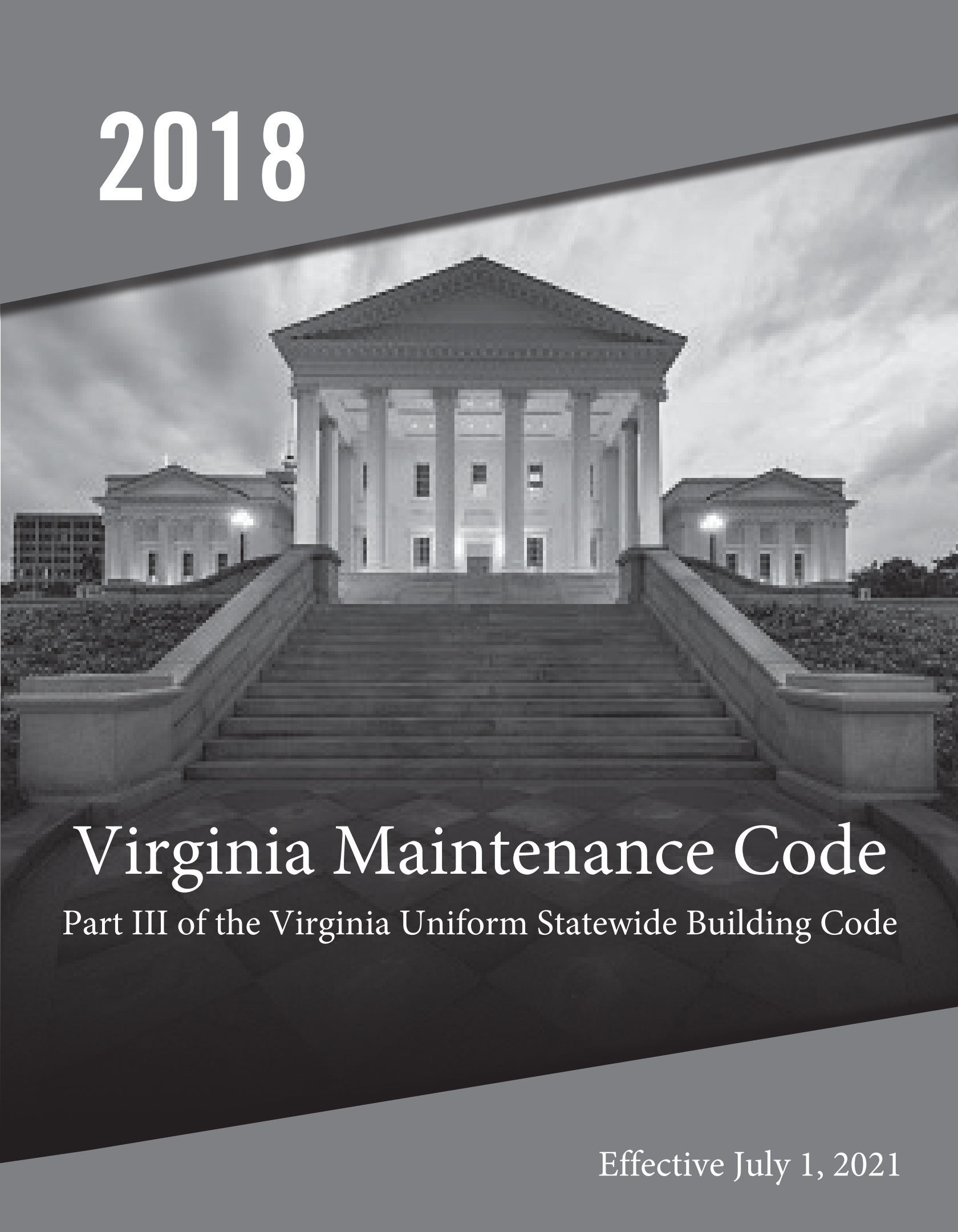


# 2018



# Virginia Maintenance Code

Part III of the Virginia Uniform Statewide Building Code

Effective July 1, 2021



# PREFACE

## Introduction

The Virginia Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC) is a state regulation promulgated by the Virginia Board of Housing and Community Development, a Governor-appointed board, for the purpose of establishing minimum regulations to govern the construction and maintenance of buildings and structures.

The provisions of the USBC are based on nationally recognized model building and fire codes published by the International Code Council, Inc.. The model codes are made part of the USBC through a regulatory process known as incorporation by reference. The USBC also contains administrative provisions governing the use of the model codes and establishing requirements for the enforcement of the code by the local building departments and other code enforcement agencies.

In keeping with the designations of the USBC used previously, since the 2018 editions of the International Codes are incorporated by reference into this version of the USBC, it is known as the 2018 edition of the USBC.

## Arrangement

The USBC is part of the Virginia Administrative Code (VAC), the official compilation of state regulations published under the authority and guidance of the Virginia Code Commission. Due to the difference in the section numbering system between the VAC and the model codes incorporated by reference into the USBC, the USBC utilizes a dual section numbering system. In the USBC, the VAC section numbers are listed first, followed by a section number matching the model code system. In this printing of the USBC, the VAC section numbers are omitted and only the model code numbering system is utilized. The version of the USBC containing both the VAC section numbers and the model code numbering is available from the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) and may also be accessed through the website of the Virginia Code Commission or by subscription to the VAC.

## Overview

The USBC is divided into three stand-alone parts. Part I contains regulations specific to the construction of new buildings and structures and is known as the Virginia Construction Code. Part II contains regulations specific to the rehabilitation of existing buildings, including repair, alterations, additions and change of occupancy in existing buildings and structures, and is known as the Virginia Existing Building Code. Part III of the USBC contains the regulations for the maintenance of existing structures which is enforced at the option of the local governments. It is known as the Virginia Maintenance Code.

## Codes Purchased from ICC

The 2015 edition of the USBC is being made available in pamphlet form as in past editions of the USBC. In addition to the pamphlet form of the USBC published by DHCD, the International Code Council (ICC) publishes versions of the Virginia Construction Code, Virginia Existing Building Code, Virginia Maintenance Code and a series of Virginia specific trade codes. In the ICC published versions, marginal markings are provided to distinguish between text which is part of the International Codes and text which is part of the state regulations. Double vertical lines in the margins within the body of the codes indicate state amendments to the International Codes. As in the standard printings of the International Codes, a single vertical line in the margins within the body of the code indicates a technical change from the previous edition of the International Codes.

Deletions from the previous editions of the International Codes are indicated in the form of an arrow ( → ) in the margin where an entire section, paragraph, exception or table has been deleted or an item in a list of items or a table has been deleted.

## **Technical Assistance**

The local building departments and enforcing agencies may be contacted for further information concerning the USBC. Contact information for DHCD is below.

**DHCD, Division of Building and Fire Regulation**  
**State Building Codes Office**  
**600 East Main Street, Suite 300**  
**Richmond, Virginia 23219**  
**Phone: (804) 371-7150 – Email: [sbco@dhcd.virginia.gov](mailto:sbco@dhcd.virginia.gov)**  
**Website: [www.dhcd.virginia.gov](http://www.dhcd.virginia.gov)**

## PREVIOUS ADOPTIONS and AMENDMENTS of the USBC and SFPC

The *Virginia Uniform Statewide Building Code* (USBC) was first adopted in 1973 by the State Board of Housing. Responsibility for the USBC passed to the State Board of Housing and Community Development on July 1, 1978. The *Virginia Statewide Fire Prevention Code* was first adopted by the Board of Housing and Community Development on March 1, 1988. The initial adoption and subsequent amendments by these Boards are indicated below:

### 1973 Edition

- Effective date: September 1, 1973
- Title: Virginia Uniform Statewide Building Code, Administrative Amendments, 1973 Edition
- Major reference standards:
  - BOCA Basic Building Code/1970, with 1972 Accumulative Supplement
  - BOCA Basic Mechanical Code/1971
  - BOCA Basic Plumbing Code/1970, with 1972 Accumulative Supplement
  - NFPA National Electrical Code/1971
  - One- and Two-Family Dwelling Code/1971

### 1974 Accumulative Supplement

- Effective date: April 1, 1974
- Title: 1974 Accumulative Supplement to Virginia Uniform Statewide Building Code
- Major reference standards:
  - BOCA Basic Building Code/1970, with 1972 Accumulative Supplement
  - BOCA Basic Mechanical Code/1971
  - BOCA Basic Plumbing Code/1970, with 1972 Accumulative Supplement
  - NFPA National Electrical Code/1971

### 1975 Accumulative Supplement

- Effective date: February 7, 1976
- Title: 1975 Accumulative Supplement to Virginia Uniform Statewide Building Code
- Major reference standards:
  - BOCA Basic Building Code/1975
  - BOCA Basic Mechanical Code/1975
  - BOCA Basic Plumbing Code/1975
  - NFPA National Electrical Code/1975
  - One- and Two-Family Dwelling Code/1975

### 1978 Accumulative Supplement

- Effective date: August 1, 1978
- Title: 1978 Accumulative Supplement to Virginia Uniform Statewide Building Code
- Major reference standards:
  - BOCA Basic Building Code/1978
  - BOCA Basic Mechanical Code/1978
  - BOCA Basic Plumbing Code/1978
  - NFPA National Electrical Code/1978
  - One- and Two-Family Dwelling Code/1975

### 1978 Accumulative Supplement (First Amendment)

- Effective date: January 1, 1981

- NOTE: The 1978 Accumulative Supplement to the Virginia Uniform Statewide Building Code was continued, but with a few changes to the previously referenced BOCA Basic Building Code/1978.

#### **1981 Edition**

- Effective date: July 16, 1982
- Title: Virginia Uniform Statewide Building Code, 1981 Edition
- Major reference standards:
  - BOCA Basic Building Code/1981
  - BOCA Basic Mechanical Code/1981
  - BOCA Basic Plumbing Code/1981
  - NFPA National Electrical Code/1981
  - One- and Two-Family Dwelling Code/1979 with 1980 Amendments

#### **1981 Edition (First Amendment)**

- Effective date: June 20, 1984
- Title: Sections 515.4 and 515.5 of Article 5 of the 1981 Edition, Virginia Uniform Statewide Building Code

#### **1984 Edition**

- Effective date: April 1, 1986
- Title: Virginia Uniform Statewide Building Code, Volume I - New Construction Code, 1984 Edition
- Major reference standards:
  - BOCA Basic Building Code/1984
  - BOCA Basic Mechanical Code/1984
  - BOCA Basic Plumbing Code/1984
  - NFPA National Electrical Code/1984
  - One- and Two-Family Dwelling Code/1983 with 1984 Amendments

#### **1987 Edition**

- Effective date: March 1, 1988
- Title: Virginia Uniform Statewide Building Code, Volume I - New Construction Code, 1987 Edition
- Major reference standards:
  - BOCA Basic Building Code/1987
  - BOCA Basic Mechanical Code/1987
  - BOCA Basic Plumbing Code/1987
  - NFPA National Electrical Code/1987
  - One- and Two-Family Dwelling Code/1986 with 1987 Amendments
- Title: Virginia Statewide Fire Prevention Code, 1987 Edition
- Major reference standard:
  - BOCA National Fire Prevention Code/1987

#### **1987 Edition (First Amendment)**

- Effective date: March 1, 1989
- Title: Virginia Uniform Statewide Building Code, Volume I - New Construction Code, 1987 Edition
- Major reference standards: Same as 1987 Edition

#### **1987 Edition (Second Amendment)**

- Effective date: March 1, 1990

- Title: Virginia Uniform Statewide Building Code, Volume I - New Construction Code, 1987 Edition
- Major reference standards: Same as 1987 Edition

#### **1987 Edition (Third Amendment)**

- Effective date: October 1, 1990
- Title: Virginia Uniform Statewide Building Code, Volume I - New Construction Code, 1987 Edition
- Major reference standards: Same as 1987 Edition

#### **1990 Edition**

- Effective date: March 1, 1991
- Title: Virginia Uniform Statewide Building Code, Volume I - New Construction Code, 1990 Edition
- Major reference standards:
  - BOCA National Building Code/1990
  - BOCA National Mechanical Code/1990
  - BOCA National Plumbing Code/1990
  - NFPA National Electrical Code/1990
  - CABO One- and Two-Family Dwelling Code/1989 with 1990 Amendments
- Title: Virginia Statewide Fire Prevention Code, 1990 Edition
- Major reference standard:
  - BOCA National Fire Prevention Code/1990

#### **1990 Edition (First Amendment)**

- Effective date: November 1, 1991
- Title: Virginia Uniform Statewide Building Code, Volume I - New Construction Code, 1990 Edition - First Amendment
- Major reference standards: Same as 1990 Edition

#### **1990 Edition (Third Amendment)**

- Effective date: March 1, 1993
- Title: Virginia Uniform Statewide Building Code, Volume I - New Construction Code, 1990 Edition - Third Amendment
- Major reference standards: Same as 1990 Edition.

#### **1993 Edition**

- Effective date: April 1, 1994
- Title: Virginia Uniform Statewide Building Code, Volume I - New Construction Code, 1993 Edition
- Major reference standards:
  - BOCA National Building Code/1993
  - BOCA National Mechanical Code/1993
  - BOCA National Plumbing Code/1993
  - BOCA National Fire Prevention Code/1993
  - NFPA National Electrical Code/1993
  - CABO One- and Two-Family Dwelling Code/1992 with 1993 Amendments
- Title: Virginia Statewide Fire Prevention Code, 1993 Edition
- Major reference standard:
  - BOCA National Fire Prevention Code/1993

#### **1996 Edition**

- Effective date: April 15, 1997 with minor revision August 20, 1997

- Title: Virginia Uniform Statewide Building Code, 1996 Edition
- Major reference standards:
  - BOCA National Building Code/1996
  - International Mechanical Code/1996
  - International Plumbing Code/1995 with 1996 Supplement
  - NFPA National Electrical Code/1996
  - CABO One- and Two-Family Dwelling Code/1995
- Title: Virginia Statewide Fire Prevention Code, 1996 Edition
- Major reference standard:
  - BOCA National Fire Prevention Code/1996

**1996 Edition w/2000 Amendments**

- Effective date: September 15, 2000
- Title: Virginia Uniform Statewide Building Code, 1996 Edition with 2000 Amendments
- Major reference standards:
  - Same as 1996 edition except with International Fuel Gas Code 1997

**2000 Edition**

- Effective date: October 1, 2003
- Title: Virginia Uniform Statewide Building Code “USBC” (2000 Edition)
- Major referenced standards:
  - International Code Council (ICC)
  - International Building Code 2000
  - International Plumbing Code 2000
  - International Mechanical Code 2000
  - NFPA National Electrical Code 1999
  - International Fuel Gas Code 2000
  - International Energy Conservation Code 2000
  - International Residential Code (IRC) 2000
- NOTE: An amendment addressing the fire separation distance between dwellings under the IRC became effective on September 9, 2004.
- Title: Virginia Statewide Fire Prevention Code, 2000 Edition
- Major reference standard:
  - ICC International Fire Code 2000

**2003 Edition**

- Effective date: November 16, 2005
- Title: Virginia Uniform Statewide Building Code “USBC” (2003 Edition)
- Major referenced standards:
  - International Code Council (ICC)
  - ICC International Building Code 2003
  - ICC International Plumbing Code 2003
  - ICC International Mechanical Code 2003
  - NFPA National Electrical Code 2005
  - ICC International Fuel Gas Code 2003
  - ICC International Energy Conservation Code 2003
  - ICC International Residential Code (IRC) 2003
- Title: Virginia Statewide Fire Prevention Code, 2003 Edition
- Major reference standard:



- ICC International Fire Code 2003

#### **2006 Edition**

- Effective date: May 1, 2008
- Title: Virginia Uniform Statewide Building Code “USBC” (2006 Edition)
- Major referenced standards:
  - ICC International Building Code 2006
  - ICC International Plumbing Code 2006
  - ICC International Mechanical Code 2006
  - NFPA National Electrical Code 2005
  - ICC International Fuel Gas Code 2006
  - ICC International Residential Code 2006
- Title: Virginia Statewide Fire Prevention Code, 2006 Edition
- Major reference standard:
  - ICC International Fire Code 2006

#### **2009 Edition**

- Effective Date: March 1, 2011
- Title: Virginia Uniform Statewide Building Code “USBC” (2009 Edition)
- Major referenced standards:
  - ICC International Building Code 2009
  - ICC International Plumbing Code 2009
  - ICC International Mechanical Code 2009
  - NFPA National Electrical Code 2008
  - ICC International Fuel Gas Code 2009
  - ICC International Residential Code 2009
- Title: Virginia Statewide Fire Prevention Code, 2009 Edition
- Major reference standard:
  - ICC International Fire Code 2009

#### **2012 Edition**

- Effective Date: July 14, 2014
- Title: Virginia Uniform Statewide Building Code “USBC” (2012 Edition)
- Major referenced standards:
  - ICC International Building Code 2012
  - ICC International Plumbing Code 2012
  - ICC International Mechanical Code 2012
  - NFPA National Electric Code 2011
  - ICC International Fuel Gas Code 2012
  - ICC International Residential Code 2012
- Title: Virginia Statewide Fire Prevention Code, 2012 Edition
- Major reference standard:
  - ICC International Fire Code 2012

#### **2015 Edition**

- Effective Date: September 4, 2018
- Title: Virginia Uniform Statewide Building Code “USBC” (2015 Edition)
- Major referenced standards:
  - ICC International Building Code 2015
  - ICC International Plumbing Code 2015

- ICC International Mechanical Code 2015
- NFPA National Electric Code 2014
- ICC International Fuel Gas Code 2015
- ICC International Residential Code 2015
- Effective date: October 16, 2018
- Title: Virginia Statewide Fire Prevention Code, 2015 Edition
- Major reference standard:
  - ICC International Fire Code 2015

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# CHAPTER 1 ADMINISTRATION

## SECTION 101 GENERAL

**101.1 Short title.** The Virginia Uniform Statewide Building Code, Part III, Maintenance, may be cited as the "Virginia Maintenance Code," or as the "VMC."

**101.2 Incorporation by reference.** Chapters 2 - 8 of the 2018 International Property Maintenance Code, published by the International Code Council, Inc., are adopted and incorporated by reference to be an enforceable part of the VMC. The term "IPMC" means the 2018 International Property Maintenance Code, published by the International Code Council, Inc. Any codes and standards referenced in the IPMC are also considered to be part of the incorporation by reference, except that such codes and standards are used only to the prescribed extent of each such reference.

**101.3 Numbering system.** A dual numbering system is used in the VMC to correlate the numbering system of the Virginia Administrative Code with the numbering system of the IPMC. IPMC numbering system designations are provided in the catchlines of the Virginia Administrative Code sections and cross references between sections or chapters of the Virginia Maintenance Code use only the IPMC numbering system designations. The term "chapter" is used in the context of the numbering system of the IPMC and may mean a chapter in the VMC, a chapter in the IPMC or a chapter in a referenced code or standard, depending on the context of the use of the term. The term "chapter" is not used to designate a chapter of the Virginia Administrative Code, unless clearly indicated.

**101.4 Arrangement of code provisions.** The VMC is comprised of the combination of (i) the provisions of Chapter 1, Administration, which are established herein, (ii) Chapters 2 - 8 of the IPMC, which are incorporated by reference in Section 101.2, and (iii) the changes to the text of the incorporated chapters of the IPMC which are specifically identified. The terminology "changes to the text of the incorporated chapters of the IPMC which are specifically identified" shall also be referred to as the "state amendments to the IPMC." Such state amendments to the IPMC are set out using corresponding chapter and section numbers of the IPMC numbering system.

**101.5 Use of terminology and notes.** The term "this code," or "the code," where used in the provisions of Chapter 1, in Chapters 2 - 8 of the IPMC, or in the state amendments to the IPMC, means the VMC, unless the context clearly indicates otherwise. The term "this code," or "the code," where used in a code or standard referenced in the IPMC, means that code or standard, unless the context clearly indicates otherwise. The term "USBC" where used in this code means the VCC unless the context clearly indicates otherwise. In addition, the use of notes in Chapter 1 is to provide information only and shall not be construed as changing the meaning of any code provision. Notes in the IPMC, in the codes and standards referenced in the IPMC, and in the state amendments to the IPMC, may modify the content of a related provision and shall be considered to be a valid part of the provision, unless the context clearly indicates otherwise.

**101.6 Order of precedence.** The provisions of this code shall be used as follows:

1. The provisions of Chapter 1 of this code supersede any provisions of Chapters 2 - 8 of the IPMC that address the same subject matter and impose differing requirements.
2. The provisions of Chapter 1 of this code supersede any provisions of the codes and standards referenced in the IPMC that address the same subject matter and impose differing requirements.
3. The state amendments to the IPMC supersede any provisions of Chapters 2 - 8 of the IPMC that address the same subject matter and impose differing requirements.

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4. The state amendments to the IPMC supersede any provisions of the codes and standards referenced in the IPMC that address the same subject matter and impose differing requirements.
5. The provisions of Chapters 2 - 8 of the IPMC supersede any provisions of the codes and standards referenced in the IPMC that address the same subject matter and impose differing requirements.

**101.7 Definitions.** The definitions of terms used in this code are contained in Chapter 2 along with specific provisions addressing the use of definitions. Terms may be defined in other chapters or provisions of the code and such definitions are also valid.

## SECTION 102 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

**102.1 Purpose.** In accordance with § 36-103 of the Code of Virginia, the Virginia Board of Housing and Community Development may adopt and promulgate as part of the Virginia Uniform Statewide Building Code, building regulations that facilitate the maintenance, rehabilitation, development and reuse of existing buildings at the least possible cost to ensure the protection of the public health, safety and welfare. Further, in accordance with § 36-99 of the Code of Virginia, the purpose of this code is to protect the health, safety and welfare of the residents of the Commonwealth of Virginia, provided that buildings and structures should be permitted to be maintained at the least possible cost consistent with recognized standards of health, safety, energy conservation and water conservation, including provisions necessary to prevent overcrowding, rodent or insect infestation, and garbage accumulation; and barrier-free provisions for the physically handicapped and aged.

**102.2 Scope.** In accordance with § 36-98 of the Code of Virginia, the VMC shall supersede the building codes and regulations of the counties, municipalities and other political subdivisions and state agencies.

**102.3 Exemptions.** This code shall not regulate those buildings and structures specifically exempt from the VCC, except that existing industrialized buildings and manufactured homes shall not be exempt from this code.

## SECTION 103 APPLICATION OF CODE

**103.1 General.** This code prescribes regulations for the maintenance of all existing buildings and structures and associated equipment, including regulations for unsafe buildings and structures.

**103.2 Maintenance requirements.** Buildings, structures and systems shall be maintained and kept in good repair in accordance with the requirements of this code and when applicable in accordance with the USBC under which such building or structure was constructed. No provision of this code shall require alterations to be made to an existing building or structure or to equipment unless conditions are present which meet the definition of an unsafe structure or a structure unfit for human occupancy.

**103.2.1 Maintenance of nonrequired components and systems.** Nonrequired components and systems may be discontinued in use provided that no hazard results from such discontinuance of use.

**103.2.2 Maintenance of nonrequired fire protection systems.** Nonrequired fire protection systems shall be maintained to function as originally installed. If any such systems are to be reduced in function or discontinued, approval shall be obtained from the building official in accordance with Section 103.3.1 of the VCC.

**103.2.3 Responsibility.** The owner of a structure shall provide and maintain all buildings, structures, systems, facilities and associated equipment in compliance with this code unless it is specifically expressed or implied that it is the responsibility of the tenant or occupant.

Note: Where an owner states that a tenant is responsible for performing any of the owner's duties under this code, the code official may request information needed to verify the owner's statement, as allowed by § 55-1-1209 A 5 of the Code of Virginia.

**103.3 Continued approval.** Notwithstanding any provision of this code to the contrary, alterations shall not be required to be made to existing buildings or structures which are occupied in accordance with a certificate of occupancy issued under any edition of the USBC.

**103.4 Rental Inspections.** In accordance with § 36-105.1:1 of the Code of Virginia, these provisions are applicable to rental inspection programs. For purposes of this section:

"Dwelling unit" means a building or structure or part thereof that is used for a home or residence by one or more persons who maintain a household.

"Owner" means the person shown on the current real estate assessment books or current real estate assessment records.

"Residential rental dwelling unit" means a dwelling unit that is leased or rented to one or more tenants. However, a dwelling unit occupied in part by the owner thereof shall not be construed to be a residential rental dwelling unit unless a tenant occupies a part of the dwelling unit that has its own cooking and sleeping areas, and a bathroom, unless otherwise provided in the zoning ordinance by the local governing body.

The local governing body may adopt an ordinance to inspect residential rental dwelling units for compliance with this code and to promote safe, decent and sanitary housing for its citizens, in accordance with the following:

1. Except as provided for in subdivision 3 of this subsection, the dwelling units shall be located in a rental inspection district established by the local governing body in accordance with this section; and
2. The rental inspection district is based upon a finding by the local governing body that (i) there is a need to protect the public health, safety and welfare of the occupants of dwelling units inside the designated rental inspection district; (ii) the residential rental dwelling units within the designated rental inspection district are either (a) blighted or in the process of deteriorating or (b) the residential rental dwelling units are in the need of inspection by the building department to prevent deterioration, taking into account the number, age and condition of residential dwelling rental units inside the proposed rental inspection district; and (iii) the inspection of residential rental dwelling units inside the proposed rental inspection district is necessary to maintain safe, decent and sanitary living conditions for tenants and other residents living in the proposed rental inspection district. Nothing in this section shall be construed to authorize one or more locality-wide rental inspection districts and a local governing body shall limit the boundaries of the proposed rental inspection districts to such areas of the locality that meet the criteria set out in this subsection; or
3. An individual residential rental dwelling unit outside of a designated rental inspection district is made subject to the rental inspection ordinance based upon a separate finding for each individual dwelling unit by the local governing body that (i) there is a need to protect the public health, welfare and safety of the occupants of that individual dwelling unit; (ii) the individual dwelling unit is either (a) blighted or (b) in the process of deteriorating; or (iii) there is evidence of violations of this code that affect the safe, decent and sanitary living conditions for tenants living in such individual dwelling unit.

For purposes of this section, the local governing body may designate a local government agency other than the building department to perform all or part of the duties contained in the enforcement authority granted to the building department by this section.

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Before adopting a rental inspection ordinance and establishing a rental inspection district or an amendment to either, the governing body of the locality shall hold a public hearing on the proposed ordinance. Notice of the hearing shall be published once a week for two successive weeks in a newspaper published or having general circulation in the locality.

Upon adoption by the local governing body of a rental inspection ordinance, the building department shall make reasonable efforts to notify owners of residential rental dwelling units in the designated rental inspection district, or their designated managing agents, and to any individual dwelling units subject to the rental inspection ordinance, not located in a rental inspection district, of the adoption of such ordinance, and provide information and an explanation of the rental inspection ordinance and the responsibilities of the owner thereunder.

The rental inspection ordinance may include a provision that requires the owners of dwelling units in a rental inspection district to notify the building department in writing if the dwelling unit of the owner is used for residential rental purposes. The building department may develop a form for such purposes. The rental inspection ordinance shall not include a registration requirement or a fee of any kind associated with the written notification pursuant to this subdivision. A rental inspection ordinance may not require that the written notification from the owner of a dwelling unit subject to a rental inspection ordinance be provided to the building department in less than 60 days after the adoption of a rental inspection ordinance. However, there shall be no penalty for the failure of an owner of a residential rental dwelling unit to comply with the provisions of this subsection, unless and until the building department provides personal or written notice to the property owner, as provided in this section. In any event, the sole penalty for the willful failure of an owner of a dwelling unit who is using the dwelling unit for residential rental purposes to comply with the written notification requirement shall be a civil penalty of up to \$50. For purposes of this subsection, notice sent by regular first-class mail to the last known address of the owner as shown on the current real estate tax assessment books or current real estate tax assessment records shall be deemed compliance with this requirement.

Upon establishment of a rental inspection district in accordance with this section, the building department may, in conjunction with the written notifications as provided for above, proceed to inspect dwelling units in the designated rental inspection district to determine if the dwelling units are being used as a residential rental property and for compliance with the provisions of this code that affect the safe, decent and sanitary living conditions for the tenants of such property.

If a multifamily development has more than 10 dwelling units, in the initial and periodic inspections, the building department shall inspect only a sampling of dwelling units, of not less than two and not more than 10% of the dwelling units, of a multifamily development, that includes all of the multifamily buildings that are part of that multifamily development. In no event, however, shall the building department charge a fee authorized by this section for inspection of more than 10 dwelling units. If the building department determines upon inspection of the sampling of dwelling units that there are violations of this code that affect the safe, decent and sanitary living conditions for the tenants of such multifamily development, the building department may inspect as many dwelling units as necessary to enforce these provisions, in which case, the fee shall be based upon a charge per dwelling unit inspected, as otherwise provided in the fee schedule established pursuant to this section.

Upon the initial or periodic inspection of a residential rental dwelling unit subject to a rental inspection ordinance, the building department has the authority under these provisions to require the owner of the dwelling unit to submit to such follow-up inspections of the dwelling unit as the building department deems necessary, until such time as the dwelling unit is brought into compliance with the provisions of this code that affect the safe, decent and sanitary living conditions for the tenants.

Except as provided for above, following the initial inspection of a residential rental dwelling unit subject to a rental inspection ordinance, the building department may inspect any residential rental dwelling unit in a rental inspection district, that is not otherwise exempted in accordance with this section, no more than once each calendar year.



Upon the initial or periodic inspection of a residential rental dwelling unit subject to a rental inspection ordinance for compliance with these provisions, provided that there are no violations of this code that affect the safe, decent and sanitary living conditions for the tenants of such residential rental dwelling unit, the building department shall provide, to the owner of such residential rental dwelling unit, an exemption from the rental inspection ordinance for a minimum of four years. Upon the sale of a residential rental dwelling unit, the building department may perform a periodic inspection as provided above, subsequent to such sale. If a residential rental dwelling unit has been issued a certificate of occupancy within the last four years, an exemption shall be granted for a minimum period of four years from the date of the issuance of the certificate of occupancy by the building department. If the residential rental dwelling unit becomes in violation of this code during the exemption period, the building department may revoke the exemption previously granted under this section.

A local governing body may establish a fee schedule for enforcement of these provisions, which includes a per dwelling unit fee for the initial inspections, follow-up inspections and periodic inspections under this section.

The provisions of this section shall not in any way alter the rights and obligations of landlords and tenants pursuant to the applicable provisions of Chapter 13 (§ 55-217 et seq.) or Chapter 13.2 (§ 55-248.2 et seq.) of Title 55 of the Code of Virginia.

The provisions of this section shall not alter the duties or responsibilities of the local building department under § 36-105 of the Code of Virginia to enforce the USBC.

Unless otherwise provided for in § 36-105.1:1 of the Code of Virginia, penalties for violation of this section shall be the same as the penalties provided for violations of other sections of the USBC.

## SECTION 104 ENFORCEMENT, GENERALLY

**104.1 Scope of enforcement.** This section establishes the requirements for enforcement of this code in accordance with subdivision C 1 of § 36-105 of the Code of Virginia. The local governing body may also inspect and enforce the provisions of the USBC for existing buildings and structures, whether occupied or not. Such inspection and enforcement shall be carried out by an agency or department designated by the local governing body.

In accordance with subdivision C 3 of § 36-105 of the Code of Virginia, if the local building department receives a complaint that a violation of this code exists that is an immediate and imminent threat to the health or safety of the owner, tenant, or occupants of any building or structure, or the owner, occupant, or tenant of any nearby building or structure, and the owner, occupant, or tenant of the building or structure that is the subject of the complaint has refused to allow the code official or his agent to have access to the subject building or structure, the code official or his agent may make an affidavit under oath before a magistrate or a court of competent jurisdiction and request that the magistrate or court grant the code official or his agent an inspection warrant to enable the code official or his agent to enter the subject building or structure for the purpose of determining whether violations of this code exist. After issuing a warrant under this section, the magistrate or judge shall file the affidavit in a manner prescribed by § 19.2-54 of the Code of Virginia. After executing the warrant, the code official or his agents shall return the warrant to the clerk of the circuit court of the city or county wherein the inspection was made. The code official or his agent shall make a reasonable effort to obtain consent from the owner, occupant, or tenant of the subject building or structure prior to seeking the issuance of an inspection warrant under this section.

Note: Generally, official action must be taken by the local government to enforce the VMC. Consultation with the legal counsel of the jurisdiction when initiating or changing such action is advised.

**104.1.1 Transfer of ownership.** In accordance with subdivision C 4 of § 36-105 of the Code of Virginia, if the local building department has initiated an enforcement action against the owner of a building or structure

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and such owner subsequently transfers the ownership of the building or structure to an entity in which the owner holds an ownership interest greater than 50%, the pending enforcement action shall continue to be enforced against the owner.

**104.2 Fees.** In accordance with subdivision C 7 of § 36-105 of the Code of Virginia, fees may be levied by the local governing body in order to defray the cost of enforcement and appeals. For the purposes of this section, "defray the cost" may include the fair and reasonable costs incurred for such enforcement during normal business hours, but shall not include overtime costs unless conducted outside of the normal working hours established by the locality. A schedule of such costs shall be adopted by the local governing body in a local ordinance. A locality shall not charge overtime rate for inspections conducted during the normal business hours established by the locality. Nothing in this provision shall be construed to prohibit a private entity from conducting such inspections, provided the private entity has been approved to perform such inspections in accordance with the written policy of the code official for the locality.

**104.3 State buildings.** In accordance with § 36-98.1 of the Code of Virginia, this code shall be applicable to state-owned buildings and structures. Acting through the Division of Engineering and Buildings, the Department of General Services shall function as the building official for state-owned buildings.

**104.3.1 Certification of state enforcement personnel.** State enforcement personnel shall comply with the applicable requirements of Sections 104.4.2 and 104.4.3 for certification.

Note: Continuing education and periodic training requirements for DHCD certifications are set out in the VCS.

**104.4 Local enforcing agency.** In jurisdictions enforcing this code, the local governing body shall designate the agency within the local government responsible for such enforcement and appoint a code official. The local governing body may also utilize technical assistants to assist the code official in the enforcement of this code. A permanently appointed code official shall not be removed from office except for cause after having been afforded a full opportunity to be heard on specific and relevant charges by and before the appointing authority. DHCD shall be notified by the appointing authority within 30 days of the appointment or release of a permanent or acting code official and within 60 days after retaining or terminating a technical assistant.

Note: Code officials and technical assistants are subject to sanctions in accordance with the VCS.

**104.4.1 Qualifications of code official and technical assistants.** The code official shall have at least five years of building experience as a licensed professional engineer or architect, building, fire or trade inspector, contractor, housing inspector or superintendent of building, fire or trade construction or at least five years of building experience after obtaining a degree in architecture or engineering, with at least three years in responsible charge of work. Any combination of education and experience that would confer equivalent knowledge and ability shall be deemed to satisfy this requirement. The code official shall have general knowledge of sound engineering practice in respect to the design and construction of structures, the basic principles of fire prevention, the accepted requirements for means of egress and the installation of elevators and other service equipment necessary for the health, safety and general welfare of the occupants and the public. The local governing body may establish additional qualification requirements.

A technical assistant shall have at least three years of experience and general knowledge in at least one of the following areas: building construction, building, fire or housing inspections, plumbing, electrical or mechanical trades, fire protection, elevators or property maintenance work. Any combination of education and experience which would confer equivalent knowledge and ability shall be deemed to satisfy this requirement. The locality may establish additional certification requirements.

**104.4.2 Certification of code official and technical assistants.** An acting or permanent code official shall be certified as a code official in accordance with the VCS within one year after being appointed as acting or permanent code official. A technical assistant shall be certified in the appropriate subject area within 18 months after becoming a technical assistant. When required by a locality to have two or more certifications, a technical assistant shall obtain the additional certifications within three years from the date of such requirement.

**Exception:** A code official or technical assistant in place prior to April 1, 1995, shall not be required to meet the certification requirements in this section while continuing to serve in the same capacity in the same locality.

**104.4.3 Noncertified code official.** Except for a code official exempt from certification under the exception to Section 104.4.2, any acting or permanent code official who is not certified as a code official in accordance with the VCS shall attend the core module of the Virginia Building Code Academy or an equivalent course in an individual or regional code academy accredited by DHCD within 180 days of appointment. This requirement is in addition to meeting the certification requirement in Section 104.4.2.

Note: Continuing education and periodic training requirements for DHCD certifications are set out in the VCS.

**104.4.4 Conflict of interest.** The standards of conduct for code officials and technical assistants shall be in accordance with the provisions of the State and Local Government Conflict of Interests Act, Chapter 31 (§ 2.2-3100 et seq.) of Title 2.2 of the Code of Virginia.

**104.4.5 Records.** The local enforcing agency shall retain a record of applications received, permits, certificates, notices and orders issued, fees collected and reports of inspections in accordance with The Library of Virginia's General Schedule Number Six.

**104.5 Powers and duties, generally.** The code official shall enforce this code as set out herein and as interpreted by the State Review Board and shall issue all necessary notices or orders to ensure compliance with the code.

**104.5.1 Delegation of authority.** The code official may delegate powers and duties except where such authority is limited by the local government. When such delegations are made, the code official shall be responsible for assuring that they are carried out in accordance with the provisions of this code.

**104.5.2 Issuance of modifications.** Upon written application by an owner or an owner's agent, the code official may approve a modification of any provision of this code provided the spirit and intent of the code are observed and public health, welfare and safety are assured. The decision of the code official concerning a modification shall be made in writing and the application for a modification and the decision of the code official concerning such modification shall be retained in the permanent records of the local enforcing agency.

**104.5.2.1 Substantiation of modification.** The code official may require or may consider a statement from a professional engineer, architect or other person competent in the subject area of the application as to the equivalency of the proposed modification.

**104.5.3 Inspections.** The code official may inspect buildings or structures to determine compliance with this code and shall carry proper credentials when performing such inspections. The code official is authorized to engage such expert opinion as deemed necessary to report upon unusual, detailed, or complex technical issues in accordance with local policies.

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**104.5.3.1 Observations.** When, during an inspection, the code official or authorized representative observes an apparent or actual violation of another law, ordinance, or code not within the official's authority to enforce, such official shall report the findings to the official having jurisdiction in order that such official may institute the necessary measures.

**104.5.3.2 Approved inspection agencies and individuals.** The code official may accept reports of inspections or tests from individuals or inspection agencies approved in accordance with the code official's written policy required by Section 104.5.3.3. The individual or inspection agency shall meet the qualifications and reliability requirements established by the written policy. Reports of inspections by approved individuals or agencies shall be in writing, shall indicate if compliance with the applicable provisions of this code have been met, and shall be certified by the individual inspector or by the responsible officer when the report is from an agency. Reports of inspections conducted for the purpose of verifying compliance with the requirements of the USBC for elevators, escalators, and related conveyances shall include the name and certification number of the elevator mechanic performing the tests witnessed by the third-party inspector or agency. The code official shall review and approve the report unless there is cause to reject it. Failure to approve a report shall be in writing within five working days of receiving it, stating the reasons for rejection.

**104.5.3.3 Third-party inspectors.** Each code official charged with the enforcement of this code and who accepts third-party reports shall have a written policy establishing the minimum acceptable qualifications for third-party inspectors. The policy shall include the format and time frame required for submission of reports, any prequalification or preapproval requirements before conducting a third-party inspection, and any other requirements and procedures established by the code official.

**104.5.3.4 Qualifications.** In determining third-party qualifications, the code official may consider such items as DHCD inspector certification, other state or national certifications, state professional registrations, related experience, education, and any other factors that would demonstrate competency and reliability to conduct inspections.

**104.5.4 Manufactured home park tenant notification.** If a notice of violation is issued to a manufactured home park owner for violations of this code that jeopardize the health or safety of tenants of the park, a copy of the notice shall be provided to each affected tenant of the manufactured home park. The terms, "manufactured home park" and "owner," as used in this section, shall be as defined in the Manufactured Home Lot Rental Act (Chapter 13.3 (§ 55-248.41 et seq.) of Title 55 of the Code of Virginia).

## SECTION 105 VIOLATIONS

**105.1 Violation a misdemeanor; civil penalty.** In accordance with § 36-106 of the Code of Virginia, it shall be unlawful for any owner or any other person, firm or corporation, on or after the effective date of any code provisions, to violate any such provisions. Any locality may adopt an ordinance that establishes a uniform schedule of civil penalties for violations of specified provisions of the code that are not abated or remedied promptly after receipt of a notice of violation from the local enforcement officer.

Note: See the full text of § 36-106 of the Code of Virginia for additional requirements and criteria pertaining to legal action relative to violations of the code.

**105.2 Notices, reports and orders.** Upon findings by the code official that violations of this code exist, the code official shall issue a correction notice or notice of violation to the owner, tenant or the person responsible for the maintenance of the structure. Work done to correct violations of this code subject to the permit, inspection and approval provisions of the VCC shall not be construed as authorization to extend the time limits established for

compliance with this code. When the owner is not the responsible party to whom the notice of violation or correction notice is issued, a copy of the notice shall also be delivered to the owner.

**105.3 Correction notice.** The correction notice shall be a written notice of the defective conditions. The correction notice shall require correction of the violation within a reasonable time unless an emergency condition exists as provided under the unsafe building provisions of Section 106. Upon request, the correction notice shall reference the code section that serves as the basis for the defects and shall state that such defects shall be corrected and reinspected in a reasonable time designated by the code official.

**105.4 Notice of violation.** If the code official determines there are violations of this code a written notice of violation may be issued to the owner, tenant, or the person responsible for the maintenance or use of the building or structure in lieu of a correction notice as provided for in Section 105.3. In addition, the code official shall issue a notice of violation for any uncorrected violation remaining from a correction notice established in Section 105.3. The code official shall provide the section numbers for any code provisions cited in the notice of violation to the owner, tenant, or the person responsible for the maintenance or use of the building or structure. The notice shall require correction of the violation within a reasonable time. The owner, tenant, or person to whom the notice of violation has been issued shall be responsible for contacting the code official within the timeframe established for any reinspections to assure the violations have been corrected. The code official will be responsible for making such inspection and verifying the violations have been corrected. In addition, the notice of violation shall indicate the right of appeal by referencing the appeals section of this code.

**Exceptions:**

1. Notices issued and legal proceedings or emergency actions taken under Section 106 for unsafe structures, unsafe equipment, or structures unfit for human occupancy.
2. Notices issued for failing to maintain buildings and structures as required by Section 103.2, as evidenced by multiple or repeated violations on the same property are not required to include a compliance deadline for correcting defects.

**105.5 Coordination of inspections.** The code official shall coordinate inspections and administrative orders with any other state or local agencies having related inspection authority and shall coordinate those inspections required by the Virginia Statewide Fire Prevention Code (13VAC5-51) for maintenance of fire protection devices, equipment, and assemblies so that the owners and occupants will not be subjected to numerous inspections or conflicting orders.

Note: The Fire Prevention Code requires the fire official to coordinate such inspections with the code official.

**105.6 Further action when violation not corrected.** If the responsible party has not complied with the notice of violation, the code official may request the legal counsel of the locality to institute the appropriate legal proceedings to restrain, correct or abate the violation or to require the removal or termination of the use of the building or structure involved. In cases where the locality or legal counsel so authorizes, the code official may issue or obtain a summons or warrant.

**105.6.1 Further action for corrected violations.** Compliance with a notice of violation notwithstanding, the code official may request legal proceedings be instituted for prosecution when a responsible party is served with three or more separate notices of violation for the same property within any five consecutive years. Legal proceedings shall not be instituted under this section for violation notices issued pursuant to the initial inspection of the property. Legal proceedings for violations that have been abated in residential rental dwelling units within a multifamily apartment development may only be instituted for such violations that affect safe, decent, or sanitary living conditions.

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**Exception:** Legal proceedings shall not be instituted for violations that have been abated on owner-occupied single family dwellings.

**105.7 Penalties and abatement.** Penalties for violations of this code shall be as set out in § 36-106 of the Code of Virginia. The successful prosecution of a violation of the code shall not preclude the institution of appropriate legal action to require correction or abatement of a violation.

### SECTION 106

#### UNSAFE STRUCTURES OR STRUCTURES UNFIT FOR HUMAN OCCUPANCY

**106.1 General.** This section shall apply to existing structures which are classified as unsafe or unfit for human occupancy. All conditions causing such structures to be classified as unsafe or unfit for human occupancy shall be remedied or as an alternative to correcting such conditions, the structure may be vacated and secured against public entry or razed and removed. Vacant and secured structures shall still be subject to other applicable requirements of this code. Notwithstanding the above, when the code official determines that an unsafe structure or a structure unfit for human occupancy constitutes such a hazard that it should be razed or removed, then the code official shall be permitted to order the demolition of such structures in accordance with applicable requirements of this code.

Note: Structures which become unsafe during construction are regulated under the VCC.

**106.2 Inspection of unsafe or unfit structures.** The code official shall inspect any structure reported or discovered as unsafe or unfit for human habitation and shall prepare a report to be filed in the records of the local enforcing agency and a copy issued to the owner. The report shall include the use of the structure and a description of the nature and extent of any conditions found.

**106.3 Notice of unsafe structure or structure unfit for human occupancy.** When a structure is determined to be unsafe or unfit for human occupancy by the code official, a written notice of unsafe structure or structure unfit for human occupancy shall be issued by personal service to the owner, the owner's agent or the person in control of such structure. The notice shall specify the corrections necessary to comply with this code, or if the structure is required to be demolished, the notice shall specify the time period within which the demolition must occur. Requirements in Section 105.2 for notices of violation are also applicable to notices issued under this section to the extent that any such requirements are not in conflict with the requirements of this section.

Note: Whenever possible, the notice should also be given to any tenants of the affected structure.

**106.3.1 Vacating unsafe structure.** If the code official determines there is actual and immediate danger to the occupants or public, or when life is endangered by the occupancy of an unsafe structure, the code official shall be authorized to order the occupants to immediately vacate the unsafe structure. When an unsafe structure is ordered to be vacated, the code official shall post a notice with the following wording at each entrance: "THIS STRUCTURE IS UNSAFE AND ITS OCCUPANCY (OR USE) IS PROHIBITED BY THE CODE OFFICIAL." After posting, occupancy or use of the unsafe structure shall be prohibited except when authorized to enter to conduct inspections, make required repairs or as necessary to demolish the structure.

**106.4 Posting of notice.** If the notice is unable to be issued by personal service as required by Section 106.3, then the notice shall be sent by registered or certified mail to the last known address of the responsible party and a copy of the notice shall be posted in a conspicuous place on the premises.

**106.5 Posting of placard.** In the case of a structure unfit for human habitation, at the time the notice is issued, a placard with the following wording shall be posted at the entrance to the structure: "THIS STRUCTURE IS UNFIT FOR HABITATION AND ITS USE OR OCCUPANCY HAS BEEN PROHIBITED BY THE CODE OFFICIAL." In the case of an unsafe structure, if the notice is not complied with, a placard with the above wording shall be posted

at the entrance to the structure. After a structure is placarded, entering the structure shall be prohibited except as authorized by the code official to make inspections, to perform required repairs or to demolish the structure. In addition, the placard shall not be removed until the structure is determined by the code official to be safe to occupy, nor shall the placard be defaced.

**106.6 Revocation of certificate of occupancy.** If a notice of unsafe structure or structure unfit for human habitation is not complied with within the time period stipulated on the notice, the code official shall be permitted to request the local building department to revoke the certificate of occupancy issued under the VCC.

**106.7 Vacant and open structures.** When an unsafe structure or a structure unfit for human habitation is open for public entry at the time a placard is issued under Section 106.5, the code official shall be permitted to authorize the necessary work to make such structure secure against public entry whether or not legal action to compel compliance has been instituted.

**106.8 Emergency repairs and demolition.** To the extent permitted by the locality, the code official may authorize emergency repairs to unsafe structures or structures unfit for human habitation when it is determined that there is an imminent danger of any portion of the unsafe structure or structure unfit for human habitation collapsing or falling and when life is endangered. Emergency repairs may also be authorized where there is a code violation resulting in the immediate serious and imminent threat to the life and safety of the occupants. The code official shall be permitted to authorize the necessary work to make the structure temporarily safe whether or not legal action to compel compliance has been instituted. In addition, whenever an owner of an unsafe structure or structure unfit for human habitation fails to comply with a notice to demolish issued under Section 106.3 in the time period stipulated, the code official shall be permitted to cause the structure to be demolished. In accordance with §§ 15.2-906 and 15.2-1115 of the Code of Virginia, the legal counsel of the locality may be requested to institute appropriate action against the property owner to recover the costs associated with any such emergency repairs or demolition and every such charge that remains unpaid shall constitute a lien against the property on which the emergency repairs or demolition were made and shall be enforceable in the same manner as provided in Articles 3 (§ 58.1-3940 et seq.) and 4 (§ 58.1-3965 et seq.) of Chapter 39 of Title 58.1 of the Code of Virginia.

Note: Code officials and local governing bodies should be aware that other statutes and court decisions may impact on matters relating to demolition, in particular whether newspaper publication is required if the owner cannot be located and whether the demolition order must be delayed until the owner has been given the opportunity for a hearing. In addition, historic building demolition may be prevented by authority granted to local historic review boards in accordance with § 15.2-2306 of the Code of Virginia unless determined necessary by the code official.

**106.9 Closing of streets.** When necessary for public safety, the code official shall be permitted to order the temporary closing of sidewalks, streets, public ways or premises adjacent to unsafe or unfit structures and prohibit the use of such spaces.

## SECTION 107

### APPEALS

**107.1 Establishment of appeals board.** In accordance with § 36-105 of the Code of Virginia, there shall be established within each local enforcing agency a LBBCA. Whenever a county or a municipality does not have such a LBBCA, the local governing body shall enter into an agreement with the local governing body of another county or municipality or with some other agency, or a state agency approved by DHCD for such appeals resulting therefrom. Fees may be levied by the local governing body in order to defray the cost of such appeals. The LBBCA for hearing appeals under the VCC shall be permitted to serve as the appeals board required by this section. The locality is responsible for maintaining a duly constituted LBBCA prepared to hear appeals within the time limits established in this section. The LBBCA shall meet as necessary to assure a duly constituted board, appoint officers as necessary, and receive such training on the code as may be appropriate or necessary from staff of the locality.

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**107.2 Membership of board.** The LBBCA shall consist of at least five members appointed by the locality for a specific term of office established by written policy. Alternate members may be appointed to serve in the absence of any regular members and as such, shall have the full power and authority of the regular members. Regular and alternate members may be reappointed. Written records of current membership, including a record of the current chairman and secretary shall be maintained in the office of the locality. In order to provide continuity, the terms of the members may be of different length so that less than half will expire in any one-year period.

**107.3 Officers and qualifications of members.** The LBBCA shall annually select one of its regular members to serve as chairman. When the chairman is not present at an appeal hearing, the members present shall select an acting chairman. The locality or the chief executive officer of the locality shall appoint a secretary to the LBBCA to maintain a detailed record of all proceedings. Members of the LBBCA shall be selected by the locality on the basis of their ability to render fair and competent decisions regarding application of the USBC and shall to the extent possible, represent different occupational or professional fields relating to the construction industry. At least one member should be an experienced builder; at least one member should be an RDP, and at least one member should be an experienced property manager. Employees or officials of the locality shall not serve as members of the LBBCA.

**107.4 Conduct of members.** No member shall hear an appeal in which that member has a conflict of interest in accordance with the State and Local Government Conflict of Interests Act (§ 2.2-3100 et seq. of the Code of Virginia). Members shall not discuss the substance of an appeal with any other party or their representatives prior to any hearings.

**107.5 Right of appeal; filing of appeal application.** Any person aggrieved by the local enforcing agency's application of this code or the refusal to grant a modification to the provisions of this code may appeal to the LBBCA. The applicant shall submit a written request for appeal to the LBBCA within 14 calendar days of the receipt of the decision being appealed. The application shall contain the name and address of the owner of the building or structure and, in addition, the name and address of the person appealing, when the applicant is not the owner. A copy of the code official's decision shall be submitted along with the application for appeal and maintained as part of the record. The application shall be marked by the LBBCA to indicate the date received. Failure to submit an application for appeal within the time limit established by this section shall constitute acceptance of a code official's decision.

**107.6 Meetings and postponements.** The LBBCA shall meet within 30 calendar days after the date of receipt of the application for appeal, except that a period of up to 45 calendar days shall be permitted where the LBBCA has regularly scheduled monthly meetings. A longer time period shall be permitted if agreed to by all the parties involved in the appeal. A notice indicating the time and place of the hearing shall be sent to the parties in writing to the addresses listed on the application at least 14 calendar days prior to the date of the hearing, except that a lesser time period shall be permitted if agreed to by all the parties involved in the appeal. When a quorum of the LBBCA is not present at a hearing to hear an appeal, any party involved in the appeal shall have the right to request a postponement of the hearing. The LBBCA shall reschedule the appeal within 30 calendar days of the postponement, except that a longer time period shall be permitted if agreed to by all the parties involved in the appeal.

**107.7 Hearings and decision.** All hearings before the LBBCA shall be open meetings and the appellant, the appellant's representative, the locality's representative and any person whose interests are affected by the code official's decision in question shall be given an opportunity to be heard. The chairman shall have the power and duty to direct the hearing, rule upon the acceptance of evidence and oversee the record of all proceedings. The LBBCA shall have the power to uphold, reverse, or modify the decision of the official by a concurring vote of a majority of those present. Decisions of the LBBCA shall be final if no further appeal is made. The decision of the LBBCA shall be explained in writing, signed by the chairman and retained as part of the record of the appeal. Copies of the written decision shall be sent to all parties by certified mail. In addition, the written decision shall contain the following wording:

"Any person who was a party to the appeal may appeal to the State Review Board by submitting an application to such Board within 21 calendar days upon receipt by certified mail of the written decision. Application forms are available from the Office of the State Review Board, 600 East Main Street, Richmond, Virginia 23219, (804) 371-7150."



**107.8 Appeals to the State Review Board.** After final determination by the LBBCA in an appeal, any person who was a party to the appeal may further appeal to the State Review Board. In accordance with § 36-98.2 of the Code of Virginia for state-owned buildings and structures, appeals by an involved state agency from the decision of the code official for state-owned buildings or structures shall be made directly to the State Review Board. The application for appeal shall be made to the State Review Board within 21 calendar days of the receipt of the decision to be appealed. Failure to submit an application within that time limit shall constitute an acceptance of the code official's decision. For appeals from a LBBCA, a copy of the code official's decision and the written decision of the LBBCA shall be submitted with the application for appeal to the State Review Board. Upon request by the Office of the State Review Board, the LBBCA shall submit a copy of all pertinent information from the record of the appeal. In the case of appeals involving state-owned buildings or structures, the involved state agency shall submit a copy of the code official's decision and other relevant information with the application for appeal to the State Review Board. Procedures of the State Review Board are in accordance with Article 2 (§ 36-108 et seq.) of Chapter 6 of Title 36 of the Code of Virginia. Decisions of the State Review Board shall be final if no further appeal is made.



## CHAPTER 2

# DEFINITIONS

*Change Section 201.3 of the IPMC to read:*

**201.3 Terms defined in other codes.** Where terms are not defined in this code and are defined in the IBC, IFC, IFGC, IPC, IMC, International Existing Building Code, IRC, International Zoning Code or NFPA 70, such terms shall have the meanings ascribed to them as stated in those codes, except that terms defined in the VCC shall be used for this code and shall take precedence over other definitions.

*Change Section 201.5 of the IPMC to read:*

**201.5 Parts.** Whenever the words "dwelling unit," "dwelling," "premises," "building," "rooming unit," "housekeeping unit," or "story" are stated in this code, they shall be construed as though they were followed by the words "or part thereof."

*Add the following definitions to Section 202 of the IPMC to read:*

**APPLICABLE BUILDING CODE.** The local or statewide building code and referenced standards in effect at the time the building or portion thereof was constructed, altered, renovated or underwent a change of occupancy. See Section 103 for the application of the code.

**MAINTAINED.** To keep unimpaired in an appropriate condition, operation, and continuance as installed in accordance with the applicable building code, or as previously approved, and in accordance with the applicable operational and maintenance provisions of this code.

**STRUCTURE UNFIT FOR HUMAN OCCUPANCY.** An existing structure determined by the code official to be dangerous to the health, safety and welfare of the occupants of the structure or the public because (i) of the degree to which the structure is in disrepair or lacks maintenance, ventilation, illumination, sanitary or heating facilities or other essential equipment, or (ii) the required plumbing and sanitary facilities are inoperable.

**UNSAFE EQUIPMENT.** Unsafe equipment includes any boiler, heating equipment, elevator, moving stairway, electrical wiring or device, flammable liquid containers or other equipment that is in such disrepair or condition that such equipment is determined by the code official to be dangerous to the health, safety and welfare of the occupants of a structure or the public.

**UNSAFE STRUCTURE.** An existing structure (i) determined by the code official to be dangerous to the health, safety and welfare of the occupants of the structure or the public, (ii) that contains unsafe equipment, or (iii) that is so damaged, decayed, dilapidated, structurally unsafe or of such faulty construction or unstable foundation that partial or complete collapse is likely. A vacant existing structure unsecured or open shall be deemed to be an unsafe structure.

*Change the following definition in Section 202 of the IPMC to read:*

## DEFINITIONS

**INFESTATION.** The presence of insects, rodents, vermin, or other pests in sufficient number to adversely affect the structure or health, safety, and welfare of the occupants.

*Delete the following definitions from Section 202 of the IPMC:*

**CONDEMN**

**COST OF DEMOLITION OF EMERGENCY REPAIRS**

**EQUIPMENT SUPPORT**

**INOPERABLE MOTOR VEHICLE**

**LABELED**

**NEGLECT**

**OPENABLE AREA**

**PEST ELIMINATION**

**STRICT LIABILITY OFFENSE**

**ULTIMATE DEFORMATION**

**WORKMANLIKE**

## CHAPTER 3

# GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

*Delete the following sections from Chapter 3 of the IPMC:*

- 301.2 Responsibility.**
- 302.1 Sanitation.**
- 302.4 Weeds.**
- 302.6 Exhaust vents.**
- 302.8 Motor vehicles.**
- 302.9 Defacement of property.**
- 303.2 Enclosures.**
- 304.1.1 Unsafe conditions.**
- 304.18.1 Doors.**
- 304.18.2 Windows.**
- 304.18.3 Basement hatchways.**
- 305.1.1 Unsafe conditions.**
- 306 Component serviceability (all provisions).**
- 308.2 Disposal of rubbish.**
  - 308.2.1 Rubbish storage facilities.**
  - 308.2.2 Refrigerators.**
- 308.3 Disposal of garbage.**
  - 308.3.1 Garbage facilities.**
  - 308.3.2 Containers.**
- 309.2 Owner.**
- 309.3 Single occupant.**
- 309.4 Multiple occupancy.**
- 309.5 Occupant.**

*Change the following sections in Chapter 3 of the IPMC to read:*

**301.1 Scope.** The provisions of this chapter shall govern the minimum conditions for the maintenance of structures and equipment and for the maintenance of exterior property to the extent that this code is applicable.

**301.3 Vacant structures.** Vacant structures shall be maintained in a clean, safe, secure, and sanitary condition as provided for in this code.

**302.2 Grading and drainage.** All premises shall be graded and maintained to protect the foundation walls or slab of the structure from the accumulation and drainage of surface or stagnant water in accordance with the applicable building code.

## GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

**302.3 Sidewalks and driveways.** All sidewalks, walkways, stairs, driveways, parking spaces, and similar spaces regulated under the VCC shall be kept in a proper state of repair and maintained free from hazardous conditions.

**302.5 Rodent harborage.** All structures shall be kept free from rodent harborage and infestation. Structures in which rodents are found shall be promptly exterminated by approved processes that will not be injurious to human health. After extermination, proper precautions shall be taken to prevent reinfestation.

**303.2 Enclosures.** Swimming pool, hot tub, and spa barriers shall be maintained in accordance with the applicable building code or ordinance under which such barriers were constructed.

**304.1 General.** The exterior of a structure shall be maintained in good repair and structurally sound.

**304.3 Premises identification.** Address numbers of buildings shall be maintained in accordance with the applicable building code or when required by ordinance.

**304.7 Roofs and drainage.** The roof and flashing shall be sound, tight, and not have defects that admit rain. Roof drainage shall be adequate to prevent dampness or deterioration in the walls or interior portion of the structure. Roof water shall be discharged in a manner to protect the foundation or slab of buildings and structures from the accumulation of roof drainage.

**304.14 Insect screens.** During the period from April 1 to December 1, every door, window, and other outside opening required for ventilation of habitable rooms, food preparation areas, food service areas, or any areas where products to be included or utilized in food for human consumption are processed, manufactured, packaged, or stored shall be supplied with an approved tightly fitting screen of not less than 16 mesh per inch (16 mesh per 25 mm) and every screen door used for insect control shall have a self-closing device in good working condition.

**Exception:** Screens shall not be required where other approved means, such as mechanical ventilation, air curtains, or insect repellent fans, are used.

**304.18 Building security.** Devices designed to provide security for the occupants and property within, when required by the applicable building code or when provided, shall be maintained unless their removal is approved by the building official.

**304.19 Gates.** To the extent required by the applicable building code or to the extent provided when constructed, exterior gates, gate assemblies, operator systems if provided, and hardware shall be maintained in good condition. Latches at all entrances shall tightly secure the gates.

**305.1 General.** The interior of a structure and equipment therein shall be maintained in good repair, structurally sound, and in a sanitary condition.

**307.1 General.** Handrails and guards required or provided when a building was constructed shall be maintained in accordance with the applicable building code.

**308.1 Accumulation of rubbish or garbage.** The interior of every structure shall be free from excessive accumulation of rubbish or garbage.

**309 Pest Infestation and extermination.**

**309.1 Infestation.** All structures shall be kept free from insect and rodent infestation. Structures in which insects or rodents are found shall be promptly exterminated by approved processes that will not be injurious to human health. After extermination, proper precautions shall be taken to prevent reinfestation.

*Add the following sections to Chapter 3 of the IPMC:*

**305.7 Carbon monoxide alarms.** Carbon monoxide alarms shall be maintained as approved.

**310 Lead-based paint.**

**310.1 General.** Interior and exterior painted surfaces of dwellings and child care facilities, including fences and outbuildings, that contain lead levels equal to or greater than 1.0 milligram per square centimeter or in excess of 0.50% lead by weight shall be maintained in a condition free from peeling, chipping, and flaking paint or removed or covered in an approved manner. Any surface to be covered shall first be identified by an approved warning as to the lead content of such surface.

**311 Aboveground liquid fertilizer storage tanks (ALFST).**

**311.1 General.** ALFSTs shall be maintained in accordance with the requirements of Section 1101.16 of the VEBC and the requirements of the VCC applicable to such ALFSTs when newly constructed and the requirements of the VEBC when undergoing a change of occupancy to an ALFST and when repaired, altered, or reconstructed, including the requirements for inspections and for a secondary containment system.





## CHAPTER 4

# LIGHT, VENTILATION, AND OCCUPANCY LIMITATIONS

*Delete the following sections from Chapter 4 of the IPMC:*

- 401.2 Responsibility.**
- 401.3 Alternative devices.**
- 402.2 Common halls and stairways.**
- 402.3 Other spaces.**
- 403.2 Bathrooms and toilet rooms.**
- 403.5 Clothes dryer exhaust.**

*Change the following sections in Chapter 4 of the IPMC to read:*

**401.1 Scope.** The provisions of this chapter shall govern the maintenance of structures for light, ventilation, and space for occupancy.

**402.1 Natural or artificial light.** Every habitable space, hallway, stairway, bathroom, and other spaces shall be maintained to provide natural or artificial light to the extent required or provided in accordance with the applicable building code.

**403.1 Natural or mechanical ventilation.** Every habitable space, hallway, stairway, bathroom, and other spaces shall be maintained to provide natural or mechanical ventilation to the extent required by the applicable building code.

**403.4 Process ventilation.** Local exhaust systems required by the applicable building code or that are provided that exhaust injurious, toxic, irritating, or noxious fumes, gases, dusts, or mists to the exterior of a building shall be maintained to prevent compromising the required ventilation system.

*Add the following section to Chapter 4 of the IPMC:*

**404.05 Limitation of application of section.** The provisions of Section 404 that address construction aspects of occupancy limitations shall apply only to the extent that such requirements were part of the applicable building code. Operational requirements such as the use of rooms or minimum areas per occupant are part of this code only to the extent that they do not require alterations to be made to a building.



## CHAPTER 5

# PLUMBING REQUIREMENTS

*Change the title of Chapter 5 of the IPMC to "Plumbing Requirements."*

*Delete the following sections from Chapter 5 of the IPMC:*

- 501.2 Responsibility.**
- 502 Required facilities (all provisions).**
- 503 Toilet rooms (all provisions).**
- 505.3 Supply.**
- 505.5.1 Abandonment of systems.**

*Change the following sections in Chapter 5 of the IPMC to read:*

**501.1 General.** The provisions of this chapter shall govern the maintenance of structures for plumbing systems, facilities, and fixtures.

**504.1 General.** Required or provided plumbing systems and facilities shall be maintained in accordance with the applicable building code.

**504.2 Plumbing fixtures.** All plumbing fixtures shall be maintained in a safe, sanitary, and working condition. A kitchen sink shall not be used as a substitute for a required lavatory.

**504.3 Plumbing system hazards.** Where it is found that a plumbing system in a structure constitutes a hazard to the public, the occupants, or the structure, the code official shall require the defects to be corrected to eliminate the hazard.

**505.1 Supply.** Required or provided water supply systems shall be maintained in accordance with the applicable building code. All water supply systems shall be free from obstructions, defects, and leaks.

**505.2 Protection of water supply systems.** Protection of water supply systems shall be provided and maintained in accordance with the applicable building code.

**505.3 Inspection and testing of backflow prevention systems.** Inspection and testing shall comply with Sections 505.3.1 and 505.3.2.

**505.4 Water heating facilities.** Water heating facilities shall be maintained. Combination temperature and pressure-relief valves and relief valve discharge pipes shall be maintained on water heaters.

**505.5 Nonpotable water reuse systems.** Where installed, nonpotable water reuse and rainwater collection and conveyance systems shall be maintained in a safe and sanitary condition. Where such systems are not properly maintained, the systems shall be repaired to provide for safe and sanitary conditions, or the system shall be abandoned in accordance with the following:

## PLUMBING REQUIREMENTS

1. All system piping connecting to a utility provided or private water system shall be removed or disabled. Proper cross-connection control and backwater prevention measures shall comply with the applicable building code.
2. Where required, the distribution piping system shall be replaced with an approved potable water supply piping system.
3. The storage tank shall be secured from accidental access by sealing or locking tank inlets and access points or filling with sand or equivalent.

**506.1 Drainage and venting.** Required or provided sanitary drainage and venting systems shall be maintained in accordance with the applicable building code.

**506.2 Maintenance.** Every building drainage and sewer system shall function properly and be kept free from obstructions, leaks, and defects.

**507.1 General.** Drainage of roofs and paved areas, yards and courts, and other open areas on the premises shall be discharged in a manner to protect the buildings and structures from the accumulation of overland water runoff.

*Add the following sections to Chapter 5 of the IPMC:*

**504.1.1 Public and employee facilities.** Except for periodic maintenance or cleaning, access and use shall be provided to facilities at all times during occupancy of the premises in accordance with the applicable building code.

**504.2.1 Fixture clearances.** Adequate clearances for usage and cleaning of plumbing fixtures shall be maintained as approved when installed.

**505.1.1 Tempered water.** Tempered water shall be supplied to fixtures and facilities when required by the applicable building code.

**505.2.1 Attached hoses.** Shampoo basin faucets, janitor sink faucets, and other hose bibs or faucets to which hoses are attached and left in place shall be protected by an approved atmospheric-type vacuum breaker or an approved permanently attached hose connection vacuum breaker.

**505.3.1 Inspections.** Inspections shall be made of all backflow assemblies and air gaps to determine whether they are operable.

**505.3.2 Testing.** Reduced pressure principle backflow preventer assemblies, double check-valve assemblies, double-detector check valve assemblies, and pressure vacuum breaker assemblies shall be tested at the time of installation, immediately after repairs or relocation and at least annually. The testing procedure shall be performed in accordance with one of the following standards: ASSE 5010-1013-1, Sections 1 and 2; ASSE 5010-1015-1, Sections 1 and 2; ASSE 5010-1015-2; ASSE 5010-1015-3, Sections 1 and 2; ASSE 5010-1015-4, Sections 1 and 2; ASSE 5010-1020-1, Sections 1 and 2; ASSE 5010-1047-1, Sections 1, 2, 3 and 4; ASSE 5010-1048-1, Sections 1, 2, 3 and 4; ASSE 5010-1048-2; ASSE 5010-1048-3, Sections 1, 2, 3 and 4; ASSE 5010-1048-4, Sections 1, 2, 3 and 4; or CAN/CSA B64.10.

## CHAPTER 6

# MECHANICAL AND ELECTRICAL REQUIREMENTS

*Delete the following sections from Chapter 6 of the IPMC:*

**601.2 Responsibility.**

**603.6 Energy conservation devices.**

**604.2 Service.**

**604.3.2 Abatement of electrical hazards associated with fire exposure.**

*Change the following sections in Chapter 6 of the IPMC to read:*

**601.1 General.** The provisions of this chapter shall govern the maintenance of mechanical and electrical facilities and equipment.

**602 Heating and cooling facilities.**

**602.1 Facilities required.** Heating and cooling facilities shall be maintained and operated in structures as required by this section.

**602.2 Heat supply.** Every owner and operator of a Group R-2 apartment building or other residential building who rents, leases, or lets one or more dwelling unit, rooming unit, dormitory, or guestroom on terms, either expressed or implied, to furnish heat to the occupants thereof shall supply heat during the period from October 15 to May 1 to maintain a temperature of not less than 68°F (20°C) in all habitable rooms, bathrooms, and toilet rooms. The code official may also consider modifications as provided in Section 104.5.2 when requested for unusual circumstances or may issue notice approving building owners to convert shared heating and cooling piping HVAC systems 14 calendar days before or after the established dates when extended periods of unusual temperatures merit modifying these dates.

**Exception:** When the outdoor temperature is below the winter outdoor design temperature for the locality, maintenance of the minimum room temperature shall not be required provided that the heating system is operating at its full design capacity. The winter outdoor design temperature for the locality shall be as indicated in Appendix D of the IPC.

**602.3 Occupiable work spaces.** Indoor occupiable work spaces shall be supplied with heat during the period from October 1 to May 15 to maintain a minimum temperature of 65°F (18°C) during the period the spaces are occupied.

**Exceptions:**

1. Processing, storage, and operation areas that require cooling or special temperature conditions.
2. Areas in which persons are primarily engaged in vigorous physical activities.

**602.4 Cooling supply.** Every owner and operator of a Group R-2 apartment building who rents, leases, or lets one or more dwelling units, rooming units, or guestrooms on terms, either expressed

## MECHANICAL AND ELECTRICAL REQUIREMENTS

or implied, to furnish cooling to the occupants thereof shall supply cooling during the period from May 15 to October 1 to maintain a temperature of not more than 77°F (25°F) in all habitable rooms. The code official may also consider modifications as provided in Section 104.5.2 when requested for unusual circumstances or may issue notice approving building owners to convert shared heating and cooling piping HVAC systems 14 calendar days before or after the established dates when extended periods of unusual temperatures merit modifying these dates.

**Exception:** When the outdoor temperature is higher than the summer design temperature for the locality, maintenance of the room temperature shall not be required provided that the cooling system is operating at its full design capacity. The summer outdoor design temperature for the locality shall be as indicated in the IECC.

**603.1 Mechanical equipment and appliances.** Required or provided mechanical equipment, appliances, fireplaces, solid fuel-burning appliances, cooking appliances, chimneys, vents, and water heating appliances shall be maintained in compliance with the code under which the appliances, system, or equipment was installed, kept in safe working condition, and capable of performing the intended function.

**603.2 Removal of combustion products.** Where required by the code under which installed, fuel-burning equipment and appliances shall be connected to an approved chimney or vent.

**603.5 Combustion air.** Where required by the code under which installed, a supply of air for complete combustion of the fuel shall be provided for the fuel-burning equipment.

**Section 604.1 Electrical system.** Required or provided electrical systems and facilities shall be maintained in accordance with the applicable building code.

**604.3 Electrical system hazards.** Where it is found that the electrical system in a structure constitutes a hazard to the occupants or the structure by reason of deterioration or damage or for similar reasons, the code official shall require the defects to be corrected to eliminate the hazard.

**604.3.1.1 Electrical equipment.** Electrical distribution equipment, motor circuits, power equipment, transformers, wire, cable, flexible cords, wiring devices, ground fault circuit interrupters, surge protectors, molded case circuit breakers, low-voltage fuses, luminaires, ballasts, motors, and electronic control, signaling, and communication equipment that have been exposed to water shall be replaced in accordance with the provisions of the VEBC.

**Exception:** The following equipment shall be allowed to be repaired or reused where an inspection report from the equipment manufacturer, an approved representative of the equipment manufacturer, a third-party inspector per Section 113.7 of the VCC, or an electrical engineer indicates that the exposed equipment has not sustained damage that requires replacement:

1. Enclosed switches, rated 600 volts or less;
2. Busway, rated 600 volts or less;
3. Panelboards, rated 600 volts or less;
4. Switchboards, rated 600 volts or less;
5. Fire pump controllers, rated 600 volts or less;
6. Manual and magnetic motor controllers;
7. Motor control centers;

8. Alternating current high-voltage circuit breakers;
9. Low-voltage power circuit breakers;
10. Protective relays, meters, and current transformers;
11. Low-voltage and medium-voltage switchgear;
12. Liquid-filled transformers;
13. Cast-resin transformers;
14. Wire or cable that is suitable for wet locations and whose ends have not been exposed to water;
15. Wire or cable, not containing fillers, that is suitable for wet locations and whose ends have not been exposed to water;
16. Luminaires that are listed as submersible;
17. Motors; or
18. Electronic control, signaling, and communication equipment.

**604.3.2.1 Electrical equipment.** Electrical switches, receptacles and fixtures, including furnace, water heating, security system and power distribution circuits, that have been exposed to fire shall be replaced in accordance with the provisions of the VEBC.

**Exception:** Electrical switches, receptacles and fixtures that shall be allowed to be repaired or reused where an inspection report from the equipment manufacturer or an approved representative of the equipment manufacturer, a third party licensed or certified electrician, or an electrical engineer indicates that the equipment has not sustained damage that requires replacement.

**605.1 Electrical components.** Electrical equipment, wiring, and appliances shall be maintained in accordance with the applicable building code.

**605.2 Power distribution and receptacles.** Required or provided power circuits and receptacles shall be maintained in accordance with the applicable building code, and ground fault and arc-fault circuit interrupter protection shall be provided where required by the applicable building code. All receptacle outlets shall have the appropriate faceplate cover for the location when required by the applicable building code.

**605.3 Lighting distribution and luminaires.** Required or provided lighting circuits and luminaires shall be maintained in accordance with the applicable building code.

**605.4 Flexible cords.** Flexible cords shall not be run through doors, windows, or cabinets or concealed within walls, floors, or ceilings.

**606.1 General.** Elevators, dumbwaiters, and escalators shall be maintained in compliance with ASME A17.1. The most current certificate of inspection shall be on display at all times within the elevator or attached to the escalator or dumbwaiter, be available for public inspection in the office of the building operator, or be posted in a publicly conspicuous location approved by the code official. Where not displayed in the elevator or attached on the escalator or dumbwaiter, there shall be a notice of where the certificate of inspection is available for inspection. An annual periodic inspection and test is required of elevators and escalators. A locality shall be permitted to require a six-month periodic inspection and test. All periodic inspections shall be performed in accordance with Section 8.11 of ASME A17.1. The code official may also provide for such inspection by an approved agency or through agreement with other local certified elevator inspectors. An approved agency includes any individual, partnership, or corporation who has met the certification requirements established by the VCS.

## MECHANICAL AND ELECTRICAL REQUIREMENTS

*Add the following sections to Chapter 6 of the IPMC:*

1. Section 602.2.1 Prohibited use. In dwelling units subject to Section 602.2, one or more unvented room heaters shall not be used as the sole source of comfort heat in a dwelling unit.
2. Section 603.7 Fuel tanks and systems. Fuel gas or combustible or flammable liquid containers, tanks, and piping systems shall be maintained in compliance with the code under which they were installed, kept in safe working condition, and capable of performing the intended function, or removed or abandoned in accordance with the Virginia Statewide Fire Prevention Code.
3. Section 607.2 Clothes dryer exhaust duct. Required or provided clothes dryer exhaust systems shall be maintained in accordance with the applicable building code.



## CHAPTER 7

# FIRE SAFETY REQUIREMENTS

*Delete the following sections from Chapter 7 of the IPMC:*

- 701.2 Responsibility.**
- 704.5 Fire department connection.**
- 704.6.1 Where required.**
  - 704.6.1.1 Group R-1.**
  - 704.6.1.2 Groups R-2, R-3, R-4, and I-1.**
  - 704.6.1.3 Installation near cooking appliances.**
  - 704.6.1.4 Installation near bathrooms.**
- 704.6.2 Interconnection.**
- 704.6.3 Power source.**
- 704.6.4 Smoke detection system.**
- 704.7 Single-station and multiple-station smoke alarms.**

*Change the following sections in Chapter 7 of the IPMC:*

**701.1 General.** The provisions of this chapter shall govern the maintenance of fire safety facilities and equipment.

**702.1 General.** The means of egress system shall be maintained in accordance with the applicable building code and Chapter 10 of the SFPC to provide a safe, continuous, and unobstructed path of travel from any point in a building or structure to the public way.

**702.2 Aisles.** The required width of aisles shall be maintained in accordance with the applicable building code.

**702.3 Doors.** Means of egress doors shall be maintained and, to the extent required by the code in effect at the time of construction, shall be readily openable from the side from which egress is to be made without the need for keys, special knowledge, or effort.

**702.4 Emergency escape openings.** Required emergency escape openings shall be maintained in accordance with the code in effect at the time of construction and to the extent required by the code in effect at the time of construction shall be operational from the inside of the room without the use of keys or tools. Bars, grilles, grates, or similar devices are permitted to be placed over emergency escape and rescue openings provided the minimum net clear opening size complies with the code that was in effect at the time of construction and such devices shall be releasable or removable from the inside without the use of a key, tool, or force greater than that which is required for normal operation of the escape and rescue opening.

**704.1 General.** Systems, devices, and equipment to detect a fire, actuate an alarm, or suppress or control a fire or any combination thereof shall be maintained in an operable condition at all times.

## FIRE SAFETY REQUIREMENTS

**704.1.1 Maintenance and alterations.** Fire protection systems shall be maintained in accordance with the original installation standards for that system. Alterations and repairs to fire protection systems shall be done in accordance with the applicable building code and the applicable standards.

**704.1.2 Required fire protection systems.** Fire protection systems shall be repaired, operated, tested, and maintained in accordance with this code. A fire protection system for which a design option, exception, or reduction to the provisions of this code or the applicable building code has been granted shall be considered to be a required system.

**704.1.3 Fire protection systems.** Fire protection systems shall be maintained in accordance with the Statewide Fire Prevention Code.

**704.3.1 Preplanned impairment programs.** Preplanned impairments shall be authorized by the impairment coordinator. Before authorization is given, a designated individual shall be responsible for verifying that all of the following procedures have been implemented:

1. The extent and expected duration of the impairment have been determined.
2. The areas or buildings involved have been inspected, and the increased risks determined.
3. Recommendations have been submitted to management or the building owner or manager.
4. The fire department has been notified.
5. The insurance carrier, the alarm company, the building owner or manager, and other authorities having jurisdiction have been notified.
6. The supervisors in the areas to be affected have been notified.
7. A tag impairment system has been implemented.
8. Necessary tools and materials have been assembled on the impairment site.

**704.4 Removal of or tampering with equipment.** It shall be unlawful for any person to remove, tamper with, or otherwise disturb any fire hydrant, fire detection and alarm system, fire suppression system, or other fire appliance required by this code or the applicable building code except for the purpose of extinguishing fire, for training purposes, for recharging or making necessary repairs, or where approved by the fire code official.

**704.4.2 Removal of existing occupant-use hose lines.** The fire code official is authorized to permit the removal of existing occupant-use hose lines where all of the following conditions exist:

1. Installation is not required by this code or the applicable building code.
2. The hose line would not be utilized by trained personnel or the fire department.
3. The remaining outlets are compatible with local fire department fittings.

**704.6 Single-station and multiple-station smoke alarms.** Required or provided single-station and multiple-station smoke alarms shall be maintained in accordance with the applicable building code.

