



SIGNIFICANT CHANGES TO THE

INTERNATIONAL FIRE CODE[®]

2012 EDITION



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**Significant Changes to the International
Fire Code® 2012 Edition
International Code Council**

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Table of Contents



PART 1			
Administrative (Chapters 1 and 2)	1		
■ 101			
Organization of the IFC	2		
■ 202			
Definitions—Group B, E, I, and R Care Occupancies	5		
PART 2			
General Safety Provisions (Chapters 3 and 4)	13		
■ 307.1.1			
Prohibited Open Burning	14		
■ 316.4			
Obstructions on Roofs	16		
■ 317.1			
Roof Gardens and Landscaped Roofs	18		
PART 3			
Building and Equipment Design Features (Chapters 5–11)	23		
■ 503.4.1			
Traffic Calming Devices	25		
■ 506.1, 607.5			
Fire Service Elevator Keys	27		
■ 508.1.5			
Required Features	31		
■ 510.1			
Emergency Responder Radio Coverage	35		
■ 604.5			
Emergency Lighting Equipment	38		
■ 605.11			
Solar Photovoltaic Power Systems	40		
■ 610			
Commercial Kitchen Cooking Oil Storage	47		
■ 803.5.2			
Newly Introduced Textile Wall and Ceiling Coverings	49		
■ 806.2			
Artificial Vegetation	52		
■ 808.4			
Combustible Lockers	55		
■ 901.4.6			
Pump and Riser Room Size	56		
■ 901.9			
Discontinuation or Change of Service	58		
■ 903.2.2			
Ambulatory Care Facilities	60		
■ 903.2.4, 903.2.7, 903.2.9			
Furniture Storage and Display in Group F-1, M, and S-1 Occupancies	62		
■ 903.2.11.1.3			
Basements	64		

■ 903.2.11.2 Rubbish and Linen Chutes	66	■ 1022.5 Penetrations	119
■ 903.3.5.2 Secondary Water Supply	69	■ 1030.2 Reliability	120
■ 904.1.1, 906.3 Certification of Service Personnel	70	■ 1102.1 Intent	122
■ 904.3.2 Actuation	73	■ 1103.8.1 Where Required	125
■ 905.4 Location of Class I Standpipe Hose Connections	75	■ 1104.16.5.1 Examination	127
■ 906.1 Where Required	77	PART 4 Special Occupancies and Operations (Chapters 20–49)	129
■ 907.2.1 Group A Occupancies	79	■ 2108.2 Automatic Sprinkler System	130
■ 907.2.1.2 Emergency Voice/Alarm Communication Captions	82	■ 2305.1 Tank-Filling Operations for Class I, II, or III Liquids	133
■ 907.2.3 Group E Fire Alarm	86	■ 2305.2.2 Repairs and Service	135
■ 907.2.6.1.1 Smoke Alarms and Smoke Detectors	92	■ 2311.7.2.1 System Design	137
■ 907.4.1 Protection of Fire Alarm Control Unit	96	■ 2703.10.1.2 Combustible Tools	139
■ 907.5.2.1.1 Average Sound Pressure	97	■ 2703.16 Sub-Atmospheric-Pressure Gas Systems	142
■ 908.7 Carbon Monoxide Alarms	99	■ 2705.3.1 Corridors and Exit Enclosures	146
■ 1004.1.2, Table 1004.1.2 Design Occupant Load—Areas without Fixed Seating	103	■ 3208.3.1 Flue Space Protection	148
■ 1005.1 Means of Egress Sizing	105	PART 5 Hazardous Materials (Chapters 50–79)	150
■ 1008.1.2 Door Swing	108	■ Table 5003.1.1(1) Maximum Allowable Quantity per Control Area	151
■ 1009, 1010, 202 Definitions: Exits, Stairways and Ramps	110	■ 5003.12 Outdoor Control Areas	159
■ 1011.2 Floor-Level Exit Signs in Group R-1	115	■ 5704.2.7.4 Emergency Venting	162
■ 1021.2 Exits from Stories	116		

■ 5705.5 Alcohol-Based Hand Rubs Classified as Class I or II Liquids	165	PART 7 Appendices (Appendices A–J)	173
■ 6104.3.1 Installation on Roof Prohibited	168	■ D105.1 Where Required	174
■ 6109.15 LP-Gas Cylinder Exchange for Resale	170	■ Appendix J Building Information Signs	176
		Index	178

Preface

The purpose of *Significant Changes to the International Fire Code® 2012 Edition* is to familiarize fire officials, building officials, plans examiners, fire inspectors, design professionals, and others with the many important changes in the 2012 International Fire Code® (IFC®). This publication will assist code users in identifying the specific code changes that have occurred and, more important, assist them in understanding the reasoning behind the changes. It is also a valuable resource for jurisdictions in their code-adoption process.

This book is arranged to follow the general layout of the IFC, including code sections and section number format. The table of contents, in addition to providing guidance in the use of this publication, allows for quick identification of these significant code changes that occurred in the 2012 IFC.

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, be it an addition, modification, clarification, or deletion.

The code change itself is presented in the same format used for code-change proposals. Deleted language is shown with a strikethrough, and new code text is identified by underlining. This book presents the 2012 code text as well as a comparison of the 2009 provisions so that the user can easily determine changes to the specific code text.

As with any code-change text, *Significant Changes to the International Fire Code 2012 Edition* is best used in conjunction with the 2012 IFC. Because only a limited discussion of each code change is provided, the IFC itself should be referenced in order 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 author and do not necessarily represent the official position of the International Code Council® (ICC®). In addition, they may not represent the opinions of any enforcing agency, as such agencies have the sole authority to render

interpretations of the IFC. In many cases the explanatory material is derived from the reasoning expressed by the proponents of the code change and consultation with industry-experienced professionals.

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

About the International Fire Code®

Many believe that the *International Fire Code*® (IFC) is a building maintenance document. This assumption is incorrect. The IFC is a design document, because one cannot construct or erect any building without fire department access, a water supply, and the required fire protection systems. Add a variable involving a hazardous process or hazardous materials—such as a refrigeration system, a stationary lead-acid battery system, or emergency power using a generator supplied with diesel fuel or liquefied petroleum gas—and other technical requirements of the IFC also must be satisfied.

The International Code Council (ICC), the publisher of the IFC, was established in 1994 as a not-for-profit organization dedicated to developing, maintaining, and supporting a single national set of comprehensive and coordinated model building and construction codes. Its 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 IFC is 1 of 15 International Codes® published by the ICC. This comprehensive fire code establishes minimum regulations for firefighter safety, fire protection systems, and safe storage and use of hazardous materials using prescriptive and performance-based provisions. It is founded on broad-based principles that make possible the use of new materials and new building designs. The IFC is available for adoption and use by jurisdictions. Its 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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emergency responder radio coverage. Bill Mills and Keith L. Kinder of Lone Star Communications, Grand Prairie, Texas, and Andre S. Garabedian, MS, P.E., of San Antonio, Texas, reviewed and contributed to the code change analysis of the Chapter 9 emergency voice/communication alarm system requirements for Group E occupancies. Jim Tidwell of Tidwell Code Consulting, Fort Worth, Texas, provided review comments for the Chapter 9 change analyses. Finally, Ron Furhop, P.E. with Praxair of Allentown, Pennsylvania, and Ken Olander, of Tampa, Florida, a technical consultant to ATMI Inc., provided comments and insight into the change analysis of Section 2703.16 for sub-atmospheric-pressure gas systems.

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Scott Stookey is a senior technical staff member with the International Code Council. He is responsible for the production of various ICC publications, including the *IFC Study Companion*, the *High-Piled Combustible Storage Application Guide*, and the *Flammable Finishes Application Guide*. Scott developed the current versions of the ICC seminars for fire protection systems, hazardous materials, fundamentals of the IFC, and high-piled combustible storage.

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Scott is a member of the Underwriters Laboratories Fire Council and is secretary/treasurer for the Austin/San Antonio (Texas) Chapter of the Society of Fire Protection Engineers. Scott is a member of the Building and Fire Code Board of Appeals for the City of Austin, Texas.

About the International Code Council®

The International Code Council (ICC), a membership association dedicated to building safety, fire prevention, and energy efficiency, develops the codes and standards used to construct residential and commercial buildings, including homes and schools. The mission of ICC is to provide the highest-quality codes, standards, products, and services for all concerned with the safety and performance of the built environment. Most cities, counties, and states within the United States choose the International Codes, building safety codes developed by the International Code Council. The International Codes also serve as the basis for construction of federal properties around the world, and as a reference for many nations outside the United States. The Code Council is also dedicated to innovation and sustainability, and a Code Council subsidiary, ICC Evaluation Service, issues Evaluation Reports for innovative products and reports of Sustainable Attributes Verification and Evaluation (SAVE).

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