

# The International Residential Code

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

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### 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 code development process is open and transparent, assuring that all impacted stakeholders can participate. Anyone can propose a change to the IRC. Those changes are considered during a three-year update cycle that relies on expertise from the building industry. Changes are initially reviewed in a public forum with stakeholder debate by code development committees. The IRC provisions are heard by one of three committees made up of homebuilders, designers, manufacturers, code officials, public safety advocates, and other stakeholders. Recommendations from the committees are then presented to ICC governmental members (again in a public forum with opportunities for stakeholder debate) for their vote on the final content of the next edition of the IRC. Governmental member votes are captured both in person and online through cdpACCESS allowing the participation of public safety officials from across the country. Through this open consensus process, the IRC provides a cost effective and efficient approach to achieving building safety.

### History and Legacy

The ICC 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).

Formation of the ICC was not the first time these organizations collaborated to address matters of common concern. In 1972, they 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. By the mid-1990s that 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. ICBO was formed in 1922, and 1941 saw the formation of the SBCCI.

The Alliance for Regulatory Coordination believes that Wisconsin should adopt the IRC to benefit from its ongoing tradition of excellence – a tradition that began over 100 years ago.

*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).*