

# CODES & STANDARDS®

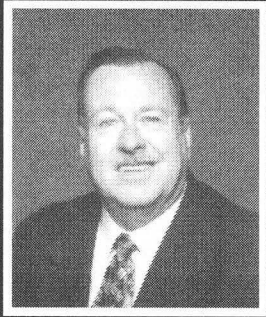
Monthly digest of recent events in model codes and standards affecting design professionals, code officials and industry.

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## WHAT THE FUTURE LOOKS LIKE

With a new government administration, here is what I see for the future of our industry.

- ◆ **REGULATIONS** - You will see less Federal interference with construction and safety requirements on the state and local level. Power will be returned to the states and local government as it should be.
- ◆ Expect to see **ADA** permit compliance in lieu of direct lawsuits. **OSHA** violators will be given more time for compliance instead of going directly for fines. The new administration will push for more business friendly compliance methods. 
- ◆ **HOUSING** - Tiny houses and multigenerational homes will become more popular. The Appendix V of the 2018 *International Residential Code* will have a section for tiny house code requirements. The concept of entire generations (children, parents, grand children) all living under one roof is trending. Although it is one house, there are separate amenities for each area such as bathrooms, kitchen and bedrooms. The commons areas are where the families will meet. They all share expenses. This living concept for years was known as a "family compound". Senior-friendly housing market will also boom due to the baby boom generation.
- ◆ **SKILLED WORKERS** - The recent recession robbed the construction industry of skilled craftsmen and workers. They either moved on to other positions or changed professions. What you will now see is an influx of unskilled construction workers needed to fill the gap. That means builders, designers and code officials will have to inspect their projects more.
- ◆ **INFRASTRUCTURE** - Expect \$1 trillion for repairs and construction at airports, urban water systems and deplapidated infrastructure of bridges, roads and other public ways. Many energy efficiency programs will be modified.

Of course, these are just my observations. We are very busy consulting on new projects and seeing an increase in commercial construction. How about your business? Tell me how you are doing.

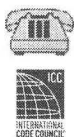
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ASK KELLY ...



**QUESTION? - “Does a pizza oven require an automatic fire extinguishing system?”**

**ANSWER:** Only grease laden cooking appliances require fire extinguishing systems. A pizza oven alone does not meet the description. However, some places cook wings and other grease laden meals in the pizza oven. If that is the case, then a fire extinguishing system is required.

**QUESTION? - “Do public and employee wash basins require hot water to be provided?”**

**ANSWER:** Many building owners have turned- off the hot water in their sinks to save on energy costs. However, the code does require both hot and cold running water.

**QUESTION? - “When can a mezzanine exceed the one-third of the room areas rule?”**

**ANSWER:** The mezzanine can be fifty percent (50%) of the room if the building is **Type I** or **Type II** construction, fully fire sprinklered and provided with emergency voice/alarm communication system.

**QUESTION? - “What is the construction classification of membrane structures?”**

**ANSWER:** Non-combustible structures are **Type II-B**. Combustible structures are **Type V-B**.

**QUESTION? - “Our building dept. has submitted our plan review comments to the architect with our findings. It was NOT APPROVED. The architect has responded with a letter stating “Will Comply” to each item of our report. Is that acceptable for a CONDITIONAL APPROVAL?”**

**ANSWER:** No, that is not acceptable. You know they will have to comply, but what you need to know are the architectural and engineering specifics about how they are going to accomplish compliance.

**QUESTION? - “We have a three story atrium with an elevator shaft in the middle. Does that shaft have to be fire-rated?”**

**ANSWER:** No, it does not. It is within the atrium enclosure and therefore rating the elevator shaft would serve no purpose.

**QUESTION? - “How is the minimum required headroom within all parts of a stairway to be measured?”**

**ANSWER:** The minimum required headroom is represented by a sloped line parallel to and located 6ft.-8in. vertically above the reference line. It’s 6ft.-6in. for spiral stairways.



**DO YOU HAVE A CODE QUESTION?** Just call me at 1-800-950-2633 or e-mail:  
[codexperts@aol.com](mailto:codexperts@aol.com).

*"CODE WATCH "*

**CANADA** - Their national building codes will be changing over the next five years to adapt to the effects of climate change. The National Research Council (NRC), which sets "model codes" for building, energy, plumbing and fire, has started working on updating some (or potentially all) of those documents to reflect the fact that **Canada** is seeing more heavy rain, floods, high winds, snow, ice, temperature swings and all-around extreme weather. The NRC's "model" codes aren't the law of the land. But they do provide a common blueprint on which local building codes are modeled, and then adopted into law by provinces and individual municipalities. This system, put into place nearly a century ago, prevents a patchwork of different regulations from cropping up across the country.

**FEDERAL** - The Fire Sprinkler Incentive Act (S.602 & H.R. 1481) has been introduced to Congress to increase the tax incentive for building owners to retrofit their properties with fire sprinkler systems. First introduced in 2003 following the deadly Station Nightclub fire the bill amends the **IRS** code to include fire sprinkler retrofit as Section 179 property. The current depreciation schedule is 39-years in a commercial building and 27-1/2 years in a residential building.

**ICC** - The International Code Council (ICC) and the National Onsite Wastewater Recycling Association (NOWRA) will co-publish the *International Private Sewage Disposal Code*. This **ICC** code is currently adopted within 17 states and 102 jurisdictions.

**KENTUCKY** - The Governor signed a bill that would prohibit contractors from offering gifts, rebates or referral fees of more than \$100. Damaging a roof to land a repair job would be a specific crime and the homeowners could sue for twice the value of the actual loss plus attorney fees.

**MARYLAND** - House Bill 1311 and Senate Bill 722 would regulate combustible wood construction in low to mid-rise residential buildings throughout the state. Still in the testimony process.

**NFPA** - *NFPA 350 Safe Confined Space Entry and Work* is a new standard for complying with these dangerous and deadly conditions. The new standard references hazards that are inherent, introduced or adjacent to the confined space. Unlike **OSHA** requirements, this standard provides "how to" compliance solutions. Many deaths are reported in confined spaces not just industrial, but hospitals, schools and other commercial properties.

**WISCONSIN** - All building depts. will be required to electronically report building permits for one-and-two family dwellings effective January 2, 2018.

➤ The State is again proposing to exclude Arc Fault and Ground Fault Circuit Interruption (AFCI/GFCI) devices from the electrical code. The Governor "pulled the plug" in 2012 from similar attempts to remove these devices from the state code.

## LAW REVIEW



**IOWA** - The Dyerville city council voted to rezone the area containing the *Field of Dreams* movie site from agricultural to commercial in order to facilitate the development of a baseball and softball complex. Opponents claimed the loss of tourism at movie site as one of the many threats to the city's growth. The Court ruled in favor of the City Council vote.

**Reference:** *Residential and Agricultural Advisory Committee v. Dyersville City Council, 2016 WL 7175256 (IA 12/9/2016).*

**LOUISIANA** - - Mississippi contractors allege the plans prepared by a New Orleans architect exposed them to liability. The plaintiffs hold the architect responsible because the defendant allegedly defectively prepared for the construction plans and failed to supervise and administer work on the project.

**Reference:** *U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Louisiana - Case Number 2:16-cv-16560*

## CRIMES & PUNISHMENT



**OAKLAND, CA.** - Further investigation to the **Ghost Ship** fire in December 2016 that killed 36 persons found that the owner was aware of electrical code violations. The building was receiving power from three adjoining tenants by running cords through a hole in the wall that supplied the building.

## In Brief....



- The "911" call system did not come to the U.S. until 1968.
- More women are becoming fire chiefs and police chiefs. It's about time we recognized the other half of the population for their expertise. The **City of Phoenix, AZ** has both a woman fire chief and police chief.

Dear Client: We had to combine this edition (Feb/Mar) due to certain circumstances. As a BONUS, I have attached our **2015 Fire & Life Safety Matrix** indicating where fire sprinklers, standpipes, fire alarms and other emergency devices are required in the *I-Codes*.

Kelly P. Reynolds

*"Education Is When You Read The Fine Print;  
Experience Is What You Get When You Don't."*