

# PREFACE

## Introduction

Internationally, code officials recognize the need for a modern, up-to-date residential code addressing the design and construction of one- and two-family dwellings and townhouses. The *International Residential 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, stand-alone residential code establishes minimum regulations for one- and two-family dwellings and townhouses using prescriptive provisions. It is founded on broad-based principles that make possible the use of new materials and new building designs. This 2006 edition is fully compatible with all the *International Codes*<sup>®™</sup> (I-Codes<sup>®</sup>) published by the International Code Council<sup>®</sup> (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 Fire 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 Wildland-Urban Interface Code*<sup>™</sup> and *International Zoning Code*<sup>®</sup>.

The *International Residential Code* provisions provide many benefits, among which is the model code development process that offers an international forum for residential construction professionals to discuss 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 Residential Code* (2000) was the culmination of an effort initiated in 1996 by the ICC and consisting of representatives from the three statutory members of the International Code Council at the time, including: Building Officials and Code Administrators International, Inc. (BOCA), International Conference of Building Officials (ICBO) and Southern Building Code Congress International (SBCCI) and representatives from the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB). The intent was to draft a stand-alone residential code consistent with and inclusive of the scope of the existing model codes. Technical content of the 1998 *International One- and Two-Family Dwelling Code* and the latest model codes promulgated by BOCA, ICBO, SBCCI and ICC was used as the basis for the development, followed by public hearings in 1998 and 1999 to consider proposed changes. This 2006 edition represents the code as originally issued, with changes reflected in the 2003 edition, and further changes developed through the ICC Code Development Process through 2005. Residential electrical provisions are based on the 2005 *National Electrical Code*<sup>®</sup> (NFPA-70). A new edition such as this is promulgated every three years.

Fuel gas provisions have been included through an agreement with the American Gas Association (AGA). Electrical provisions have been included through an agreement with the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA).

This code is founded on principles intended to establish provisions consistent with the scope of a residential 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 Residential 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 Residential 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.

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The maintenance process for the fuel gas provisions is based upon the process used to maintain the *International Fuel Gas Code*, in conjunction with the American Gas Association. The maintenance process for the electrical provisions is undertaken by the National Fire Protection Association.

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

### **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 Residential 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.

Thin vertical lines (|) in the margin within the body of the text indicate a technical change from the requirements of the 2003 *Seattle Residential Code*. Deletion indicators in the form of a hollow arrow (⇨) are provided in the margin where a Seattle amendment has been deleted.

### **Acknowledgment**

Development of the 2006 *Seattle Residential Code* is the result of cooperative effort of the volunteer Construction Codes Advisory Board and the Department of Planning and Development. The staff of the Department wishes to extend its appreciation to the members of the Board and its committees. The Department is deeply indebted to the Board and its subcommittees for their intense hard work over many months. Adoption of this code would not have been possible without them.

### **Electronic Mailing List**

If you would like to receive occasional email messages notifying you of future amendments and errata to the *Seattle Residential Code* or other codes, go to the Technical Codes page on DPD's website <http://www.seattle.gov/dpd/TechCodes/>. Click the link "Subscribe to Mailing List" in the right column under "Resources".

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