

# The International Residential Code

## The preferred model code for new homes in the United States

April 21, 2020

### Use and Development

The International Residential Code (IRC) is in use or adopted in 49 states, the District of Columbia, Guam, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands. Developed and maintained by the International Code Council (ICC), with input from experts in safety, building design, construction, materials, and regulatory services, the IRC promotes building safety without stifling economic development or the use of innovative products.

The IRC reflects over 100 years of dedication to the ideal of promoting public safety in the built environment through the use of model codes.

That ideal is currently pursued by 35 individuals on three IRC code committees: the IRC Building Code Committee; the IRC Plumbing/Mechanical Committee; and the Residential Energy Code Committee. These committees are charged with reviewing proposed code changes and making recommendations to ICC members.

IRC code committees encompass the viewpoints of home builders, code officials, designers, product suppliers and safety experts. Of the 35 IRC code committee members, almost one third, (11) are recommended by the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB). Code officials fill 11 seats, and 13 members are experts in building design, building products and public safety within the built environment.

### History and Legacy

The International Code Council was formed in 1994, and officially incorporated in 2003, by

three legacy organizations; the Building Officials and Code Administrators International, Inc., (BOCA), the International Conference of Building Officials (ICBO), and the Southern Building Code Congress International, Inc. (SBCCI). However, this was not the first time these three organizations collaborated to address matters of common concern.

In 1972, the three model code groups formed the Council of American Building Officials (CABO). One of the first joint code-writing efforts resulted in the CABO One-and Two-Family Dwelling Code, first published in the early 1970s. By the mid-1990s this CABO code was the most widely used model dwelling code in the United States.

But the legacy of the IRC goes back many years before the first CABO code. Long before 1972, each ICC legacy organization had established standards and traditions of excellence – which today are continued by the ICC.

Founded in 1915, BOCA International, was the first model building code association in the United States. Seven years later, in 1922, the ICBO was founded. And nineteen years after that, in 1941 the SBCCI was founded.

Today, the International Residential Code reflects the continuation of efforts begun by national building experts over 100 years ago.

The Alliance for Regulatory Coordination believes that Wisconsin should adopt the IRC to benefit from its ongoing tradition of excellence.

*The Alliance for Regulatory Coordination is a consortium of 21 organizations involved in building design, construction and regulatory services. Alliance membership consists of business, labor, advocacy, professional and governmental groups; numbering thousands of members, all committed to promoting more coordinated and efficient regulatory services for citizens and businesses of Wisconsin. Learn more about the Alliance at [www.4ARC.org](http://www.4ARC.org).*