

CB 9 - 2015
CB 10 - 2015



HOWARD COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF INSPECTIONS, LICENSES AND PERMITS

3430 Courthouse Drive ■ Ellicott City, Maryland 21043 ■ 410-313-2433

Robert J. Frances, P.E., Director
bfrances@howardcountymd.gov

FAX 410-313-3298
TDD 410-313-2323

Subject: Testimony Regarding Adoption of 2015 Building Codes and 2014 National Electrical Code

To: Lonnie Robbins
Chief Administrative Officer

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

Date: February 19, 2015

The Department of Inspections, Licenses, and Permits has proposed legislation to adopt the 2015 version of the Howard County Building Code. The intent of this legislation is to update the model codes with the most recent editions. This will keep Howard County up to date with the latest codes that are currently being used in the construction industry.

This code adoption will also update the International Energy Conservation Code to the 2015 Edition (IECC). By State law, we are not allowed to adopt amendments that lessen the requirements of the IECC. This edition did not increase energy efficiency that has been the trend in the two previous editions of the code.

The Department of Inspections, Licenses, and Permits has proposed legislation to adopt the 2014 Edition of the National Electrical Code (NEC) as the Howard County Electrical Code. We have made very few changes, mostly corrective language to maintain current construction practices. The only significant amendment change is delaying the implementation of arc fault circuit interrupters in kitchens and laundry areas to allow industry products to become more readily available.

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. I have attached a detailed list of all code changes that were made and are different from the previously approved code amendments. If you have any questions, I can be reached at ext 3946.

Copy: Donald L. Mock, P.E., Chief, DILP Plan Review
Jennifer Sager, County Administration

Proposed Code Changes to the Building Code and Electrical Code

The Department of Inspections, Licenses, and Permits propose the following changes to the Howard County Building Code.

- 1) Update all code references from the 2012 Edition to the 2015 Edition.
- 2) Section 105.2 is eliminating the current amendment for fences greater than 6 feet high and going with the National Standard of 7 feet high for when a permit is required.
- 3) Removed current amendment to Section 310.3-310.5 because the National Standard now addresses the issue without the local amendments being required.
- 4) Sections 903.2.1.6 and 903.2.1.7 were added to the 2015 IBC. Those provisions refer to assembly occupancies on roofs and multiple fire areas and require sprinklers for occupancy loads greater than 300. These new sections are inconsistent with past adopted local amendments that have required sprinklers for occupancy loads greater than 100 for assembly occupancies. This bill includes local amendments consistent with previously adopted local amendments to change the occupant load from 300 to 100 for these new sections.
- 5) Current amendment to Section 910.2.1 was deleted because the National Code has come into line with our past amendment. Table 910.2.2 was added from the 2012 Edition of the code because the new edition references a Table in the International Fire Code, which is a code we do not adopt.
- 6) Table 1607.1 was updated to conform to a County roof design load that has been in effect for over 30 years.
- 7) Section R302.2 was updated to maintain current construction practices regarding separation walls in townhouses.
- 8) Section R101.2.3 and R326.1 updated to maintain current code requirements for swimming pools without having to adopt an additional code that addresses swimming pools.
- 9) M1503.1 of the International Residential Code and 402.1 of the International Mechanical Code added another option to cross ventilation that will allow a window within 12 feet of the range cooking surface as an acceptable venting alternative.

Proposed Changes to the Electrical regulations and 2014 National Electrical Code

- 1) Section 3.202 was updated to change the qualifications for Electrical Board members to allow four licensed contractors instead of two licensed contractors. The general public representatives were changed from four to just two members from the general public. This will put the County in line with the state board and make it easier to find qualified members for the electrical board.
- 2) Section 3.208 revised to reflect current practices in administering the exam.
- 3) Section 210.12 was amended in exception number (2) to allow delay enforcement of this Section until January 1, 2017 because currently the industry has not adequately produced the product needed at this time to meet the requirements of this Section.