



City of Philadelphia

City Council
Chief Clerk's Office
402 City Hall
Philadelphia, PA 19107

Legislation Text

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Amending Title 4 of The Philadelphia Code, entitled "The Philadelphia Building Construction and Occupancy Code," by adopting the 2015 edition of the "International Residential Code" as published by the International Code Council, with previously adopted amendments thereto, as adopted through the Pennsylvania Uniform Construction Code Act, all under certain terms and conditions.

THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA HEREBY ORDAINS:

SECTION 1. Subcode "R" of Title 4 of The Philadelphia Code, entitled "The Philadelphia Residential Code," is hereby repealed in its entirety and replaced with a new Subcode "R" to read as follows:

SUBCODE "R" (THE PHILADELPHIA RESIDENTIAL CODE)

Article R-1.0 Pursuant to the Pennsylvania Uniform Construction Code Act, adoption of the "2015 International Residential Code" with state amendments, and local amendments which legally existed prior to the Act or were approved pursuant to Section 503 of the Act.

§ R-1.1 The "2015 International Residential Code" as published by the International Code Council is hereby adopted as the Philadelphia Residential Code, with amendments as set forth in § R-1.2.

§ R-1.2 The "2015 International Residential Code", copies of which are on file with the Department of Licenses and Inspections, is incorporated as if fully set forth herein, subject to the following local and state amendments.

§ R-1.2.1 The numbers of all state and local amendments shall be preceded with the prefix "R-".

§ R-1.2.2 Throughout the code, references to "International" codes or "ICC" codes shall be deemed to refer to the "Philadelphia" codes of the same name.

§ R-1.2.3 Additional amendments developed by the UCC Review and Advisory Council will be established by Regulation of the PA Department of Labor and Industry prior to October 1, 2018. Such amendments shall become part of this code as if adopted herein.

PART 1 - ADMINISTRATIVE CHAPTER 1 SCOPE AND ADMINISTRATION

Delete the text of Chapter 1 and substitute the following.

SECTION R-R101 TITLE, SCOPE AND PURPOSE

R-R101.1 Title. *These provisions shall be known as the Philadelphia Amendments to the International Residential Code, and will be referred to herein as the “Philadelphia Residential Code” or “this code.”*

R-R101.2 Scope. *The provisions of this code shall apply to the construction, alteration, movement, enlargement, replacement, repair, equipment, use and occupancy and location of detached one- and two-family dwellings and multiple single-family dwellings (townhouses) not more than three stories in height with a separate means of egress, and their accessory structures.*

Exceptions:

1. *Live/work units located in townhouses and complying with the requirements of Section 419 of the International Building Code shall be permitted to be constructed in accordance with the International Residential Code for One- and Two-Family Dwellings. Fire suppression required by Section 419.5 of the International Building Code where constructed under the International Residential Code for One and Two-family Dwellings shall conform to Section P2904.*

2. *Owner-occupied lodging houses with five or fewer guestrooms shall be permitted to be constructed in accordance with the International Residential Code for One- and Two-family Dwellings where equipped with a fire sprinkler system in accordance with Section P2904.*

R-R101.3 Purpose. *The purpose of this code is to provide minimum requirements to safeguard the public safety, health and general welfare through affordability, structural strength, means of egress, facilities, stability, sanitation, light and ventilation, energy conservation and safety to life and property from fire and other hazards attributed to the built environment, and to provide safety to fire fighters and first responders during emergency operations.*

R-R101.4 Administrative provisions. *This Chapter contains those provisions that are unique to the administration of this code. All other administrative provisions applicable to this code are as set forth in the Administrative Code (Subcode A).*

R-R101.5 Appendices. *The following appendices are adopted:*

1. *Sections AE501 through AE503 and AE601 through AE605 of Appendix E (“Manufactured Housing Used as Dwellings”);*

2. *Pursuant to the UCC, Appendix G (“Swimming Pools, Spas and Hot Tubs”) of the 2009 International Residential Code.*

R-R101.6 Construction safeguards. *The provisions of Chapter 33 of the International Building Code with amendments (Subcode B) shall apply to the construction safeguards required for all building construction and demolition.*

R-R101.7 Construction documents. *In addition to the submittal requirements of the Administrative Code (Subcode A), the provisions of R-R101.7.1 and R-101.7.2 shall apply.*

R-R101.7.1 Manufacturer’s installation instructions. *Manufacturer’s installation instructions, as required by this code, shall be available on the job site at the time of inspection.*

R-R101.7.2 Information on braced wall design. For buildings and structures utilizing braced wall design, and where required by the code official, braced wall lines shall be identified on the construction documents. Pertinent information including, but not limited to, bracing methods, location and length of braced wall panels and foundation requirements of braced wall panels at top and bottom shall be provided.

PART III - BUILDING PLANNING AND CONSTRUCTION

**CHAPTER 3
BUILDING PLANNING**

Table R301.2(1) is revised to include the climatic and geographic design criteria for Philadelphia as follows:

**Table R-R301.2(1)
CLIMATIC AND GEOGRAPHIC DESIGN CRITERIA**

GROUND SNOW LOAD	WIND SPEED ^d (mph)	SEISMIC DESIGN CATEGORY ^f	SUBJECT TO DAMAGE			WINTER DESIGN TEMP ^e	ICE BARRIER UNDER- LAYMENT REQUIRE D ^h	FLOOD HAZARD S ^g	AIR FREEZING INDEX ⁱ	MEAN ANNUAL TEMP ⁱ
			Weather	Frost line depth ^l	Termites					
25 psf	115	B	Severe	30 in.	Mode e to heavy	14° F	YES	(a) 1979 (b) 11/18/15 (c) see table R- R301.2(1a)	500	55.9° F

Insert Table R-R301.2(1a) as follows:

**TABLE R-R301.2(1a)
PANEL NUMBERS AND DATES OF EFFECTIVE FIRMS FOR PHILADELPHIA**

PANEL NUMBER	EFFECTIVE
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420757IND0B	11/18/2015
4207570019G	01/17/2007
4207570038G	01/17/2007
4207570067G	01/17/2007
4207570078G	01/17/2007
4207570086G	01/17/2007
4207570087G	01/17/2007
4207570088G	01/17/2007
4207570089G	01/17/2007
4207570104G	01/17/2007
4207570107G	01/17/2007
4207570108G	01/17/2007
4207570109G	01/17/2007
4207570111G	01/17/2007
4207570113G	01/17/2007
4207570114H	11/18/2015

PANEL NUMBER	EFFECTIVE
4207570116G	01/17/2007
4207570117H	11/18/2015
4207570118H	11/18/2015
4207570119H	11/18/2015
4207570126G	
4207570127G	01/17/2007
4207570128G	01/17/2007
4207570129G	01/17/2007
4207570136H	11/18/2015
4207570157G	01/17/2007
4207570159G	01/17/2007
4207570167G	01/17/2007
4207570169H	11/18/2015
4207570177G	01/17/2007
4207570178G	01/17/2007
4207570179G	01/17/2007

PANEL NUMBER	EFFECTIVE
4207570181G	01/17/2007
4207570182H	11/18/2015

4207570183G	01/17/2007
4207570184H	11/18/2015
4207570186H	11/18/2015
4207570187H	11/18/2015
4207570188H	11/18/2015
4207570189H	11/18/2015
4207570191H	11/18/2015
4207570192H	11/18/2015
4207570193H	11/18/2015
4207570194H	11/18/2015
4207570201H	11/18/2015
4207570202H	11/18/2015
4207570203H	11/18/2015
4207570206H	11/18/2015
4207570230H	11/18/2015

SECTION R310 EMERGENCY ESCAPE AND RESCUE OPENINGS

Delete Section R310.6 and replace as follows:

R-R310.6 Alterations or repairs of existing basements. *An emergency escape and rescue opening is not required for existing basements undergoing alterations or repairs, where such alterations or repairs do not increase the existing story height of the basement.*

Exception: *New sleeping rooms created in an existing basement shall be provided with emergency escape and rescue openings in accordance with Section R310.1.*

SECTION R311 MEANS OF EGRESS

Pursuant to the UCC, delete Section R311.7.5 and replace as follows:

R-R311.7.5 Stair treads and risers. *Stair treads and risers shall meet the requirements of this section. For the purposes of this section, dimensions and dimensioned surfaces shall be exclusive of carpets, rugs or runners.*

R-R311.7.5.1 Risers. *The riser height shall be not more than 8 ¼ inches (210 mm). The riser shall be measured vertically between leading edges of the adjacent treads. The greatest riser height within any flight of stairs shall not exceed the smallest by more than 3/8 inch (9.5 mm). Risers shall be vertical or sloped from the underside of the nosing of the tread above at an angle not more than 30 degrees (0.51 rad) from the vertical. Open risers are permitted provided that the openings located more than 30 inches (762 mm), as measured vertically, to the floor or grade below do not permit the passage of a 4-inch-diameter (102 mm) sphere.*

Exceptions:

1. The opening between adjacent treads is not limited on spiral stairways.
2. The riser height of spiral stairways shall be in accordance with Section R311.7.10.1.

R-R311.7.5.2 Treads. The tread depth shall be not less than 9 inches (229 mm). The tread depth shall be measured from tread nosing to tread nosing. The greatest tread depth within any flight of stairs shall not exceed the smallest by more than 3/8 inch (9.5 mm). Treads may have a uniform projection of not more than 1½ inches (38 mm) when solid risers are used.

SECTION R313 AUTOMATIC FIRE SPRINKLER SYSTEMS

Pursuant to the UCC, delete Section R313.2 and replace as follows:

R-R313.2 Detached one- and two-family dwellings. A builder of a one-family or two-family dwelling shall, at or before the time of entering into the purchase contract, do all of the following:

1. Offer to a buyer the option to install or equip, at the buyer's expense, an automatic fire sprinkler system in the building or dwelling unit designed and installed in accordance with the provisions of P2904 or NFPA 13D.
2. Provide the buyer with information which explains the initial and ongoing cost of installing and equipping an automatic fire sprinkler system in the building or dwelling unit.
3. Provide the buyer with information, as made available by the State Fire Commissioner on the agency's Internet website, on the possible benefits of installing an automatic sprinkler system.

SECTION R314 SMOKE ALARMS

Pursuant to the UCC, insert the following additional exception to Section R314.4:

R-R314.4, Exception 2: The provisions of R314.4 requiring interconnected smoke alarms do not apply to one-family and two-family dwellings undergoing alterations, repairs or additions. Non-interconnected battery-operated smoke alarms shall be installed in these dwellings. This exception does not apply to multiple single-family dwellings (townhouses).

SECTION R322 FLOOD RESISTANT CONSTRUCTION

Delete Section R322.2.1 and replace as follows:

R-R322.2.1 Elevation requirements.

1. Buildings and structures in flood hazard areas shall have the lowest floors elevated to or above the base flood elevation plus 1 ½ feet (457 mm), or the design flood elevation, whichever is higher.
2. In areas of shallow flooding (AO Zones), buildings and structures shall have the lowest floor (including basement) elevated to a height of not less than the highest adjacent grade as the depth number specified in feet (mm) on the FIRM plus 1 ½ feet (457 mm), or not less than 3 feet (15 mm) if a depth number is not specified.
3. Basement floors that are below grade on all sides shall be elevated to or above base

flood elevation plus 1 ½ feet (457 mm), or the design flood elevation, whichever is higher.

Exceptions:

1. Enclosed areas below the design flood elevation, including basements with floors that are not below grade on all sides, shall meet the requirements of Section R322.2.2.
2. Accessory structures in accordance with Section R-R322.2.1.1.

R-R322.2.1.1 Accessory structures. Accessory structures are not required to be elevated to remain dry where they comply with all of the following requirements:

1. The structure shall not be designed or used for human habitation, but shall be limited to the parking of vehicles, or to the storage of tools, material, and equipment related to the principal use or activity;
2. The floor area shall not exceed 200 square feet;
3. The structure must have a low damage potential;
4. The structure must be located on the site so as to cause the least obstruction to the flow of flood waters.
5. Power lines, wiring, and outlets must be elevated to the elevation requirements of Section R-R322.2.1;
6. The structure shall not contain permanently affixed utility equipment and appliances such as furnaces, heaters, washers, dryers, etc.;
7. The structure shall not contain sanitary facilities; and
8. The structure shall be adequately anchored to prevent flotation, collapse, and lateral movement and shall be designed to automatically provide for the entry and exit of floodwater for the purpose of equalizing hydrostatic forces on the walls. Designs for meeting this requirement must either be certified by a registered design professional, or meet or exceed the following minimum criteria:
 - a. a minimum of two openings having a net total area of not less than one (1) square inch for every square foot of enclosed space;
 - b. the bottom of all openings shall be no higher than one (1) foot above grade.
 - c. openings may be equipped with screens, louvers, etc. or other coverings or devices provided that they permit the automatic entry and exit of flood waters.

**CHAPTER 6
WALL CONSTRUCTION**

SECTION R602 WOOD WALL FRAMING

Pursuant to the UCC, delete Sections R602.10 and R602.11 in their entirety and replace as follows:

R-R602.10 Wall bracing requirements. The wall bracing requirements of sections R602.10 through R602.11.3 of the 2006 International Residential Code shall apply.

**CHAPTER 9
ROOF ASSEMBLIES**

SECTION R905 REQUIREMENTS FOR ROOF COVERINGS

Add Section R-R905.17 as follows:

R-R905.17 Reflectance. *Roof Coverings over conditioned spaces on low-slope roofs (roof slope < 2:12) on newly constructed buildings and additions to existing buildings shall be Energy Star rated as highly reflective.*

Exceptions:

1. *An addition to a roof that supports living vegetation and includes a synthetic, high quality waterproof membrane, drainage layer, soil layer and light weight medium plants shall be permitted to comprise part or all of the roof area.*
2. *Roof areas used as outdoor recreation space by the occupants of the building.*
3. *An area including and adjacent to rooftop photovoltaic and solar thermal equipment, totaling not more than three times the area that is covered with such equipment.*
4. *Limited roof areas as determined by regulations promulgated by the Department of Licenses and Inspections.*
5. *A roof, the area of which is less than three (3) percent of the gross floor area of the building.*

PART V - MECHANICAL

CHAPTER 20 BOILERS AND WATER HEATERS

Pursuant to the UCC, add Section R-M2001.1.2 as follows:

R-M2001.2 Coal-fired boilers. *Coal-fired boilers shall not be subject to the stamping (labeling) requirements of Section M2001.1.1.*

PART VII - PLUMBING

CHAPTERS 25 THROUGH 32

Delete Chapters 25 through 32, with the exception of Section P 2904 (Dwelling Unit Fire Sprinkler Systems), in their entirety and insert the following text:

Plumbing systems in buildings and structures regulated by this code shall be designed and constructed in accordance with the Philadelphia Plumbing Code.

SECTION 2. The provisions of Section 1 shall be effective October 1, 2018, and upon taking effect replace and supersede the “Regulations Pursuant to the Philadelphia Residential Code” related to R-101.2 of the Department of Licenses and Inspections. Additional amendments to this Subcode, developed by the UCC Review and Advisory Council, will be established by Regulation of the PA Department of Labor and Industry prior to October 1, 2018. Pursuant to the UCC, such amendments shall become part of this code as if adopted

herein.

Explanation:

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted.

Italics indicate new matter added.