jamaica Institution of Engineers
3. Mr. Peter Jervis—Jamaica Institution of Engineers
4. Mr. Percival Stewart—Jamaica Institution of Engineers
5. Dr. Marva Blankson—Jamaica Institution of Engineers
6. Mr. Oneil Josephs—Jamaica Institution of Engineers
7. Mr. Alex Bernard—Jamaica Institution of Engineers
8. Mr. Kevin Sinclair—Jamaica Institution of Engineers
9. Mr. Noel Whyte—Jamaica Institution of Engineers
10. Mr. Gary Walters—Jamaica Institution of Engineers
11. Mr. Dwight Ricketts—Jamaica Institution of Engineers
12. Mr. Howard Chin—Jamaica Institution of Engineers
13. Mr. Karl Kaiser—Private Fire Consultant, Kaiser Fire Prevention
14. Mrs. Nilsia Johnson—Ministry of Health & Wellness, Environmental Health Unit
15. Mrs. Winsome Grant—Jamaica Fire Brigade
16. Mr. Sirnal Sangster—Jamaica Fire Brigade

17. Mr. Derval McKenzie—Jamaica Fire Brigade
18. Mr. Alfred Fennel—Jamaica Fire Brigade
19. Mr. Dwight Wilson—Ministry of Local Government & Community Development
20. Mr. Carl Drummond—Ministry of Local Government & Community Development
21. Mr. Shane Slater—Bureau of Standards Jamaica
22. Mr. Eldon Livingston—Bureau of Standards Jamaica
23. Mr. Wilfred Francis—Bureau of Standards Jamaica
24. Mr. Romaine McLean—Bureau of Standards Jamaica
25. Mr. Richard Lawrence—Bureau of Standards Jamaica
26. Mr. Sheldon Grant—Office of Disaster Preparedness and Emergency Management
27. Mr. David Allen—Code Consultant, Endacosta Limited
28. Mr. Noel DaCosta—Code Consultant, Endacosta Limited
29. Mrs. Erica Whondell Monroe—Legal Consultant, Endacosta Limited
30. Mr. David Chung—Code Consultant, Endacosta Limited
31. Dr. Yolanda Silvera—Academia, University of Technology, Jamaica
32. Mr. Chris Lue—Jamaica Institute of Architects
33. Mr. Lascelles Dixon—Consulting Architect, Lascelles Dixon Associates Limited
34. Dr. Paul Aiken—Academia, University of the West Indies
35. Mr. Africo Adams—Structural Engineering Consultant, SMADA Consultants Limited
36. Mr. Mark Taylor—Consulting Architect, Taylor Architects Limited
37. Mr. Burchell Solomon—Government Electrical Inspectorate
38. Mr. Gary Walters—Construction Industry Council

Now that the National Building Act is in place, and implementation of the code is mandatory, future code development cycles may begin with a public hearing in which the experience of code users (designers, developers, contractors and code enforcement officials) will be aired, problems experienced and solutions offered. This will enrich the local input into the code and make it even more relevant and applicable to the Jamaica Building Industry.

Marginal Markings

Double vertical lines in the margin denote amendments and additions promulgated by the Bureau of Standards Jamaica modifying the 2018 *International Property Maintenance Code*.

Coordination of the Jamaica Codes

The coordination of technical provisions is one of the strengths of the ICC family of model codes and since the Jamaica codes are mainly adoptions of the ICC codes, it follows that coordination of technical provisions is also one of the strengths of the Jamaica codes. The codes can be used as a complete set of complementary documents, which will provide users with full integration and coordination of technical provisions. Individual codes can also be used in subsets or as stand-alone documents. To make sure that each individual code is as complete as possible, some technical provisions that are relevant to more than one subject area are duplicated in some of the model codes. This allows users maximum flexibility in their application of the Jamaica Codes.

Italicized Terms

Words and terms defined in Chapter 2, Definitions, are italicized where they appear in code text and the Chapter 2 definition applies. Where such words and terms are not italicized, common-use definitions apply. The words and terms selected have code-specific definitions that the user should read carefully to facilitate better understanding of the code.

Adoption

The International Code Council (ICC) and the Bureau of Standards Jamaica (BSJ) maintain a copyright in all of its codes and standards. Maintaining copyright allows the ICC and BSJ to fund their missions through sales of books, in both print and electronic formats. The ICC and BSJ welcome adoption of its codes by jurisdictions that recognise and acknowledge the ICC's and BSJ'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 and BSJ.

EFFECTIVE USE OF THE JAMAICA PROPERTY MAINTENANCE CODE

The *Jamaica Property Maintenance Code* (JPMC) is a model code that regulates the minimum maintenance requirements for existing buildings. The intent of this code is to ensure that the code compliance level that led to the code official granting Occupancy Certification to the building or structure is preserved throughout its occupancy life irrespective of the repairs, replacements, alterations and additions that will in all probability take place.

The JPMC is a maintenance document intended to establish minimum maintenance standards for basic equipment, light, ventilation, cooling, heating, sanitation and fire safety. Responsibility is fixed among owners, operators and occupants for code compliance. The JPMC provides for the regulation and safe use of existing structures in the interest of the social and economic welfare of the community.

Arrangement and Format of the 2024 JPMC

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

Chapters	Subjects
1	Scope and Administration
2	Definitions
3	General Requirements
4	Light, Ventilation and Occupancy Limitations
5	Plumbing Facilities and Fixture Requirements
6	Mechanical and Electrical Requirements
7	Fire Safety Requirements
8	Referenced Standards

The following is a chapter-by-chapter synopsis of the scope and intent of the provisions of the *Jamaica Property Maintenance 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 property maintenance 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.

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

Chapter 3 General Requirements. Chapter 3, “General Requirements,” is broad in scope. It includes a variety of requirements for the exterior property areas as well as the interior and exterior elements of the structure. This chapter provides requirements that are intended to maintain a minimum level of safety and sanitation for both the general public and the occupants of a structure, and to maintain a building’s structural and weather-resistance performance. Chapter 3 provides specific criteria for regulating the installation and maintenance of specific building components; maintenance requirements for vacant structures and land; requirements regulating the safety, sanitation and appearance of the interior and exterior of structures and all exterior property areas; accessory structures; vehicle storage regulations and establishes who is responsible for complying with the chapter’s provisions. This chapter also contains the requirements for swimming pools, spas and hot tubs and the requirements for protective barriers and gates in these barriers. Chapter 3 establishes the responsible parties for exterminating insects and rodents, and maintaining sanitary conditions in all types of occupancies.

Chapter 4 Light, Ventilation and Occupancy Limitations. The purposes of Chapter 4 are to set forth these requirements in the code and to establish the minimum environment for occupiable and habitable buildings, by establishing the minimum criteria for light and ventilation and identifying occupancy limitations including minimum room width and area, minimum ceiling height and restrictions to prevent overcrowding. This chapter also provides for alternative arrangements of windows and other devices to comply with the requirements for light and ventilation and prohibits certain room arrangements and occupancy uses. This chapter also deals with the new issue of nuisance lighting since it affects the sleep and subsequent health of a large percentage of persons. The chapter outlines the sources that give rise to nuisance lighting and shows that they stem mainly from improper maintenance practices, insufficient consideration of the negative effect that new or upgraded exterior lights can have on the sleeping environment of neighbouring properties, specifies acceptable correction approaches and how correction should be carried out for just outcomes between the protagonists.

Chapter 5 Plumbing Facilities and Fixture Requirements. Chapter 5 establishes the minimum criteria for the installation, maintenance and location of plumbing systems and facilities, including the water supply system, water heating appliances, sewage disposal system and related plumbing fixtures.

Sanitary and clean conditions in occupied buildings are dependent upon certain basic plumbing principles, including providing potable water to a building, providing the basic fixtures to effectively utilize that water and properly removing waste from the building. Chapter 5 establishes the minimum criteria to verify that these principles are maintained throughout the life of a building.

Chapter 6 Mechanical and Electrical Requirements. The purpose of Chapter 6 is to establish minimum performance requirements for heating, cooling, electrical and mechanical facilities and to establish minimum standards for the continued safety of these facilities.

This chapter establishes minimum criteria for installation arising from repairs, replacements, alterations as well as additions and maintenance of the following: heating and air-conditioning equipment, appliances and their supporting systems; water heating equipment, appliances and systems; cooking equipment and appliances; ventilation and exhaust equipment; gas and liquid fuel distribution piping and components; fireplaces and solid fuel-burning appliances; chimneys and vents; electrical services; lighting fixtures; electrical receptacle outlets; electrical distribution system equipment, devices and wiring; and elevators, escalators and dumbwaiters.

Chapter 7 Fire Safety Requirements. The purpose of Chapter 7 is to address those fire hazards that arise as the result of a building’s occupancy. It also provides minimum requirements for fire safety issues that are most likely to arise in older buildings.

This chapter contains requirements for means of egress in existing buildings, including path of travel, required egress width, means of egress doors and emergency escape openings.

Chapter 7 establishes the minimum requirements for fire safety facilities and fire protection systems, as these are essential fire safety systems.

Chapter 8 Referenced Standards. The code contains numerous references to standards that are used to regulate materials and methods of construction. Chapter 8 contains a comprehensive list of all standards that are referenced in the code. The standards are part of the code to the extent of the reference to the standard. Compliance with the referenced standard is necessary for compliance with this code. By providing specifically adopted standards, the construction and installation requirements necessary for compliance with the code can be readily determined. The basis for code compliance is, therefore, established and available on an equal basis to the code official, contractor, designer and owner.

Chapter 8 is organized in a manner that makes it easy to locate specific standards. It lists all of the referenced standards, alphabetically, by acronym of the promulgating agency of the standard. Each agency's standards are then listed in either alphabetical or numeric order based upon the standard identification. The list also contains the title of the standard; the edition (date) of the standard referenced; any addenda included as part of the ICC adoption; and the section or sections of this code that reference the standard.

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