



NEWS RELEASE

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Sprinklers, energy efficiency key changes to 2009 *International Residential Code*

The 2009 edition of the *International Residential Code* (IRC), available in March, includes new requirements for sprinklers and energy efficiency. It also includes new standards for building homes in high-wind regions, and constructing community and residential storm shelters.

Jurisdictions that adopt the 2009 IRC will apply the most modern, scientific and comprehensive building safety provisions available to save lives and protect property. The IRC, developed and published by the International Code Council, is adopted at the state or local level in 48 states and Washington, D.C.

The IRC combines all building, plumbing, mechanical, fuel gas, energy and electrical provisions for one- and two-family residences and townhouses into one comprehensive code that is compatible with all I-Codes. To pre-purchase the 2009 *International Codes*, visit www.iccsafe.org/2009icodes.

New safety features in the 2009 IRC include:

- Fire sprinklers required in all new one- and two-family residences beginning Jan. 1, 2011.
- Fire sprinklers in all new townhomes when the code is adopted.
- Carbon monoxide alarms required in new construction dwelling units with fuel-fired appliances, and in existing homes where interior alterations include fuel-fired appliance replacements or attached garages.
- New guidelines for the design and construction of homes in high wind regions, based on the International Code Council's *Standard for Residential Construction in High Wind Regions*, ICC 600.
- New guidelines for the design and construction of storm shelters, based on the new International Code Council/National Storm Shelter Association (NSSA) *Standard for the Design and Construction of Storm Shelters*, ICC 500-2008.

Energy-efficient upgrades in the 2009 IRC include:

- Programmable thermostats in new homes and buildings with forced air furnaces.
- High-efficiency light bulbs in at least 50% of permanent lighting fixtures in new homes.
- Maximum fenestration U-factors are lowered in warmer climates to reduce the amount of heat loss or gain through windows and doors to lower energy costs during cooling periods.
- An increase in insulation R-values for walls, floors and basements in cold climates to achieve heating and cooling savings.

The International Code Council, a membership association dedicated to building safety and fire prevention, develops the codes used to construct residential and commercial buildings, including homes and schools. Most U.S. cities, counties and states choose the International Codes, building safety codes developed by the International Code Council.

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