



SIGNIFICANT CHANGES TO THE
INTERNATIONAL PLUMBING CODE®
INTERNATIONAL MECHANICAL CODE®
INTERNATIONAL FUEL GAS CODE®

2021 EDITION

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International Code Council

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Preface

The purpose of *Significant Changes to the International Plumbing Code®*, *International Mechanical Code®*, *International Fuel Gas Code®* 2021 Edition is to familiarize plumbing and mechanical officials, building officials, fire officials, plans examiners, inspectors, design professionals, contractors and others in the building construction industry with many of the important changes to these codes. This publication is designed to assist code users in identifying the specific code changes that have occurred and, more importantly, in understanding the reasons behind the changes. It is also a valuable resource for jurisdictions in their code-adoption process.

Only portions of the total number of code changes to the *International Plumbing Code*, *International Mechanical Code* and *International Fuel Gas Code* are discussed in this book. The changes selected were identified for a number of reasons, including their frequency of application, special significance or change in application. However, the importance of the 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: Successful and Public Comments*, available in 2021 from the International Code Council® (ICC®) online store, <http://shop.iccsafe.org>. This resource collection provides the published documentation for each successful code change contained in the 2021 *International Plumbing Code* and *International Mechanical Code*.

Throughout this *Significant Changes* book, each change is accompanied by a photograph or an illustration to assist in and enhance the reader's understanding of the specific change. A summary and a discussion of the significance of the change are also provided. Each code change is identified by type, be it an addition, modification, clarification or deletion.

The code change itself is presented in a legislative format similar to the style utilized for code-change proposals. Deleted code language is shown with a strikethrough, 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 language, so the user can easily determine changes to the specific code text.

As with any code-change text, *Significant Changes to the International Plumbing Code, International Mechanical Code, International Fuel Gas Code* 2021 Edition is best used as a companion to the 2021 IPC, 2021 IMC and 2021 IFGC. Because only a limited discussion of each change is provided, the reader should reference the code itself 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 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 IPC, IMC and IFGC. In many cases, the explanatory material is derived from the reasoning expressed by code-change proponents.

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

About the *International Plumbing Code, International Mechanical Code and International Fuel Gas Code*

Code officials, design professionals, contractors and others involved in the building construction industry recognize the need for modern, up-to-date codes addressing the design and installation of plumbing, mechanical and fuel gas systems through both prescriptive and performance requirements. The 2021 editions of the *International Plumbing Code* (IPC®), *International Mechanical Code* (IMC®) and *International Fuel Gas Code* (IFGC®) are intended to meet these needs through model code regulations that safeguard the public health and safety in all communities, large and small. The IPC, IMC and IFGC are kept up to date through ICC's open code-development process. The provisions of the 2018 editions, along with those code changes approved through 2019, make up the 2021 editions.

The IPC, IMC and IFGC are three codes in a family of International Codes® published by ICC. These comprehensive codes establish minimum regulations for plumbing, mechanical and fuel gas systems by means of prescriptive and performance-related provisions, and are founded on broad-based principles that make possible the use of new materials and new system designs. The IPC, IMC and IFGC are available for adoption and use by jurisdictions internationally. Their use within a governmental jurisdiction is intended to be accomplished through adoption by reference, in accordance with proceedings establishing the jurisdiction's laws.

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Fred Grable, author of the IPC section, thanks all of the people who have called him over the years with questions about the requirements in the many editions of the IPC. The conversations have led to his greater understanding of how the codes are applied in the built environment and have enabled him to better help others.

Gregg Gress, author of the IMC and IFGC portions of this book, thanks fellow ICC staff, the graphic artists and all those who donated photographs.

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Gregg Gress is a former Senior Technical Staff member of the ICC and was responsible for the maintenance of the *International Mechanical Code* (IMC) and *International Fuel Gas Code* (IFGC), the commercial portion of the *International Energy Conservation Code* (IECC) and the mechanical and electrical parts of the *International Residential Code* (IRC). He is also an author of the IMC, IRC and IFGC Commentary books and has provided training and code interpretations of the ICC codes. Gregg was formerly a code official for a municipality and has worked in the plumbing, mechanical/HVAC and electrical trades and has been employed by BOCA and the ICC for 25 years. Gregg has served on multiple AGA, NFPA and ASHRAE project committees.

About the International Code Council®

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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