### SIGNIFICANT CHANGES TO THE INTERNATIONAL BUILDING CODE<sup>®</sup>

### 2021 EDITION

### International Code Council

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## Preface

The purpose of Significant Changes to the International Building Code<sup>®</sup> 2021 Edition is to familiarize building officials, fire officials, plans examiners, inspectors, design professionals, contractors and others in the construction industry with many of the important changes in the 2021 International Building Code<sup>®</sup> (IBC<sup>®</sup>). This publication is designed to assist those code users in identifying the specific code changes that have occurred and, more importantly, understanding the reasons behind the changes. It is also a valuable resource for jurisdictions in their code-adoption process.

Only a portion of the total number of code changes to the IBC are discussed in this book. The changes selected were identified for a number of reasons, including the frequency of application, special significance or change in application. However, the importance of those changes not included is not to be diminished. Further information on all code changes can be found in the *Complete Revision History to the 2021 I-Codes*, available from the International Code Council<sup>®</sup> (ICC<sup>®</sup>) online store. The revision history provides the published documentation for each successful code change contained in the 2021 IBC since the 2018 edition.

The IBC discussion in this publication addressing significant code changes is organized into eight general categories, each representing a distinct grouping of code topics. It is arranged to follow the general layout of the IBC, including code sections and section number format. The table of contents, in addition to providing guidance in the use of this publication, allows for the quick identification of the significant code changes that occur in the 2021 IBC.

This edition of *Significant Changes to the International Building Code* includes a ninth part that addresses a limited number of selected code changes that occur in the 2021 edition of the *International Existing Building Code*<sup>®</sup> (IEBC<sup>®</sup>). Applicable to all existing buildings, the IEBC is intended to provide flexibility to permit the use of alternative approaches to achieve compliance with minimum requirements to safeguard the public health, safety and welfare. Both structural and nonstructural changes are addressed in Part 9 of this publication. Throughout the book, each change is accompanied by a photograph, an application example or an illustration to assist and enhance the reader's understanding of the specific change. A summary and a discussion of the significance of the changes are also provided. Each code change is identified by type, either an addition, modification, clarification or deletion.

The code change itself is presented in a format similar to the style utilized for code-change proposals. Deleted code language is shown with a strike-through, and new code text is indicated by underlining. As a result, the actual 2021 code language is provided as well as a comparison with the 2018 code language, so the user can easily determine changes to the specific code text.

As with any code-change text, *Significant Changes to the International Building Code, 2021 Edition* is best used as a study companion to the 2021 IBC. Because only a limited discussion of each change is provided, the code itself should always be referenced to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the code change and its application.

The commentary and opinions set forth in this text are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official position of the ICC. In addition, they may not represent the views of any enforcing agency, as such agencies have the sole authority to render interpretations of the IBC. In many cases, the explanatory material is derived from the reasoning expressed by the code-change proponent.

Comments concerning this publication are encouraged and may be directed to the ICC at significantchanges@iccsafe.org.

## About the International Building Code

Building officials, design professionals and others involved in the building construction industry recognize the need for a modern, up-to-date building code addressing the design and installation of building systems through requirements emphasizing performance. The *International Building Code* (IBC), in the 2021 edition, is intended to meet these needs through model code regulations that safeguard public health and safety in all communities, large and small. The IBC is kept up to date through the open code-development process of the International Code Council (ICC). The provisions of the 2018 edition, along with those code changes approved in the most recent code development cycle, make up the 2021 edition.

The International Code Council (ICC), publisher of the IBC, was established in 1994 and is a nonprofit association that provides a wide range of building safety solutions including product evaluation, accreditation, certification, codification and training. The ICC develops model codes and standards used worldwide to construct safe, sustainable, affordable and resilient structures. The ICC's mission is to provide the highest-quality codes, standards, products and services for all concerned with the safety and performance of the built environment.

The IBC is one of 15 International Codes<sup>®</sup> (I-Codes<sup>®</sup>) published by the ICC. This comprehensive building code establishes minimum regulations for buildings systems through prescriptive and performance-related provisions. It is founded on broad-based principles that make possible the use of new materials and new building designs. The IBC 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 established by the jurisdiction's laws.

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In his current role, Doug also continues to create and present building code seminars nationally and has developed numerous educational texts and resource materials. He was presented with the ICC's inaugural Educator of the Year Award in 2008, recognizing his outstanding contributions in education and training.

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Kevin was a member of the original IFC Drafting Committee that worked to create the first edition of the IFC. He served for 7 years on the IFC Code Development Committee and was the chairperson of the committee from 2001 to 2004. Kevin has actively participated in numerous technical committees to evaluate specific hazards and technologies and to create regulations specific to those hazards. John "Buddy" Showalter, P.E. International Code Council Senior Staff Engineer

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# About the International Code Council<sup>®</sup>

The International Code Council is a nonprofit association that provides a wide range of building safety solutions including product evaluation, accreditation, certification, codification and training. It develops model codes and standards used worldwide to construct safe, sustainable, affordable and resilient structures. ICC Evaluation Service (ICC-ES) is the industry leader in performing technical evaluations for code compliance, fostering safe and sustainable design and construction.

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