



SIGNIFICANT CHANGES TO THE

INTERNATIONAL RESIDENTIAL CODE®

2012 EDITION



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**Significant Changes to the International Residential Code 2012 Edition
International Code Council**

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Preface

The purpose of *Significant Changes to the International Residential Code[®], 2012 Edition*, is to familiarize building officials, fire officials, plans examiners, inspectors, design professionals, contractors, and others in the building construction industry with many of the important changes in the 2012 International Residential Code[®] (IRC[®]). This publication is designed to assist code users in identifying the specific code changes that have occurred and, more important, understanding the reasons behind the changes. It is also a valuable resource for jurisdictions in their code-adoption process.

Only portions of the total number of code changes to the IRC are discussed in this book. The changes selected were identified for a number of reasons, including their frequency of application, special significance, or change in application. However, the importance of those changes not included is not to be diminished. Further information on all code changes can be found in the *Code Changes Resource Collection[®]*, published by the International Code Council[®] (ICC[®]). This resource collection provides the published documentation for each successful code change contained in the 2012 IRC since the 2009 edition.

Significant Changes to the International Residential Code, 2012 Edition, is organized into eight parts, each representing a distinct grouping of code topics. It is arranged to follow the general layout of the IRC, including code sections and section number format. The table of contents, in addition to providing guidance in the use of this publication, allows for a quick identification of those significant code changes that occur in the 2012 IRC.

Throughout the book, each change is accompanied by a photograph or an illustration to assist in and enhance the reader's understanding of the specific change. A summary and a discussion of the significance of the change are also provided. Each code change is identified by type, be it an addition, modification, clarification, or deletion.

The code change itself is presented in a format similar to the style utilized for code-change proposals. Deleted code language is shown with a strikethrough, whereas new code text is indicated by underlining. As a result, the actual 2012 code language is provided, as well as a comparison with the 2009 language, so the user can easily determine changes to the specific code text.

As with any code-change text, *Significant Changes to the International Residential Code, 2012 Edition*, is best used as a study companion to the

2012 IRC. Because only a limited discussion of each change is provided, the code itself should always be referenced in order to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the code change and its application.

The commentary and opinions set forth in this text are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the official position of ICC. In addition, they may not represent the views of any enforcing agency, as such agencies have the sole authority to render interpretations of the IRC. In many cases, the explanatory material is derived from the reasoning expressed by code-change proponents.

Comments concerning this publication are encouraged and may be directed to ICC at significantchanges@iccsafe.org.

About the International Residential Code®

Building officials, design professionals, contractors, and others involved in the field of residential building construction recognize the need for a modern, up-to-date residential code addressing the design and installation of building systems through both prescriptive and performance requirements. The *International Residential Code*® (IRC), 2012 edition, is intended to meet these needs through model code regulations that safeguard the public health and safety in all communities, large and small. The IRC is kept up to date through ICC's open code-development process. The provisions of the 2009 edition, along with those code changes approved through 2010, make up the 2012 edition.

The IRC is one in a family of International Codes® published by ICC. This comprehensive residential code establishes minimum regulations for residential building systems by means of prescriptive and performance-related provisions. It is founded on broad-based principles that make possible the use of new materials and new building designs. The IRC is a comprehensive code containing provisions for building, mechanical, fuel-gas, plumbing, and electrical systems. The IRC 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.

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The International Code Council (ICC) is a nonprofit membership association dedicated to protecting the health, safety, and welfare of people by creating better buildings and safer communities. The mission of ICC is to provide the highest-quality codes, standards, products, and services for all concerned with the safety and performance of the built environment. ICC is the publisher of the family of International Codes (I-Codes®), a single set of comprehensive and coordinated model codes. This unified approach to building codes enhances safety, efficiency, and affordability in the construction of buildings. The Code Council is also dedicated to innovation, sustainability, and energy efficiency. The Code Council subsidiary ICC Evaluation Service™ issues Evaluation Reports for innovative products and reports of Sustainable Attributes Verification and Evaluation (SAVE).

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