



HOWARD COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF INSPECTIONS, LICENSES AND PERMITS

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Date: March 27, 2025

To: Brandee Ganz, Chief Administrative Officer
Department of County Administration

From: Robert Frances, P.E., Director *Robert J. Frances*
Department of Inspections, Licenses, & Permits

Subject: Testimony Regarding Adoption of 2024 Building Codes, 2024 International Plumbing Code, 2024 Swimming Pool and Spa Code and 2024 Property Maintenance Code for Rental Housing

The Department of Inspections, Licenses, & Permits has proposed legislation to adopt the 2024 version of the Howard County Building Code. The intent of this legislation is to update the model codes used as the basis of the Howard County Building Code, to the most recent editions. This will keep Howard County up to date with the latest codes and standards that are being used in the construction industry. All the codes that are proposed can be viewed online with links provided on the Howard County website.

This adoption will include the 2024 Editions of the following model codes; International Building Code, International Residential Code, International Plumbing Code, International Energy Conservation Code, International Mechanical Code, International Swimming Pool and Spa Code, and the International Property Maintenance Code scoped to apply to rental properties and older buildings that may have structural concerns. The amendments as proposed enable us to stay current with the most up to date construction codes and allow us to maintain our current construction practices.

The most significant amendments and changes to the current code are:

- 1) Adoption of the 2024 International Energy Conservation Code will result in 7.80% energy savings, over the 2021 version, as determined by the Department of Energy.
- 2) The County has been mandated by State law to adopt the current version of the International Swimming Pool and Spa Code for all commercial and residential pool installations.
- 3) Language was added to clarify exemptions for permits to exclude any structure located within the floodplain. There will not be any exemptions as this is a requirement from FEMA.
- 4) To update codes that deal with the new federal mandate for flammable A2L refrigerants.

Fiscal Impact

The adoption of these updates to the 2024 International Codes will not have any fiscal impact on the County. There will not be a need for additional staff to enforce these requirements at this time. All training will be handled within the Department's normal training and certification methods.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me on extension x3946.

CC: Don Mock, P.E., Chief of Plan Review
Jennifer Sager, County Administration