

2012 CODES

Building, Existing Building, Residential, Mechanical,
Fuel Gas, and Plumbing

Legislation adopts 6 codes

- Building
- Existing Building
- Residential
- Mechanical
- Fuel Gas
- Plumbing.
- Energy and Fire are related, but heard at different times.
- All will take effect on the same day.

Residential Code

- Covers single family residences, duplexes, townhouses up to 3 stories, and buildings accessory to them
- New and existing buildings
- Local amendments must be approved by the State Building Code Council if they would affect construction of single family buildings, and other residential buildings up to two stories with 4 or fewer units

Building Code

- Governs all buildings that aren't within the scope of the Residential Code
- Regulates new construction
- 2012 is the first edition that won't cover alterations, additions, change of occupancy, repair
 - ▣ Seattle is moving those provisions to Existing Building Code
 - ▣ The same change will be made to the 2015 edition of the model codes

Existing Building Code

- Covers all work on existing buildings except buildings within scope of the Residential Code

Mechanical Code

- Applies to HVAC equipment (heating, ventilating and air conditioning), refrigeration systems, and other heat-producing equipment such as clothes dryers, cooking hoods that isn't within the scope of the Fuel Gas Code

Fuel Gas Code

- Applies to the same equipment as the Mechanical Code if it is powered by fuel gas

Plumbing Code

- Applies to plumbing systems, including piping and fixtures, after the utility connection with the building's system

Energy Code

- Energy conservation requirements for
 - ▣ Building envelope (exterior walls, roofs, windows, doors, skylights)
 - ▣ HVAC equipment
 - ▣ Lighting
 - ▣ Service-water heating equipment and piping.
- Divided into 2 separate “codes” for nonresidential and residential (defined as single family residences, duplexes, townhouses, and other residential buildings up to 3 stories tall.)
- This committee will consider Energy Code later this month

Fire Code

- Includes provisions for fire protection systems in new buildings (fire sprinklers, fire alarms, etc.) and requirements for operation of certain activities such as use of hazardous materials, dry cleaning, welding, and many more
- 2012 Seattle Fire Code approved by Public Safety Committee in July

State law

- Enforcement is mandated by the State Building Code Act, RCW 19.27 and the State Energy Related Standards, RCW 19.27A. (Energy Code briefing is scheduled for August 15.)
- State Building Code Council, an agency within the Washington Dept. of Enterprise Services, adopts with amendments
- State codes took effect on July 1, 2013 elsewhere in Washington
- Cities and counties are given limited authority to make amendments
- The Seattle Fire Code is part of this group of codes
 - 2012 SFC was approved by the Public Safety Committee in July
 - Enforced by Fire Department, coordinated with DPD

Model codes

- All are based on model codes that are developed by national organizations, adopted across the US and internationally
- Six are “International” codes enforced by DPD, and published by International Code Council (ICC)
- Plumbing Code enforced by Public Health Seattle-King County, published by International Association of Plumbing and Mechanical Officials (IAPMO)

Seattle amendments

- Most of the amendments and model code provisions are unchanged from current 2009 codes
- Changes in amendments are listed in fiscal note attachment for each bill
- Seattle's building code has a long history compared to the state
 - ▣ First Seattle building code adopted approximately 1893 (30 pages)
 - ▣ The first Washington state building code was adopted in the 1970s
- Seattle codes have more amendments than state codes, in part because of our longer experience having a building code
- Many Seattle amendments clarify model code text, are early adoptions of revisions from 2015 editions of the model codes, and Seattle codifies alternative methods of complying so everyone knows about them.

Highlights of amendments

- All codes have more complete provisions for ‘vesting’
 - ▣ Clarifies which editions of codes apply to permit applications.
 - ▣ Especially important during slow economic periods in which many applications are inactive.

Building Code

- Several “green code” provisions are added. Some were developed in collaboration with 10-12 other jurisdictions in the Puget Sound region
 - ▣ Require documentation of recycling and reuse of construction waste
 - ▣ Allow existing buildings to be 4 inches taller and closer to property lines for the purpose of adding insulation (does not affect zoning setbacks)
 - ▣ Require permits for reroofing so DPD can check that reroofing complies with Energy Code for roof insulation
 - ▣ Protect construction materials from moisture during building construction
 - ▣ In buildings with a floor more than 120 feet above grade, a second “fire service access elevator” is required with features that assist firefighters
- Amendments adapting hazardous materials regulations for research laboratories. Developed by with affected industries, building owners, OED, SFD and DPD

Existing Building Code

- All existing buildings provisions are from Building Code to the Seattle Existing Building Code (SEBC).
- The SEBC has 1 more compliance method than the Building Code. (The additional method predominates in other parts of the country.)
- 2015 International Codes will be arranged like this

Residential Code

- A provision is added establishing a threshold size at which permits are required for small cisterns and other water tanks to accommodate the growing use of cisterns to collect rainwater
- Provisions are added to clarify that accessory dwelling units are within the scope of the IRC, and fire sprinklers are not required
- A model code change requires fire protection of floors to reduce the risk collapse during a fire

Plumbing Code

- First new Seattle edition of the UPC that has been adopted in several years. State codes have been enforced as required by RCW 19.27
- Includes a chapter on administration and enforcement similar to the other Seattle codes
- Water conservation and pollution-reduction measures are added
 - ▣ Drains for nonwater urinals must connect to a branch drain serving water-using fixtures upstream of the nonwater urinal to help flush the urinal drains
 - ▣ Trap primers must be served by nonpotable water where available
 - ▣ Trap primers may not use more than 30 gallons of water per year
 - ▣ Several provisions regulate water usage by automatic irrigation systems
 - ▣ Provisions reduce pollution from drainage from floors of parking garages

Mechanical and Fuel Gas Codes

- Revisions to these codes are mostly updates to existing provisions, and modifications of specific detailed provisions