

# PREFACE

## Introduction

Internationally, code officials recognize the need for a modern, up-to-date fire code addressing conditions hazardous to life and property from fire, explosion, handling or use of hazardous materials and the use and occupancy of buildings and premises. The *International Fire Code*<sup>®</sup>, in this 2006 edition, is designed to meet these needs through model code regulations that safeguard the public health and safety in all communities, large and small.

This comprehensive fire code establishes minimum regulations for fire prevention and fire protection systems using prescriptive and performance-related provisions. It is founded on broad-based principles that make possible the use of new materials and new system designs. This 2006 edition is fully compatible with all the *International Codes*<sup>®</sup> (I-Codes<sup>®</sup>) published by the International Code Council (ICC)<sup>®</sup>, including the *International Building Code*<sup>®</sup>, *International Code Council Electrical Code Administrative Provisions*, *International Energy Conservation Code*<sup>®</sup>, *International Existing Building Code*<sup>®</sup>, *International Fuel Gas Code*<sup>®</sup>, *International Mechanical Code*<sup>®</sup>, *ICC Performance Code*<sup>®</sup>, *International Plumbing Code*<sup>®</sup>, *International Private Sewage Disposal Code*<sup>®</sup>, *International Property Maintenance Code*<sup>®</sup>, *International Residential Code*<sup>®</sup>, *International Wildland-Urban Interface Code*<sup>™</sup> and *International Zoning Code*<sup>®</sup>.

The *International Fire Code* provisions provide many benefits, among which is the model code development process that offers an international forum for fire safety 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 Fire Code* (2000) was the culmination of an effort initiated in 1997 by a development committee appointed by ICC and consisting of representatives of the three statutory members of the International Code Council: 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 fire safety regulations 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 was utilized as the basis for the development, followed by public hearings in 1998 and 1999 to consider proposed changes. This 2006 edition presents the code as originally issued, with changes reflected in the 2003 edition and further changes approved through the ICC Code Development Process through 2005. A new edition such as this is promulgated every three years.

This code is founded on principles intended to establish provisions consistent with the scope of a fire code that adequately protects 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 Fire Code* 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 establishing the jurisdiction's laws. At the time of adoption, jurisdictions should insert the appropriate information in provisions requiring specific local information, such as the name of the adopting jurisdiction. These locations are shown in bracketed words in small capital letters in the code and in the sample ordinance. The sample adoption ordinance on page v addresses several key elements of a code adoption ordinance, including the information required for insertion into the code text.

## Maintenance

The *International Fire 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 both through the Code Development Cycles and the governmental body that enacts the code into law. For more information regarding the code development process, contact the Code and Standard Development Department of the International Code Council.

While the development procedure of the *International Fire Code* assures the highest degree of care, 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 ICC and its founding members do 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.

## Letter Designations in Front of Section Numbers

In each code development cycle, proposed changes to the code are considered at the Code Development Hearings by the ICC Fire Code Development Committee, whose action constitutes a recommendation to the voting membership for final action on the proposed change. Proposed changes to a code section that has a number beginning with a letter in brackets are considered by a different code development committee. For example, proposed changes to code sections that have [B] in front of them (e.g. [B] 607.2) are considered by the ICC Building Code Development Committee at the code development hearings.

The content of sections in this code that begin with a letter designation are maintained by another code development committee in accordance with the following:

- [B] = International Building Code Development Committee;
- [EB] = International Existing Building Code Development Committee;
- [FG] = International Fuel Gas Code Development Committee;
- [M] = International Mechanical Code Development Committee; and
- [P] = International Plumbing Code Development Committee.

## Marginal Markings

Thick solid vertical lines (■) in the margins within the body of the text indicate a technical change from the requirements of the *International Fire Code*, 2003 edition. Deletion indicators in the form of a solid 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. Changes from the Seattle amended language from the 2003 Seattle Fire Code within the body of the text are indicated with a thin vertical line (|) in the margin. Deletion indicators for Seattle amended language from the 2003 Seattle Fire Code are indicated with a hollow arrow (⇒).

## 2006 Seattle Fire Code

The 2006 Seattle Fire Code is the 2006 International Fire Code as adopted and amended by the City of Seattle. Changes from the International Fire Code are indicated by lines through text that is deleted by Seattle and underlining of text that is added by Seattle.

Seattle has adopted many provisions of the Washington State Building Codes. Where text originates in Washington State Code it is preceded by the letter designation [W].

Wherever there is conflict between metric units of measurement and English units, the English units shall govern.

## National Fire Protection Association Amendments

The 2006 Seattle Fire Code includes National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) Codes and Standards as referenced and amended in City of Seattle Ordinance (122491). Links to excerpts from the Seattle ordinance showing the amended NFPA language are available for viewing on the Seattle Fire Department web page at [www.seattle.gov/fire](http://www.seattle.gov/fire). From the main web page select Fire Prevention, then Seattle Fire Code.

## Acknowledgment

Development of the 2006 Seattle Fire Code is a collaborative effort of the volunteer Fire Code Advisory Board and the Seattle Fire Department. The Fire Code Advisory Board is comprised of members appointed by the Mayor of Seattle and confirmed by the Seattle City Council. These volunteer members donated many hours of work over many months to produce this code. To learn more about the Fire Code Advisory Board visit the Seattle Fire Department web page. From Seattle Fire Code, select Code Development Process.

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