By Statute, the Commissioner of Insurance has general supervision of the administration and enforcement of the *North Carolina State Building Code* and the Engineering Division serves as the Staff for the Building Code Council. Officials of the Department of Insurance are:

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Senior Deputy Commissioner

**BARRY GUPTON, PE**
Chief Code Consultant

**CLIFF ISAAC, PE**
Deputy Commissioner

**MELANIE BUTLER, PE**
Existing Building Code Consultant

### COMMITTEES OF THE COUNCIL
**DECEMBER 12, 2017**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ADMINISTRATION</th>
<th>ENERGY</th>
<th>MECHANICAL</th>
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</thead>
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<tr>
<td>Robbie Davis — Chair</td>
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<td>Keith Rogers, PE — Chair</td>
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<td>Daniel Priest, RA - Vice Chair</td>
<td>Charles Conner, RA</td>
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<th>ELECTRICAL</th>
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<td>Eric Tjalma, RA</td>
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PREFACE

Introduction

Internationally, code officials recognize the need for a modern, up-to-date code addressing repair, alteration, addition or change of occupancy in existing buildings. The International Existing Building Code®, in this 2015 edition, is designed to meet this need through model code regulations that safeguard the public health and safety in all communities, large and small.


The International Existing Building Code provisions provide many benefits, including the model code development process, which 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 Existing Building Code (2003) was the culmination of an effort initiated in 2000 by a development committee appointed by the 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 existing buildings 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 as well as other rehabilitation codes was utilized as the basis for the development, followed by a public forum in 2001 and the publication of the 2001 Final Draft. This 2015 edition presents the code as originally issued in 2003 with the changes reflected in the 2006 edition, 2009 edition, 2012 edition and with further changes approved through the ICC code development process through 2013. A new edition such as this is promulgated every 3 years.

This code is founded on principles intended to encourage the use and reuse of existing buildings that adequately protect 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 Existing 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 non-downloadable form on the ICC’s website. Jurisdictions should contact the ICC at adop-
Maintenance

The International Existing 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 Existing 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, proposed changes to this code are considered at the Committee Action Hearings by the International Existing Building Code Development Committee. Proposed changes to a code section having a number beginning with a letter in brackets are considered by a different code development committee. For example, proposed changes to code sections that are preceded by the designation [F] (e.g., [F] 1404.2) are considered by the International Fire Code Development Committee at the Committee Action Hearings.

The content of sections 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;
[BE] = IBC – Means of Egress Code Development Committee;
[BG] = IBC – General Code Development Committee;
[BS] = IBC – Structural Code Development Committee;
[EC] = International Energy Conservation Code Development Committee;
[F] = International Fire Code Development Committee;
[FG] = International Fuel Gas Code Development Committee;
[M] = International Mechanical Code Development Committee; and

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.
Marginal and Text 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. Underlining within the body of the code indicates a technical change to the 2018 North Carolina Existing Building Code from the requirements of the 2015 edition of the International Existing Building Code.

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 Existing Building Code.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2015 LOCATION</th>
<th>2012 LOCATION</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>302.5</td>
<td>501.3</td>
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<td>1105.3</td>
<td>806.4</td>
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<tr>
<td>1105.4</td>
<td>806.5</td>
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</table>

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 that the user should read carefully to facilitate better understanding of the code.
EFFECTIVE USE OF THE INTERNATIONAL EXISTING BUILDING CODE

The *International Existing Building Code* is a model code in the *International Code* family of codes intended to provide alternative approaches to repair, alteration and additions to existing buildings. A large number of existing buildings and structures do not comply with the current building code requirements for new construction. Although many of these buildings are potentially salvageable, rehabilitation is often cost-prohibitive because compliance with all the requirements for new construction could require extensive changes that go well beyond the value of the building or the original scope of the alteration. At the same time, it is necessary to regulate construction in existing buildings that undergo additions, alterations, extensive repairs or change of occupancy. Such activity represents an opportunity to ensure that new construction complies with the current building codes and that existing conditions are maintained, at a minimum, to their current level of compliance or are improved as required to meet basic safety levels. To accomplish this objective, and to make the alteration process easier, this code allows for options for controlled departure from full compliance with the *International Codes* dealing with new construction, while maintaining basic levels for fire prevention, structural and life safety features of the rehabilitated building.

This code provides three main options for a designer in dealing with alterations of existing buildings. These are laid out in Section 301 of this code:

**OPTION 1:** Work for alteration, repair, change of occupancy, addition or relocation of all existing buildings shall be done in accordance with the Prescriptive Compliance Method given in Chapter 4. It should be noted that this method originates from the former Chapter 34 of the *International Building Code* (2012 and earlier editions).

**OPTION 2:** Work for alteration, repair, change of occupancy, addition or relocation of all existing buildings shall be done in accordance with the Work Area Compliance Method given in Chapters 5 through 13.

**OPTION 3:** Work for alteration, repair, change of occupancy, addition or relocation of all existing buildings shall be done in accordance with the Performance Compliance Method given in Chapter 14. It should be noted that this option was also provided in the former Chapter 34 of the *International Building Code* (2012 and earlier editions).

Under limited circumstances, a building alteration can be made to comply with the laws under which the building was originally built, as long as there has been no substantial structural damage and there will be limited structural alteration.

Arrangement and Format of the 2015 IEBC

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapters</th>
<th>Subjects</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-2</td>
<td>Administrative Requirements and Definitions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Compliance Methods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Prescriptive Compliance Method for Existing Buildings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-13</td>
<td>Work Area Compliance Method for Existing Buildings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Performance Compliance Method for Existing Buildings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Construction Safeguards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Referenced Standards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix A</td>
<td>Guidelines for Seismic Retrofit of Existing Buildings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix B</td>
<td>Supplementary Accessibility Requirements for Existing Buildings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix C</td>
<td>Guidelines for Wind Retrofit of Existing Buildings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resource A</td>
<td>Guidelines on Fire Ratings of Archaic Materials and Assemblies</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The following is a chapter-by-chapter synopsis of the scope and intent of the provisions of the International Existing Building 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 regulations contained in the body of the code. Only through careful observation of the administrative provisions can the code official reasonably expect to demonstrate that “equal protection under the law” has been provided.

**Chapter 2 Definitions.** All defined terms in the code are provided in Chapter 2. While a defined term may only 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 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 also provided.

**Chapter 3 Provisions for All Compliance Methods.** This chapter explains the three compliance options available in the code. In addition, this chapter also lays out the methods to be used for seismic design and evaluation throughout the IEBC. Finally this chapter clarifies that provisions in other I-codes related to repairs, alterations, additions, relocation and changes in occupancy must also be addressed unless they conflict with the IEBC. In that case the IEBC takes precedence.

**Chapter 4 Prescriptive Compliance Method.** This chapter provides one of the three main options of compliance available in the IEBC for buildings and structures undergoing repair, alteration, addition or change in occupancy.

**Chapter 5 Classification of Work.** This chapter provides an overview of the Work Area Method available as an option for rehabilitation of a building. The chapter defines the different classifications of alterations and provides general requirements for repairs, alterations, additions, relocation and changes in occupancy. Detailed requirements for all of these are given in subsequent Chapters 6 through 13.

**Chapter 6 Repairs.** Chapter 6 governs the repair of existing buildings. The provisions define conditions under which repairs may be made using materials and methods like those of the original construction or the extent to which repairs must comply with requirements for new buildings.

**Chapter 7 Alterations—Level 1.** This chapter provides the technical requirements for those existing buildings that undergo Level 1 alterations as described in Section 503, which includes replacement or covering of existing materials, elements, equipment or fixtures using new materials for the same purpose. This chapter, similar to other chapters of this code, covers all building-related subjects, such as structural, mechanical, plumbing, electrical and accessibility as well as the fire and life safety issues when the alterations are classified as Level 1. The purpose of this chapter is to provide detailed requirements and provisions to identify the required improvements in the existing building elements, building spaces and building structural system. This chapter is distinguished from Chapters 8 and 9 by only involving replacement of building components with new components. In contrast, Level 2 alterations involve more space reconfiguration and Level 3 alterations involve more extensive space reconfiguration, exceeding 50 percent of the building area.

**Chapter 8 Alterations—Level 2.** Like Chapter 7, the purpose of this chapter is to provide detailed requirements and provisions to identify the required improvements in the existing building elements, building spaces and building structural system when a building is being altered. This chapter is distinguished from Chapters 7 and 9 by involving space reconfiguration that could be up to
and including 50 percent of the area of the building. In contrast, Level 1 alterations (Chapter 7) do not involve space reconfiguration and Level 3 alterations (Chapter 9) involve extensive space reconfiguration that exceeds 50 percent of the building area. Depending on the nature of alteration work, its location within the building and whether it encompasses one or more tenants, improvements and upgrades could be required for the open floor penetrations, sprinkler system or the installation of additional means of egress such as stairs or fire escapes.

Chapter 9 Alterations—Level 3. This chapter provides the technical requirements for those existing buildings that undergo Level 3 alterations. The purpose of this chapter is to provide detailed requirements and provisions to identify the required improvements in the existing building elements, building spaces and building structural system. This chapter is distinguished from Chapters 7 and 8 by involving alterations that cover 50 percent of the aggregate area of the building. In contrast, Level 1 alterations do not involve space reconfiguration and Level 2 alterations involve extensive space reconfiguration that does not exceed 50 percent of the building area. Depending on the nature of alteration work, its location within the building and whether it encompasses one or more tenants, improvements and upgrades could be required for the open floor penetrations, sprinkler system or the installation of additional means of egress such as stairs or fire escapes. At times and under certain situations, this chapter also intends to improve the safety of certain building features beyond the work area and in other parts of the building where no alteration work might be taking place.

Chapter 10 Change of Occupancy. The purpose of this chapter is to provide regulations for the circumstances when an existing building is subject to a change in occupancy or a change in occupancy classification. A change of occupancy is not to be confused with a change of occupancy classification. The International Building Code (IBC) defines different occupancy classifications in Chapter 3, and special occupancy requirements in Chapter 4. Within specific occupancy classifications there can be many different types of actual activities that can take place. For instance, a Group A-3 occupancy classification deals with a wide variation of different types of activities, including bowling alleys and courtrooms, indoor tennis courts and dance halls. When a facility changes use from, for example, a bowling alley to a dance hall, the occupancy classification remains A-3, but the different uses could lead to drastically different code requirements. Therefore, this chapter deals with the special circumstances that are associated with a change in the use of a building within the same occupancy classification as well as a change of occupancy classification.

Chapter 11 Additions. Chapter 11 provides the requirements for additions, which correlate to the code requirements for new construction. There are, however, some exceptions that are specifically stated within this chapter. An “Addition” is defined in Chapter 2 as “an extension or increase in the floor area, number of stories or height of a building or structure.” Chapter 11 contains the minimum requirements for an addition that is not separated from the existing building by a fire wall.

Chapter 12 Historic Buildings. This chapter provides some exceptions from code requirements when the building in question has historic value. The most important criterion for application of this chapter is that the building must be essentially accredited as being of historic significance by a state or local authority after careful review of the historical value of the building. Most, if not all, states have such authorities, as do many local jurisdictions. The agencies with such authority can be located at the state or local government level or through the local chapter of the American Institute of Architects (AIA). Other considerations include the structural condition of the building (i.e., is the building structurally sound), its proposed use, its impact on life safety and how the intent of the code, if not the letter, will be achieved.

Chapter 13 Relocated or Moved Buildings. Chapter 13 is applicable to any building that is moved or relocated.

Chapter 14 Performance Compliance Methods. This chapter allows for existing buildings to be evaluated so as to show that alterations, while not meeting new construction requirements, will improve the current existing situation. Provisions are based on a numerical scoring system involving 19 various safety parameters and the degree of code compliance for each issue.
Chapter 15 Construction Safeguards. The building construction process involves a number of known and unanticipated hazards. Chapter 15 establishes specific regulations in order to minimize the risk to the public and adjacent property. Some construction failures have resulted during the initial stages of grading, excavation and demolition. During these early stages, poorly designed and installed sheeting and shoring have resulted in ditch and embankment cave-ins. Also, inadequate underpinning of adjoining existing structures or careless removal of existing structures has produced construction failures.

Chapter 16 Referenced Standards. The code contains numerous references to standards that are used to regulate materials and methods of construction. Chapter 16 contains a comprehensive list of all standards that are referenced in the code, including the appendices. 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 building code official, contractor, designer and owner.

Chapter 16 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.

Appendix A Guidelines for the Seismic Retrofit of Existing Buildings. Appendix A provides guidelines for upgrading the seismic resistance capacity of different types of existing buildings. It is organized into separate chapters which deal with buildings of different types, including unreinforced masonry buildings, reinforced concrete and reinforced masonry wall buildings, and light-frame wood buildings.

Appendix B Supplementary Accessibility Requirements for Existing Buildings and Facilities. Chapter 11 of the International Building Code (IBC) contains provisions that set forth requirements for accessibility to buildings and their associated sites and facilities for people with physical disabilities. Sections 410, 605, 705, 906, 1006, 1012.1.4, 1012.8, 1105, 1204.1, 1205.15, 1401.2.5 and 1508 in the code address accessibility provisions and alternatives permitted in existing buildings. Appendix B was added to address accessibility in construction for items that are not typically enforceable through the traditional building code enforcement process.


Recommended Resource A Guidelines on Fire Ratings of Archaic Materials and Assemblies. In the process of repair and alteration of existing buildings, based on the nature and the extent of the work, the IEBC might require certain upgrades in the fire-resistance rating of building elements, at which time it becomes critical for the designers and the code officials to be able to determine the fire-resistance rating of the existing building elements as part of the overall evaluation for the assessment of the need for improvements. This resource document provides a guideline for such an evaluation for fire-resistance rating of archaic materials that is not typically found in the modern model building codes.
LEGISLATION

Deleted.
**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

**CHAPTER 1  SCOPE AND ADMINISTRATION... . . 1**

**PART 1—SCOPE AND APPLICATION. ............. 1**

Section
101  General ................................. 1
102  Applicability .............................. 1

**PART 2—ADMINISTRATION AND ENFORCEMENT ................. 2**

103  Department of Building Safety (Deleted)
See the North Carolina Administrative Code and Policies ................. 2
104  Duties and Powers of Code Official (Deleted)
See the North Carolina Administrative Code and Policies ................. 2
105  Permits (Deleted) See the North Carolina Administrative Code and Policies ................. 3
106  Construction Documents (Deleted) See the North Carolina Administrative Code and Policies ................. 3
107  Temporary Structures and Uses (Deleted) See the North Carolina Administrative Code and Policies ................. 3
108  Fees (Deleted) See the North Carolina Administrative Code and Policies ................. 3
109  Inspections (Deleted) See the North Carolina Administrative Code and Policies ................. 3
110  Certificate of Occupancy (Deleted) See the North Carolina Administrative Code and Policies ................. 3
111  Service Utilities (Deleted) See the North Carolina Administrative Code and Policies ................. 3
112  Board of Appeals (Deleted) (See the North Carolina Administrative Code and Policies ................. 3
113  Violations (Deleted) See the North Carolina Administrative Code and Policies ................. 3
114  Stop Work Order (Deleted) See the North Carolina Administrative Code and Policies ................. 3
115  Unsafe Buildings and Equipment (Deleted) See the North Carolina Administrative Code and Policies ................. 3
116  Emergency Measures (Deleted) See the North Carolina Administrative Code and Policies ................. 3

**CHAPTER 2  DEFINITIONS ..................... 5**

Section
201  General ................................ 5
202  General Definitions ....................... 5

**CHAPTER 3  PROVISIONS FOR ALL COMPLIANCE METHODS .......... 9**

Section
301  Administration ............................ 9
302  General Provisions .......................... 10

**CHAPTER 4  PRESCRIPTIVE COMPLIANCE METHOD .............. 11**

Section
401  General ................................ 11
402  Additions ................................ 11
403  Alterations ................................ 12
404  Repairs ................................ 13
405  Fire Escapes ................................ 14
406  Glass Replacement and Replacement Windows ......................... 15
407  Change of Occupancy ....................... 15
408  Historic Buildings ......................... 16
409  Moved Structures ......................... 16
410  Accessibility for Existing Buildings ......................... 16
411  Temporary Overflow Emergency Shelters for the Homeless ............. 19

**CHAPTER 5  CLASSIFICATION OF WORK ........ 21**

Section
501  General ................................ 21
502  Repairs ................................ 21
503  Alteration—Level 1 (Renovation) ............ 21
504  Alteration—Level 2 (Alteration) ............ 21
505  Alteration—Level 3 (Reconstruction) ........ 21
506  Change of Occupancy ....................... 21
507  Additions ................................ 21
508  Historic Buildings ......................... 21
509  Relocated Buildings ......................... 21
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## CHAPTER 6  REPAIRS  ................. 23

Section
- 601 General  ................. 23
- 602 Building Elements and Materials  ................. 23
- 603 Fire Protection  ................. 23
- 604 Means of Egress  ................. 23
- 605 Accessibility  ................. 23
- 606 Structural  ................. 23
- 607 Electrical  ................. 24
- 608 Mechanical  ................. 24
- 609 Plumbing  ................. 25
- 610 Energy Conservation  ................. 25

## CHAPTER 7  ALTERATIONS—LEVEL 1  ................. 27

Section
- 701 General  ................. 27
- 702 Building Elements and Materials  ................. 27
- 703 Fire Protection  ................. 28
- 704 Means of Egress  ................. 28
- 705 Accessibility (Deleted) Relocated to Section 806  ................. 28
- 706 Reroofing  ................. 28
- 707 Structural  ................. 29
- 708 Energy Conservation  ................. 29

## CHAPTER 8  ALTERATIONS—LEVEL 2  ................. 31

Section
- 801 General  ................. 31
- 802 Special Use and Occupancy  ................. 31
- 803 Building Elements and Materials  ................. 31
- 804 Fire Protection  ................. 34
- 805 Means of Egress  ................. 35
- 806 Accessibility  ................. 39
- 807 Structural  ................. 41
- 808 Electrical  ................. 42
- 809 Mechanical  ................. 42
- 810 Plumbing  ................. 42
- 811 Energy Conservation  ................. 42

## CHAPTER 9  ALTERATIONS—LEVEL 3  ................. 45

Section
- 901 General  ................. 45
- 902 Special Use and Occupancy  ................. 45
- 903 Building Elements and Materials  ................. 45
- 904 Fire Protection  ................. 45
- 905 Means of Egress  ................. 46
- 906 Accessibility  ................. 46
- 907 Structural  ................. 46
- 908 Energy Conservation  ................. 47

## CHAPTER 10  CHANGE OF OCCUPANCY  ................. 49

Section
- 1001 General  ................. 49
- 1002 Special Use and Occupancy  ................. 49
- 1003 Building Elements and Materials  ................. 49
- 1004 Fire Protection  ................. 49
- 1005 Means of Egress  ................. 49
- 1006 Accessibility  ................. 50
- 1007 Structural  ................. 50
- 1008 Electrical  ................. 50
- 1009 Mechanical  ................. 51
- 1010 Plumbing  ................. 51
- 1011 Other Requirements  ................. 51
- 1012 Change of Occupancy Classification  ................. 51

## CHAPTER 11  ADDITIONS  ................. 57

Section
- 1101 General  ................. 57
- 1102 Heights and Areas  ................. 57
- 1103 Structural  ................. 57
- 1104 Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarms  ................. 58
- 1105 Accessibility  ................. 58
- 1106 Energy Conservation  ................. 59

## CHAPTER 12  HISTORIC BUILDINGS  ................. 61

Section
- 1201 General  ................. 61
- 1202 Repairs  ................. 61
- 1203 Fire Safety  ................. 62
- 1204 Alterations  ................. 62
- 1205 Change of Occupancy  ................. 62
- 1206 Structural  ................. 63

## CHAPTER 13  RELOCATED OR MOVED BUILDINGS  ................. 65

Section
- 1301 General  ................. 65
- 1302 Requirements  ................. 65
TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER 14 PERFORMANCE COMPLIANCE METHODS ........................................... 67
Section
1401 General ................................................. 67

CHAPTER 15 CONSTRUCTION SAFEGUARDS ................................................. 79
Section
1501 General ................................................. 79
1502 Protection of Adjoining Property ........................................... 80
1503 Temporary Use of Streets, Alleys and Public Property ......................... 80
1504 Fire Extinguishers ........................................... 80
1505 Means of Egress ........................................... 81
1506 Standpipe Systems ........................................... 81
1507 Automatic Sprinkler System ........................................... 81
1508 Accessibility .............................................. 81
1509 Water Supply for Fire Protection ........................................... 81

CHAPTER 16 REFERENCED STANDARDS ................................................. 83

APPENDIX A GUIDELINES FOR THE SEISMIC RETROFIT OF EXISTING BUILDINGS ................................................. 87

CHAPTER A1 SEISMIC STRENGTHENING PROVISIONS FOR UNREINFORCED MASONRY BEARING WALL BUILDINGS ................................................. 87
Section
A101 Purpose ................................................. 87
A102 Scope ................................................. 87
A103 Definitions ............................................. 87
A104 Symbols and Notations ........................................... 87
A105 General Requirements ........................................... 88
A106 Materials Requirements ........................................... 89
A107 Quality Control ........................................... 91
A108 Design Strengths ........................................... 92
A109 Analysis and Design Procedure ........................................... 93
A110 General Procedure ........................................... 93
A111 Special Procedure ........................................... 93
A112 Analysis and Design ........................................... 95
A113 Detailed System Design Requirements ........................................... 95
A114 Walls of Unburned Clay, Adobe or Stone Masonry ........................................... 97

CHAPTER A2 EARTHQUAKE HAZARD REDUCTION IN EXISTING REINFORCED CONCRETE AND REINFORCED MASONRY WALL BUILDINGS WITH FLEXIBLE DIAPHRAGMS ................................................. 103
Section
A201 Purpose ................................................. 103
A202 Scope ................................................. 103
A203 Definitions ............................................. 103
A204 Symbols and Notations ........................................... 103
A205 General Requirements ........................................... 103
A206 Analysis and Design ........................................... 104
A207 Materials of Construction ........................................... 105

CHAPTER A3 PRESCRIPTIVE PROVISIONS FOR SEISMIC STRENGTHENING OF CRIPPLE WALLS AND SILL PLATE ANCHORAGE OF LIGHT, WOOD-FRAME RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS ................................................. 107
Section
A301 General ................................................. 107
A302 Definitions ............................................. 107
A303 Structural Weaknesses ........................................... 108
A304 Strengthening Requirements ........................................... 108

CHAPTER A4 EARTHQUAKE RISK REDUCTION IN WOOD-FRAME RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS WITH SOFT, WEAK OR OPEN FRONT WALLS ................................................. 125
Section
A401 General ................................................. 125
A402 Definitions ............................................. 125
A403 Analysis and Design ........................................... 125
A404 Prescriptive Measures for Weak Story ........................................... 127
A405 Materials of Construction ........................................... 127
A406 Information Required to be on the Plans ........................................... 128
A407 Quality Control ........................................... 128

CHAPTER A5 EARTHQUAKE HAZARD REDUCTION IN EXISTING CONCRETE BUILDINGS ................................................. 129
Section
A501 Purpose ................................................. 129
### TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A502</td>
<td>Scope</td>
<td>129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A503</td>
<td>General Requirements</td>
<td>129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A504</td>
<td>Site Ground Motion</td>
<td>129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A505</td>
<td>Tier 1 Analysis Procedure</td>
<td>129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A506</td>
<td>Tier 2 Analysis Procedure</td>
<td>130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A507</td>
<td>Tier 3 Analysis Procedure</td>
<td>131</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**CHAPTER A6 REFERENCED STANDARDS . . . . 133**

**APPENDIX B SUPPLEMENTARY ACCESSIBILITY REQUIREMENTS FOR EXISTING BUILDINGS AND FACILITIES . . . 135**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>B101</td>
<td>Qualified Historical Buildings and Facilities</td>
<td>135</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B102</td>
<td>Fixed Transportation Facilities and Stations</td>
<td>135</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B103</td>
<td>Dwelling Units and Sleeping Units</td>
<td>136</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B104</td>
<td>Referenced Standards</td>
<td>136</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**APPENDIX C GUIDELINES FOR THE WIND RETROFIT OF EXISTING BUILDINGS (Deleted) .................. 137**

**RESOURCE A RECOMMENDED GUIDELINES ON FIRE RATINGS OF ARCHAIC MATERIALS AND ASSEMBLIES ........ 139**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Fire-related Performance of Archaic Materials and Assemblies</td>
<td>140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Building Evaluation</td>
<td>141</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Final Evaluation and Design Solution</td>
<td>144</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Summary</td>
<td>151</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Appendix</td>
<td>153</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Resource A Table of Contents</td>
<td>153</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bibliography</td>
<td>272</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**INDEX .................................................. 279**