



## Washington State Association of Permit Technicians

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### Getting Involved in Code Development!

By: Marlei Brenna, WSAPT Code Development Committee Chair  
*Wednesday, February 25*

**Why get involved?** As an organization, WSAPT is dedicated to assisting in the development and promotion of uniform regulations and legislation pertaining to building construction.

**What is the Code Development Process?** The code development process is a revision procedure that allows all interested parties the opportunity to both propose changes to the code provisions and to testify regarding such change proposals.

**What is the Purpose of a Code Change?** The purpose for a code change might include revising the codes to:

- Address health, safety and welfare issues.
- Reflect new technology.
- Delete out-of-date technology.
- Refine language and content by either:
  - Adding new requirement(s) or,
  - Deleting or amending current requirement(s).

The effect of the proposed change on the intent of the section (and subsection), as well as the impact of the change on the application of the code, is considered during the code development process.

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**Current Codes Being Watched by WSAPT:** No codes are being watched at this time. This section will be updated after the proposed changes have been published.

**International Code Council (ICC)** - Public Proposals for Code changes - Deadline April 24, 2009

**State Building Code Council (SBCC)** - Public Proposal's for Code changes - Deadline April 1, 2009

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#### **Propose a Change!**

Coming soon, our members will be able to submit a proposed code change to our very own Code Development Committee.

*This section is a work in progress so please check back for updates!!*

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## **International Code Council (ICC)**

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 that adopt codes choose the International Codes developed by the International Code Council.

In order to ensure that the ICC International Codes reflect new developments in the construction industry, published formal procedures have been established for reviewing proposed changes submitted for incorporation into the code. Anyone can submit a proposed change. The Code development hearings are open to the general public and anyone may testify. The process follows a predictable, easy-to-follow agenda.

## **Washington State Building Code Council (SBCC)**

The Washington State Building Code is comprised of several different codes. Most are national model codes adopted by reference and amended at the state level. Others, such as the Washington State Energy Code, are state-written and specific to Washington.

The SBCC periodically initiates a process for review of code amendments proposals and new code requirements. The Council appoints experts and interest group representative to serve on Technical Advisory Groups (TAGs), to assist the Council by providing detailed information on state building code changes and other issues. All meetings are open to the public and active participation is encouraged.

## **Washington Association of Building Officials (WABO)**

WABO actively participates in the building code development process at the national and state levels. WABO encourages their membership to acknowledge a professional obligation to contribute time and expertise to monitor and develop safety standards. Their Technical Code Development Committee reviews draft proposals from members for technical merit and proper wording, as well as coordinating with other stakeholder groups.

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## **Important News & Events:**

### **ICC**

2009/2010 Code Development Cycle – **Current Schedule**

**By-Laws Changes Regarding Voting Eligibility and Procedures**

**ICC Code Development Process Changes**

### **SBCC**

Current SBCC - **Meeting Schedule**

### **WABO**

**ICC Governmental Consensus on Residential Sprinklers**

### **NFPA**

**Critical Changes in NFPA 101® Life Safety Code, 2009 Edition**

## **WABO - ICC Governmental Consensus Process on Residential Sprinkler Amendments (Email dated November 3, 2008)**

One of the cornerstones of the ICC code development is the Governmental Consensus Process, put in place to ensure those with financial interests in a code issue do not unduly influence the outcome. With respect to the residential fire sprinkler amendments adopted in Minneapolis last month, WABO believes there is evidence that special interests influenced the outcome of the code changes.

Because this issue is of grave concern to our members, we have sent a letter to the ICC Board of Directors requesting an investigation into the entire voting process to determine what role industry played in the ICC voting process, and, if there were violations, to take appropriate measures. We believe that the integrity of ICC is at stake. If you would like to read the entire letter, click the link below.

## **WABO Letter to ICC Board of Directors**

If you have similar concerns raised by actions taken at the ICC Code Hearings, we urge you to write to the ICC Board of Directors and express your opinions. We would also appreciate a copy of your communications as well.

If you have any questions, please contact the WABO office. 360-856-6725 / wabo@wabo.org  
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### **NFPA - Critical Changes in NFPA 101® Life Safety Code, 2009 Edition**

NFPA 101® Life Safety Code is an important document that provides the latest rules for fire-safe design and construction in new and existing structures.

New and revised requirements, some of which are outlined in this article, have been developed to minimize danger to life from the effects of fire and related hazards.

Below are some of the most critical changes in the new **NFPA 101® Life Safety Code, 2009 Edition**

#### **MEANS OF EGRESS: ANNUAL INSPECTION OF DOORS**

NFPA 101®, 2009 Edition, has added the new **Section 7.2.1.15 Inspection of Door Openings**, which requires door assemblies for which the door leaf is required to swing in the direction of egress travel to be inspected and tested not less than annually, in accordance with sections **7.2.1.15.2** through **7.2.1.15.8**.

The new requirement also refers to **NFPA 80, Standard for Fire Doors and Other Opening Protectives, 2007 Edition** for the inspection and testing of fire-rated door assemblies.

#### **MEANS OF EGRESS: ELECTRICALLY CONTROLLED EGRESS DOOR ASSEMBLIES**

NFPA 101®, 2009 Edition has added **Section 7.2.1.5.5 Electrically Controlled Egress Door Assemblies** to address the requirements of electrically locked door assemblies in the means of egress in order to ensure that there is no delay during escape.

The new section makes it clear that electrically controlled egress doors are not to be treated the same as special locking arrangements such as delayed-egress locks or access-controlled egress doors as addressed in **Section 7.2.1.6 Special Locking Arrangements**.

In order to meet the conditions of **Section 7.2.1.5.5**, electrically controlled egress doors are required to have a release hardware which is affixed to the door leaf; has an obvious method of operation with one hand in the direction of egress, interrupts the power supply directly to the electric lock and unlocks the door assembly in the direction of egress, and automatically unlocks the door assembly in the direction of egress when there is a loss of power to the hardware.

#### **MEANS OF EGRESS: ELEVATOR LOBBY EXIT ACCESS DOOR ASSEMBLIES LOCKING**

The previous edition of NFPA 101® did not allow the elevator lobby exit access door to be locked, as **Section 7.4.1.6** required exit access doors not to require the use of a key, tool, special knowledge or effort.

NFPA 101®, 2009 Edition has added an exception to this requirement, which was causing security concerns, in **Section 7.4.1.6.3**. Now, elevator lobby exit access doors are permitted to be electronically locked in accordance with the new **Section 7.2.1.6.3**, which lists 15 criteria that need to be met.

The requirement to have the building sprinklered, a two-way communication system for communication between the elevator lobby and a central control point that is constantly staffed, and the elevator lobby protected by an approved, supervised smoke detection system are only a few of these requirements.

## **MEANS OF EGRESS: TWO-WAY COMMUNICATION SYSTEMS IN AREAS OF REFUGE**

The previous edition of NFPA 101® provided an exception in **Section 7.2.12.1.2** for the requirement of a two-way communication system in areas of refuge in buildings with automatic sprinkler system.

NFPA 101®, 2009 Edition has revised **Section 7.2.12.1.1** to require all areas of refuge used as part of a required accessible means of egress with a two-way communication system for communication between the elevator landing and the fire command center or a central control point approved by the authority having jurisdiction, even if the building is equipped with an automatic sprinkler system.

The two-way communication system, which shall include both audible and visible signals, is required to have directions for the use of the system, instructions for summoning assistance via the system, and written identification of the location posted adjacent to the system.

### **EXISTING HEALTH CARE OCCUPANCIES: SPRINKLERS IN HIGH RISE BUILDINGS**

NFPA 101®, 2009 Edition has added the new **Section 19.4.2 High-Rise Buildings**, which requires all existing high-rise buildings containing health care occupancies to be protected throughout by an approved, supervised automatic sprinkler system within 12 years of the adoption of the Code.

**Section 19.4.2 High-Rise Buildings** in the previous edition had been “Reserved”.

### **NEW APARTMENT BUILDINGS: SMOKE ALARMS IN SLEEPING AREAS**

NFPA 101®, 2009 Edition now requires smoke alarms to be installed in every sleeping area in **Section 30.3.4.5 Smoke Alarms**.

The previous edition of NFPA 101® provided an exception in **Section 30.3.4.5.2** for the requirement to install single-station smoke alarms in sleeping rooms in buildings protected throughout by an approved, supervised automatic sprinkler system.

### **NEW APARTMENT BUILDINGS: SPRINKLER SYSTEM REQUIREMENT**

The previous edition of NFPA 101® provided an exception for the requirement to have an approved, supervised automatic sprinkler system in new apartment buildings in **Section 30.3.5.1** and listed the exceptions in **Section 30.3.5.2**.

According to **Section 30.3.5.2**, sprinkler systems were not required in buildings where every dwelling unit provided an exit door opening directly to the street or yard at ground level, or direct access to an outside stair and served a maximum of two units, both located on the same floor, or direct access to an interior stair serving only that unit and separated from all other portions of the building by fire barriers having a 1-hour fire resistance rating with no openings therein.

NFPA 101®, 2009 Edition has revised **Section 30.3.5.1** and taken out the language providing exceptions to the sprinkler requirement. Now, all new apartment buildings shall be protected throughout by an approved, supervised automatic sprinkler system.

Resource: MADCAD.com Newsletter, February 2009

*Thank you to WABO and Various Industry publications for providing information for this report.*