



**City of Houston
Building Inspection
CODE WORD 2012**

INTERPRETATIONS AND APPLICATIONS OF
THE HOUSTON ADOPTED CODES
*2012 IBC, 2012 IRC, 2014 NEC, 2012 UMC, 2012 UPC,
2009 IECC and ASHRAE 90.1-2007*

Section 104.1 of the Building Code states: "The building official is hereby authorized and directed to enforce the provisions of this code. The building official shall have the authority to render interpretations of this code and to adopt policies and procedures in order to clarify the application of its provisions. Such interpretations, policies and procedures shall be in compliance with the intent and purpose of this code."

In compliance with the intent of this section, documents are published which are referred to as CODE WORDS. The updated series of these documents herein will be referred to as [CODE WORD 2012](#) and will replace and supersede all previous CODE WORD documents.

The purpose of CODE WORDS is to provide a single source of written policies, procedures, and information to aid in the successful administration of the Building Code and city ordinances and to promote consistent, uniform practices.

The CODE WORD 2012 documents and additional information are available on the Houston Permitting Center website located at: www.houstonpermittingcenter.org



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CW No:	2012-B01	Page:	1	of	1
PUBLICATION:	February 14, 1989				
SUBJECT:	Residential Setback				
CODE(S):	Residential & Building				
SECTION(S)	R102 (IRC) and 102 (IBC)				

As established by Planning and Development, the location of residences relative to the frontal setback line will be considered in compliance when the outside face of the front wall is behind the setback line. Eaves and gutter overhangs, bay windows, and other limited architectural protrusions into the setback area are acceptable.

Approved:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Earl N. Greer".

Earl N. Greer, Building Official



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CW No:	2012-B02	Page:	1	of	1
PUBLICATION:	February 1, 1996				
SUBJECT:	Existing Transit Shed				
CODE(S):	Building				
SECTION(S)	102.6 and 311				

An existing transit shed shall be classified as a Group S, Division 1 occupancy as provided in Section 311 of the building code. It is assumed that such use was legal at the time of construction and complied with the codes at that time, as addressed in Section 102.6 of the building code.

A new building or change of use shall be classified according to its use or character under the current building code, subject to section 511.

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CW No:	2012-B03	Page:	1	of	1
PUBLICATION:	August 6, 1987				
SUBJECT:	Existing Mechanical Room Ceilings				
CODE(S):	Building				
SECTION(S)	102.6				

Several methods were approved or accepted by the Building Official in the past to protect the structure within the mechanical room ceilings. All existing methods will be allowed to continue provided that the mechanical room is not part of a vertical opening.

All vertical openings must be protected as required by Appendix L, Life Safety Requirements for Existing Buildings, and the code that was in effect when the building was constructed.

Approved:


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CW No:	2012-B04	Page:	1	of	1
PUBLICATION:	November 15, 1988				
SUBJECT:	Permits for Various Type Projects				
CODE(S):	Building				
SECTION(S)	105.3				

The building official shall require building permits to be issued as specified for the following projects:

1. New shell building with multiple leases or suites.
 - One permit for the shell and one permit for each space.
2. Remodel of more than one lease or suite in an existing building
 - One permit for each space.
3. Remodel of more than one location in the interior concerning the "shell" or "core" of the building.
 - The number of permits is at the option of the applicant.
4. Remodel exterior of multiple buildings.
 - One permit for each building.

Remodeling of any existing occupied area shall not increase the wastewater load or the square footage of the building, lease space or suite. Any change in these items constitutes new construction.

A Certificate of Compliance is available at the option of the applicant once remodeling of the existing occupied area is complete.

Definition: Suite- A group of connected rooms used as a unit.

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CW No:	2012-B05	Page:	1	of	1
PUBLICATION:	April 09, 2014				
SUBJECT:	Acceptance of Flipped or Reversed Plans				
CODE(S):	Building and Residential Code				
SECTION(S)	107 (IBC) and R106 (IRC)				

Flipped or reversed plans will be accepted when the plans clearly indicate that they are flipped or reversed.

Due to the State of Texas engineering/architectural practice acts, when a plan is sealed by an engineer or architect the notation shall be stamped or printed on the plans. Handwritten notes on sealed plans will not be accepted.

When plans are exempt from the aforementioned practice acts, the note may be handwritten.

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CW No:	2012-B06	Page:	1	of	1
PUBLICATION:	November 27, 1995				
SUBJECT:	Plan and Profile Drawings				
CODE(S):	Building				
SECTION(S)	107				

A “conditional” permit for a project requiring plan and profile utility drawings may be issued prior to the plan and profile drawing approval provided the owner makes a written request to the building official that includes the following:

1. A description of the work requiring a plan and profile.
2. A confirmed compliance date.
3. A statement acknowledging and agreeing to the condition that if the plan and profile drawing have not been approved by the compliance date, as agreed upon, the City of Houston will not grant final inspection, the Certificate of Occupancy will not be issued and final release of utilities will not be granted.
4. A statement from the owner acknowledging and agreeing to the condition that failure to obtain approval within the specified time may result in citations being issued pursuant to the code.
5. A statement releasing the City of any and all liability for the proposed project in the event that the City is unable to provide the specific utility services proposed in the plan and profile drawings.

The issuance of the “conditional” permit shall be approved by the Building Official and the Manager of the Utility Analysis Section.

Approved:

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PUBLICATION:	October 24, 1988				
SUBJECT:	Requirements for Engineer Seals				
CODE(S):	Building				
SECTION(S)	107.1				

The Texas Engineering Practice Act, Section 1001.402, states that a public official of this state, or of a political subdivision of this state, who is responsible for enforcing laws, ordinances, codes or regulations that affect the practice of engineering may accept plans, specifications and other related documents only if those plans, specifications and other related documents were prepared by registered professional engineers, as evidenced by the seal of the engineer.

Section 1001.056 exempts the following from the provisions of the Act:

1. Any private dwelling, one story apartment buildings not exceeding eight units, two story apartment buildings not exceeding four units, garages or other structures pertinent to such buildings;
2. Private buildings used exclusively for farm, ranch or agricultural purposes, or used exclusively for storage of raw agricultural commodities; or
3. Other one story buildings, except public buildings, containing no clear span greater than 24 feet and having a floor area of 5000 square feet or less.

Section 1001.053 exempts the following public works from the provisions of the Act:

1. A public work that involves electrical or mechanical engineering, if the contemplated expense for the completed project is \$8000.00 or less.
2. A public work that does not involve electrical or mechanical engineering, if the contemplated expense for the completed project is \$20,000.00 or less.

Plans submitted for permits will require engineer seals in accordance with state law unless specifically exempt.

The Office of the Attorney General of the State of Texas has determined that the design of air conditioning systems that licensed air conditioning contractors are permitted to perform under the Air Conditioning Contractor License Law (Article 8861 of V.T.C.S), serves as an exception to the Engineering Practice Act (Article 3271a of V.T.C.S). Accordingly, the Engineering Practice Act does not apply to design work performed by licensed air conditioning contractors. Similarly, the designs of electrical and plumbing systems that licensed electrical and plumbing contractors are permitted to perform serve as exceptions to the Engineering Practice Act.

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PUBLICATION:	January 29, 1992				
SUBJECT:	Survey of Lot				
CODE(S):	Building				
SECTION(S)	107.2.5				

The purpose of this policy on survey requirements is to assure that proposed construction does not cross any property lines without proper easements, does not extend onto or across easements without proper written permission, does not violate building line restrictions and does maintain the proper distance from underground pipelines or railroad easements.

Sufficient lot and construction dimension information must be provided to conduct a satisfactory plan review. Acceptable alternates for the survey may be one of the following:

1. A copy of the survey furnished to the buyer when the property was purchased is normally required for all title insurance policies. The owner either has a copy or one may be obtained from the mortgage company holding the note on the property.
2. A complete site plan usually satisfies the intent for a survey. A site plan which is signed, sealed and dated by an architect or engineer, with a statement that it is complete, is acceptable. The site plan shall show all property lines, building setback lines, building locations, easements and indicate the type of easement. The site plan shall show driveway width and radius of turn at the curbs. If the site plan appears to be incomplete or the drawing raises some questions to its accuracy, a survey may be required.
3. For single family residential, a complete site plan usually satisfies the intent for a survey. The site plan shall show all property lines, building setback lines, building locations, easements and indicate the type of easement. The site plan shall show driveway width and radius of turn at the curbs. If the site plan appears to be incomplete or the drawing raises some questions to its accuracy, a survey may be required.
4. A site plan is required when foundation repair is proposed. It must show easements that affect proposed construction, existing buildings and property lines which affects adjacent property owners in those cases where structures are situated on a property with no building setback lines or such construction as townhouses with zero lot line separations.

The following must be included on the site plan:

Easements for permanent encroachment where foundation work extends across the property line of patio homes and zero lot line houses.

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CW No:	2012-B09	Page:	1	of	1
PUBLICATION:	April 4, 2012				
SUBJECT:	Finals on Core/Shell Permits				
CODE(S):	Building				
SECTION(S)	107.3.3 and 110.3.10				

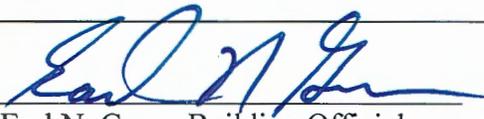
Historically, when a shell and core permit was issued and subsequent tenant improvement permits began construction prior to the final of the shell and core, a number of challenges ensued.

Past practice was to have the entire fire sprinkler system installed prior to the core/shell finals. Prior to the tenant improvement final the ceiling was required to be installed to ensure the actuation of the sprinklers. The installation was required regardless of activity on other permits; consequently, after the sprinkler approvals were achieved, a portion of the ceiling system needed to be removed in order to complete the tenant build out. This caused delays and additional expense to the builder without achieving any additional level of fire protection.

When a tenant build out receives a permit and begins construction prior to the core and shell permit receiving all of the final inspection approvals, the following shall apply:

- The core and shell permit final approvals, including the sprinkler approval shall not apply to any portion(s) of the building that are under construction with a valid separate tenant improvement permit.
- Any work done under a tenant improvement will be inspected and approved under the permit issued for the build out and will stand independently from the core/shell approval. Multi-tenant floors shall be served by a completed core build out.
- All fire protection including fire pumps, sprinklers and alarms shall be fully functional in all areas with the exception of turning down sprinkler heads in the area under remodel.

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CW No:	2012-B10	Page:	1	of	1
PUBLICATION:	July 2, 2015				
SUBJECT:	Remodel and Repair Permit Fee Calculations				
CODE(S):	Building Code				
SECTION(S)	109.3 and 118				

Section 109.3 of the Building Code authorizes the building official to set the valuation of for the purposes of building permits. The code allows for the calculation to be performed solely on the value of the work for which a permit is required and states, "For alterations, remodeling, or repairs the value to be used in computing the permit fee shall be the total value of all construction work for which the permit is issued."

To more appropriately align the permit fee with the true cost of service for remodel and repair permits, valuations will only be the assessed based on the work that requires a permit. In addition, only the permitted work will be inspected and reviewed for compliance.

Section 118 of the Building Code establishes construction permit fees, many of these fees are calculated based on the permit valuation.

For new structures and build-out projects the valuation (or cost of construction) is the contracted amount.

Permit fees for alterations and repair work will hereto forward be interpreted to mean only the items that require a permit. For example, if the complete scope of a repair permit includes new custom countertops, electrical repairs, and replacing damaged studs, the permit valuation would only include the electrical work and stud replacement/repair cost inclusive of the overhead and profits for those items. Please note that the definition of valuation and the valuation determination for new construction and build-outs remain unchanged.

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PUBLICATION:	March 6, 1985			
SUBJECT:	Partial Occupancy of Buildings			
CODE(S):	Building			
SECTION(S)	110			

The Building Code requires a Certificate of Occupancy to be posted in a conspicuous place on the premises of all commercial buildings prior to occupancy. It also allows a Certificate of Occupancy to be issued for the use of a portion or portions of a building prior to the completion of the entire building or structure.

The policy relative to issuing partial Certificates of Occupancy is as follows:

1. The portion of the building where occupancy is requested must conform to the codes.
2. In fire-resistive buildings, the structural frame must be protected up to and including the floor of occupancy. If the ceiling membrane is part of the structural frame fire protection, then it must be installed throughout the floor of occupancy.
3. Where a standpipe system is required, the system must be in operation throughout the structure. If an automatic sprinkler system is required, it must be in operation throughout the areas to be occupied.
4. When a fire alarm is required, the system must be in operation for the floor of incidence, the floor above and floor below.
5. If the building falls within the scope of a high-rise building, all life safety requirements shall be in operation throughout the areas to be occupied.

The Certificate of Occupancy attests that the portion or portions for which the certificate is issued meets the codes, but not the total building. A separate certificate will be issued for each portion of the building upon completion of the space.

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PUBLICATION:	December 23, 1986				
SUBJECT:	Certificates of Occupancy and Compliance				
CODE(S):	Building				
SECTION(S)	111				

The purpose of this policy is to set guidelines for the transition of occupancy classification and types of construction from the previous code to the designations in the current code. For a point of clarification it would not make any difference what designations are shown on the certificates as long as the authority having jurisdiction knows what the designation means as to the use and construction types and also the code that was in effect when the building was constructed. With this in mind, the following procedures will be used in the future:

1. The current building code occupancy classification and type of construction will be shown on all occupancy or compliance certificates that are issued from occupancy inspection reports. The certificates will be coded as to which code was used in inspecting the building as follows:
 - 2012 Code- Buildings submitted for permit after February 1st, 2016
 - 2006 Code- Buildings submitted for permit after December 30, 2010
 - 2003 Code- Buildings submitted for permit after January 4, 2006
 - 2000 Code- Buildings submitted for permit after July 15, 2002
 - 1997 Code- Buildings submitted for permit after March 12, 2000
 - 1994 Code- Buildings submitted for permit after January 26, 1997
 - 1991 Code- Buildings submitted for permit after July 12, 1993
 - 1988 Code- Buildings submitted for permit after March 25, 1990
 - 1985 Code- Buildings submitted for permit after May 5, 1986
 - 1970 Code- Buildings submitted for permit between June 1972 and May 5, 1986
 - 1963 Code- Buildings submitted for permit between March 1963 and June 1972
 - U K Code- Buildings submitted for permit before March 1963 and buildings annexed into the City.
2. All certificates issued pursuant to a building permit application will have the same classification and type of construction as shown on the application and will be coded as above.



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3. No certificate of Life Safety Code compliance will be issued unless the building complies with:
 - A. The building code that was in effect when the building was constructed.
 - B. Section 102 of the Building Code.
 - C. Appendix L of the Building Code.
4. All buildings permitted before March 1963 and buildings annexed into the City will be inspected for compliance with Section 102 and the Life Safety Appendix only.
5. Fees for inspections for a certificate of compliance shall be the same as for a certificate of occupancy.

Approved:

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PUBLICATION:	August 13, 2013				
SUBJECT:	Existing Certificate of Occupancy Validity				
CODE(S):	Building				
SECTION(S)	111				

Prior to occupancy of a building, or portion thereof, Section 111 of the building code requires a Certificate of Occupancy (CO) to be issued which indicates the building, or portion thereof, has been reviewed and approved for the particular use and occupancy. The certificate applies to the specific location and configuration within a particular type of building, and a maximum occupant load. The CO is valid for the life of that building or portion thereof, subject to the Life Safety Appendix, as long as there are no changes to the space, and it is maintained in good condition with the same use and occupancy.

A Certificate of Occupancy could be invalidated for any of the following conditions:

1. Revocation
2. Occupant load change
3. Use or occupancy change
4. Expired renovation permit is incomplete
5. Unpermitted alterations

While permitting and inspection options may be pursued in some cases to restore an existing Certificate of Occupancy to compliance, a change to the occupancy classification will require a new Certificate of Occupancy. A new CO is also required when the use or character has been changed within the same occupancy classification such as in the following examples:

- office to beauty shop
- school to daycare
- residence to personal care home
- residence to boarding house
- grocery to flea market
- restaurant to dance hall
- warehouse to auto repair
- warehouse to high piled storage

For other changes that may require a new Certificate of Occupancy, the Building Official will determine whether the character or use of an existing occupancy would initiate a new Certificate of Occupancy due to significant code implications.

Approved:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Earl N. Greer".

Earl N. Greer, Building Official



City of Houston
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CODE WORD 2012

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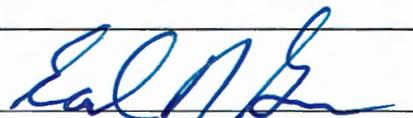
CW No:	2012-B14	Page:	1	of	1
PUBLICATION:	July 16, 2014, Revised October 21, 2014				
SUBJECT:	Certificates of Occupancy Posting				
CODE(S):	Building Code				
SECTION(S)	111.5				

Section 111.5 of the Building Code requires that Certificates of Occupancy be posted in a conspicuous place.

In building complexes under common ownership, where multiple buildings have separate Certificates of Occupancy issued and are subject to damage or removal by unauthorized persons a copy shall be sufficient; provided the original is maintained in a management office located on site, and is readily available to view.

Other than a copy authorized by the Habitability Ordinance, in 10-155 of the City Code, when a copy of the certificate is placed in lieu of the original, the certificate shall contain a statement "This is a copy, see the management office for the original Certificate of Occupancy."

Approved:


Earl N. Greer, Building Official



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CW No:	2012-B15	Page:	1	of	1
PUBLICATION:	April 09, 2014				
SUBJECT:	Assessment of Permit Valuations				
CODE(S):	Building Code				
SECTION(S)	118				

Section 118 of the Building Code identifies the various permits for all types of construction and related costs. Both the building permit and certain mechanical permits are assessed based on valuation.

The Building Code defines valuation as,

“**VALUATION.** The total cost of construction to the end user, excluding the land purchase costs and the overhead attributed to the land purchase. The value of donated goods and services is included.”

To ensure equitable permit fee calculation those projects that require both a building permit and a mechanical permit shall be assessed as follows:

Building Permit: Total construction valuation.

Mechanical Permit (HVAC and Refrigeration): Valuation of the mechanical installation costs of the project.

Approved:


Earl N. Greer, Building Official



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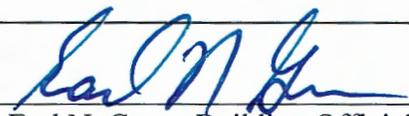
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CW No:	2012-B16	Page:	1	of	1
PUBLICATION:	June 10, 1987				
SUBJECT:	Permit Tonnage Limitations				
CODE(S):	Mechanical & Building				
SECTION(S)	121.5 (UMC) & 118.3 (IBC)				

Limitations regarding tonnage, assigned by code, for State Class "B" contractor licenses will be considered to limit the licensee to repair and install equipment developing a total of not more than 25 tons, or using compressors driven by not more than 30 horsepower.

This shall not limit a Class "B" contractor from installation or repair of air conditioning systems serving a building which contains more than 25 tons of mechanical refrigeration provided that no single system is greater than 25 tons, and that no single permit is greater than 25 tons. Subsequently, multiple permits may be purchased for a single address or building to form an aggregate of the total tonnage in multiples of 25 tons or less.

Approved:


Earl N. Greer, Building Official



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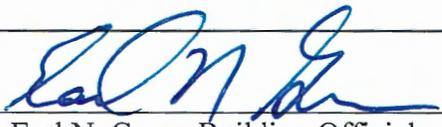
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CW No:	2012-B17	Page:	1	of	1
PUBLICATION:	March 31, 2009				
SUBJECT:	Residential Occupancies Explained				
CODE(S):	Building				
SECTION(S)	310				

The matrix below has been constructed to help with the understanding of the R occupancies as addressed by the 2012 Building Code.

Use	Number of Occupants	Classification	Notes
Single family home	1 family ¹	R-3	Use IRC code
Boarding house (transient) ²	Any	R-1	
Boarding house (not transient)	Any	R-2	
Congregate living facility ³	16 or less	R-3	Use IBC provisions for the R-3 occupancies (limited in height, etc)
Congregate living facility ³	More than 16	R-2	Sprinklers required
Residential care/assisted living facilities	6 to 16, excluding staff	R-4	Sprinklers required

1. Family: An individual or two or more persons related by blood or marriage or a group of not more than 10 persons (excluding servants) who need not be related by blood or marriage living together in a dwelling unit.
2. Transient: Occupancy of a dwelling unit or sleeping unit for not more than 30 days.
3. Congregate living facility: A building or portion thereof that contains facilities for living, sleeping and sanitation, as required by this code, and may include facilities for eating and cooking, for occupancy by other than a family. A congregare living facility may be a shelter, convent, monastery, dormitory, fraternity, or sorority house, but does not include jails, hospitals, nursing homes, hotels or boarding houses.

Approved: 
Earl N. Greer, Building Official



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CW No:	2012-B18	Page:	1	of	1
PUBLICATION:	March 7, 1988				
SUBJECT:	Emergency Pneumatic Systems				
CODE(S):	Building				
SECTION(S)	403				

- a. The air compressor located within the building serving life safety functions shall be located in a 2 hour rated enclosure. The air compressor, dryer and associated electrical equipment shall be served from the emergency generator.
- b. The air compressor may be located within the same rated enclosure that houses the emergency generator.
- c. The main pneumatic trunkline for life safety systems shall be protected by a 2 hour rated enclosure or shall be a material that will withstand 1800° F for 2 hours (i.e., stainless steel).
- d. Branch pneumatic lines run in air ducts or plenums shall have a flame-spread index of not more than 25 and a smoke-developed rating of not more than 50.

Approved:


Earl N. Greer, Building Official



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No:	2012-B19	Page:	1	of	1
PUBLICATION:	April 9, 2014				
SUBJECT:	Sprinkler System In Four Story Residences				
CODE(S):	Building Code				
SECTION(S)	504.2				

This interpretation is to clarify when the use of a NFPA 13R sprinkler system is required in single family residential structures. If the design exceeds three stories in Type V construction, a sprinkler system must be provided to allow an additional story. In Type V construction a fourth story is only allowed when the building is fully sprinklered as required by Section 504.2 of the International Building Code.

Typically, the NFPA 13D sprinkler standard is allowed for providing sprinkler protection for a single family residence. The scope of the Houston Residential Code is limited to 3 stories in height.

When the building exceeds 3 stories, the residence is regulated by the provisions of the Houston Building Code. The Houston Building Code limits a single family home, classified as an R-3 structure to 3 stories in height for Type V construction unless the sprinkler tradeoff is used to increase the height/stories. Section 504.2 of the Building Code only allows for the tradeoff when utilizing the NFPA 13R system.

This interpretation is to formalize an interpretation made effective for plans submitted on or after February 27, 2014.

Approved:


Earl N. Greer, Building Official



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CW No:	2012-B20	Page:	1	of	1
PUBLICATION:	May 19, 1997				
SUBJECT:	School Vocational Shops				
CODE(S):	Building				
SECTION(S)	Table 508.4				

Classrooms located within the vocational shop area and used by the shop students will be considered as part of the shop area and will not require a separation. The code does require a one-hour separation between shop areas and other portions of the building and also between each vocational shop area.

Approved:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Earl N. Greer".

Earl N. Greer, Building Official



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CW No:	2012-B21	Page:	1	of	1
PUBLICATION:	December 11, 2014				
SUBJECT:	Glass Block in Exterior Fire-Rated Walls				
CODE(S):	Residential & Building				
SECTION(S)	R302.1 (IRC) and Table 705.8 (IBC)				

The code prohibits openings in exterior walls located within the minimum fire separation distance to the property line. In Group R-3 single family residences where openings are prohibited, fire-resistance rated masonry unit glass block may be used as part of the fire-resistance rated wall subject to the following criteria:

- The fire-resistance rating is based on NFPA 357 or UL 9 testing criteria with a hose stream test.
- The fire-resistance rated glass block portion of the wall is non-load bearing.
- The fire-resistance rated glass block is installed as a fixed partition that is not openable or moveable.
- Projections using glass block are not allowed.
- The maximum size area for the fire-resistance rated glass block is 120 square feet with the aggregate width at any floor level not to exceed 25 percent of the length of the wall.

Any construction, walls, or projections, 3 feet or less from the property line shall have a maintenance agreement with the adjacent property owner.

Approved:

Earl N. Greer, Building Official



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CW No:	2012-B22	Page:	1	of	1
PUBLICATION:	December 23, 1986				
SUBJECT:	Corridor Doors				
CODE(S):	Building				
SECTION(S)	716.5.3				

Door assemblies in corridors and smoke barriers are required to be tested and labeled.

Doors without the labels shall be considered as having a 20 minute fire rating if they are of 1 3/4- inch thick solid bonded wood construction.

Door frames milled from 1½ - inch wood or metal door frames will be considered as meeting the 20 minute requirement without being labeled.

Approved:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Earl N. Greer".

Earl N. Greer, Building Official



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CW No:	2012-B23	Page:	1	of	1
PUBLICATION:	April 9, 2014				
SUBJECT:	Smoke Dampers in Corridors				
CODE(S):	Building				
SECTION(S)	717.5				

The building code requires smoke dampers to be installed in corridors to prevent the migration of smoke into the path of egress. The smoke dampers required by Section 717.5.4.1 for penetrations of the rated exit corridor are intended to protect the corridor path of egress from smoke migration from adjacent spaces. The dampers are required in fire-rated partitions that serve as corridor walls and smoke barrier walls in accordance with Section 716.5.3. The exterior wall to the outdoors is not an adjacent space within the building and therefore the corridor would not need to be protected from outdoor air.

Based on the code intent, as described in the code commentary and confirmed by ICC, the smoke damper is required when there are air transfer openings or ducts communicating with spaces inside the building. Therefore, when a corridor is served only by outside air and without air transfer openings to adjacent spaces within the building, a smoke damper will not be required for that location.

Approved:

Earl N. Greer, Building Official



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CW No:	2012-B24	Page:	1	of	1
PUBLICATION:	February 28, 2000				
SUBJECT:	Hazardous Materials Storage Canopies				
CODE(S):	Building & Fire				
SECTION(S)	903.2.5 (IBC) and 5004.13 (IFC)				

An automatic fire-extinguishing system will not be required for an open canopy that meets the requirements of Section 5004.13 of the Fire Code and is used for sheltering outdoor hazardous material unless the sprinkler system is required by the Fire Code for outdoor storage. The canopy will be classified in the appropriate H occupancy classification with the notation on the permit "Canopy for Hazard Material Storage." All such structures shall be routed to the Fire Department for approval.

Approved:


Earl N. Greer, Building Official



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CW No:	2012-B25	Page:	1	of	1
PUBLICATION:	November 28, 1995				
SUBJECT:	Electronic Locking Devices				
CODE(S):	Building				
SECTION(S)	1008				

SPECIFIC APPROVAL

When approved by the Building Official, electronic locking devices may be used to meet specialized security needs such as, but not limited to, Alzheimer units, infant protection devices, money handling rooms for security purposes, night operation of convenience stores or police stations, etc. This specific approval will require the door to be monitored by an on-site guard, staff or employee trained in the method of releasing the locking device at times when the building or space is occupied.

A separate permit for specific approval shall be required for each locking device and may be revoked at any time by the Building Official for due cause.

Approved:


Earl N. Greer, Building Official



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CW No:	2012-B26	Page:	1	of	1
PUBLICATION:	October 19, 1995				
SUBJECT:	Main Exit Doors				
CODE(S):	Building				
SECTION(S)	1008.1.9.3				

This is to clarify that a building or space can have more than one main exit as allowed in this section. Any door or pair of doors that are used by the general public as an entrance and exit to and from the business will be considered as a main exit. Any door provided for exit purposes only will not be considered as a main exit and will not be allowed to use these exceptions.

Approved:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Earl N. Greer", written over a horizontal line.

Earl N. Greer, Building Official



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CW No:	2012-B27	Page:	1	of	1
PUBLICATION:	May 19, 1995				
SUBJECT:	Double Doors Signage				
CODE(S):	Building				
SECTION(S)	1008.1.9.3 and 1008.1.9.4				

Where a pair of doors serves as an exit door, the use of manually operated bolts (edge mounted or surface mounted) shall be allowed on the inactive leaf when this leaf is not part of the required egress width. The active leaf shall provide a permanently affixed sign stating, "THIS DOOR TO REMAIN UNLOCKED WHEN BUILDING IS OCCUPIED".

Approved:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Earl N. Greer".

Earl N. Greer, Building Official



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CW No:	2012-B28	Page:	1	of	1
PUBLICATION:	January 7, 1988				
SUBJECT:	Corridor Construction				
CODE(S):	Building				
SECTION(S)	1018.1				

When a common corridor serves mixed occupancies the most restrictive occupancy shall determine the corridor requirements.

Interpretation: When minor uses do not occupy more than ten percent (10%) of the area served the major use shall determine the corridor requirements.

Approved:


Earl N. Greer, Building Official



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CW No:	2012-B29	Page:	1	of	1
PUBLICATION:	August 13, 1991				
SUBJECT:	Restroom Openings Into Corridors				
CODE(S):	Building				
SECTION(S)	1018.6				

A separation will not be required between a restroom and a corridor provided the ceiling and walls of the restroom are constructed as required for the corridor.

Approved:


Earl N. Greer, Building Official



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CW No:	2012- B30	Page:	1	of	1
PUBLICATION:	September 20, 2012				
SUBJECT:	Cellular Tower Risk Category and Basic Wind Speed				
CODE(S):	Building				
SECTION(S)	1604.5 and 1609.3				

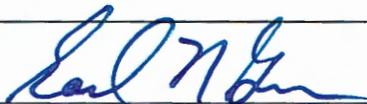
This interpretation is in response to a request to address the appropriate risk category assignment for certain communication cellular towers for the purpose of the required minimum basic wind speed design based on the Houston Adopted IBC (2012).

Although all tower structures may initially appear to be included within the risk category 4 designation, this designation "Risk Category 4" is intended for essential facilities required for emergency response or disaster recovery including but not limited to police stations, fire stations, hospitals, 311 emergency centers, storm shelters, and their required support structures. A tower structure adjacent to a police station or fire station that supplies communication capabilities to the police or fire station would be considered the same risk category as the building it serves "Risk Category 4".

However, although cellular phone service does provide messages from the regional emergency broadcast system as well as other emergency services to their customers such as 911, the typical cellular communications tower is not considered an essential facility for carrying out emergency response. As a result it is interpreted that where a cellular tower does not provide service to a structure designed as an essential facility and is not considered essential to emergency responders to complete their task during an emergency event, the cellular tower shall be designated a "Risk Category 2".

Plans shall include appropriate documentation to clearly indicate that the tower structure will not provide service to structures designated as "Risk Category 4".

Approved:


Earl N. Greer, Building Official



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CW No:	2012-B31	Page:	1	of	1
PUBLICATION:	Revision December 10, 2013				
SUBJECT:	Block and Base Foundations				
CODE(S):	Residential & Building				
SECTION(S)	R403.1, R403.2 (IRC) and 1809.9(IBC)				

This policy is an acceptable alternate as per Section 104.11 of the Building Code for existing buildings when performing maintenance or repair of existing block and base foundations. This alternative shall apply to conventional light-frame construction designed with girders and supported on blocks and bases in such a manner that the building can be easily leveled any time after the full load has been applied. For repair of existing block and base foundations the following apply:

1. All loose material and vegetation must be removed to ensure solid bearing beneath bases.
2. End joints of girders shall occur over supports.
3. Minimum thickness of concrete bases shall be 4 inches.
4. The minimum width of the structure shall not be less than the overall height.
5. Girders shall not be placed further than the depth of the joist from the exterior wall.

For new and relocated buildings, as well as additions, block and base foundations shall be designed by a Texas registered Professional Engineer to comply with the applicable code sections, or in accordance with Code Enforcement Drawing #13-05-R

This interpretation is applicable to all building plans submitted on or after March 1, 2014.

Approved:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Earl N. Greer".

Earl N. Greer, Building Official



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No:	2012-B32	Page:	1	of	1
PUBLICATION:	July 11, 2013				
SUBJECT:	Design Values for visually graded Southern Pine dimensional lumber				
CODE(S):	Residential and Building				
SECTION(S)	Various				

Effective June 1, 2013, the Southern Forest Products Association modified and reduced the recognized design allowances of visually graded Southern Yellow Pine lumber.

The 2012 Building and Residential Codes were published and adopted prior to these reductions being known or published and currently contain less stringent allowances.

In response to this industry change, the City of Houston will utilize the new recognized span tables published by the Southern Pine Inspection Bureau as of June 1.

For ease of use, the span tables are included herein for reference and replace the following tables:

IRC

Floor Joists	R502.3.1 (1) - R502.3.1(2)
Cantilever Spans	R502.3.3 (1) - R502.3.3(2)
Girder and Header Spans	R502.5 (1) - R502.5(2)
Ceiling Joists	R802.4 (1) - R802.4(2)
Rafter Spans	R802.5.1 (1) - R802.5.1(8)

IBC

Floor Joists	2308.8(1) – 2308.8(2)
Header and Girder	2308.9.5 and 2308.9.6
Ceiling Joists	2308.10.2(1) - 2308.10.2(2)
Rafter Spans	2308.10.3(1) - 2308.10.3(6)

This change will not affect currently approved projects or plans that are in the plan review process nor other lumber species.

Approved:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Earl N. Greer".

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CW No:	2012-B33	Page:	1	of	1
PUBLICATION:	November 1, 2011				
SUBJECT:	Restrooms in Carry-Out Food Establishments.				
CODE(S):	Building				
SECTION(S)	2902.3				

In carry-out food establishments with waiting areas not greater than 225 sq. ft., where food will not be consumed by the public on premises, toilet facilities are not required for customers.

Approved: 
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CW No:	2012-B34	Page:	1	of	1
PUBLICATION:	September 20, 2012				
SUBJECT:	Elevator Signage				
CODE(S):	Building Code and Fire Code				
SECTION(S)	3002.3 (IBC) and 607.2 (IFC)				

The City of Houston Fire Code Section 607.2 requires an approved pictorial sign to be posted adjacent to each elevator call station.

The approved pictorial sign shall also contain a correctly oriented diagram showing the location and identification of the stairs on the floor in relationship to the elevator. The top of the sign shall not exceed 6 feet (1.8 m) above the floor level.

Approved:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Earl N. Greer".

Earl N. Greer, Building Official



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CW No:	2012-B35	Page:	1	of	2
PUBLICATION:	December 3, 1998				
SUBJECT:	R-1 or R-2 Conversions				
CODE(S):	Building				
SECTION(S)	3408				

Section 3408 of the code grants wide authority to the building official to use judgment in determining the level of safety and which code requirements will apply when a change of occupancy is proposed to an existing building. Reference is made in Chapter 34 of the Building Code to Appendix M for determining the level of hazard. In order to provide consistency in the requirements, the attached guidelines have been developed to use when converting an existing building to an apartment or hotel. The minimum Appendix L life-safety requirements shall apply. See the table on page 2.



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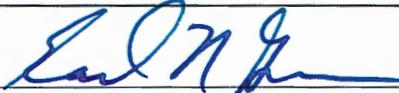
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CW No:	2012-B35	Page:	2	of	2
R-1 and R-2 conversions continued					

CHANGE OF OCCUPANCY - GROUP B TO GROUP R-1 OR R-2

1. Sprinkler System	As required per current code.
2. Fire Alarm System	As required per current code.
3. Natural Light	As required per current code.
4. Stair Enclosures	Rated enclosure is required but one stair may discharge through a street floor lobby.
5. Stair Rise and Run	Existing stairs do not have to be changed if they comply with all requirements of Appendix L. New stairs must comply.
6. Stair Pressurization	As required per current code. However, if it can be determined that there are practical difficulties with the existing construction, an alternate will be considered by the Building Official.
7. Exterior Walls	May keep existing construction and openings per Appendix M.
8. Fire Command Station	As required per current code for high-rise buildings.
9. Smoke Control System	Not required unless required when constructed.
10. Corridors	As required per current code.
11. Type of Construction	As required per current code.
12. Emergency Generator for High-Rise	As required per current code.
13. Vertical Openings	As required per current code.
14. Ventilation / Fresh Air	As required per current code.
15. Bathrooms	As required per current code.
16. Structural	As required per current code.

Approved:


Earl N. Greer, Building Official



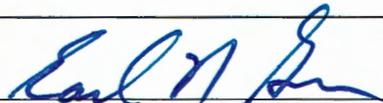
City of Houston
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2012 IBC, 2012 IRC, 2014 NEC, 2012 UMC, 2012 UPC,
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CW No:	2012-B36	Page:	1	of	1
PUBLICATION:	March 13, 1989				
SUBJECT:	Extent of Exit Enclosure (existing)				
CODE(S):	Building				
SECTION(S)	L102.1				

As an alternate method of providing two separate distinct exits, exit enclosures may discharge into and through a street-floor lobby, provided the required exit width is free and unobstructed and the street/ground floor is protected with an automatic sprinkler system.

Approved:


Earl N. Greer, Building Official



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2009 IECC and ASHRAE 90.1-2007

CW No:	2012-B37	Page:	1	of	1
PUBLICATION:	January 6, 1998				
SUBJECT:	Requirement of at Least One Handrail for Every Stairway on Existing Buildings				
CODE(S):	Building				
SECTION(S)	L102.2				

The following interpretation is to be applied to all stairways of buildings inspected for Appendix L of the building code.

Section L102.2 of the Houston Amendments to 2012 building code states that "Every stairway shall have at least one handrail". Handrails shall be provided for each stairway with four or more risers.

Approved:


Earl N. Greer, Building Official



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CW No:	2012-B38	Page:	1	of	1
PUBLICATION:	May 23, 1990				
SUBJECT:	Glass in Corridor Walls				
CODE(S):	Building				
SECTION(S)	L102.3				

As an alternate to the wired glass allowed in corridor walls by Section L102.3 of the Building Code, regular glass may be used subject to the following:

1. Both sides of the glass shall be protected by a sprinkler system equipped with listed quick-response sprinklers. The sprinklers shall be spaced 6 feet or less along both sides of the glass, not more than 1 foot from the glass and located so that the entire surface of the glass is wet upon operation.
2. The glass shall meet the safety and design requirements of Chapter 24.
3. Obstructions such as curtain rods, curtains, drapes or similar materials shall not be installed between the sprinkler and the glass.

Glass doors will be permitted provided they are included in the allowable glass area.

Approved:


Earl N. Greer, Building Official



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2009 IECC and ASHRAE 90.1-2007

CW No:	2012-B39	Page:	1	of	1
PUBLICATION:	July 30, 1990				
SUBJECT:	Wired Glass in Existing Corridor Doors				
CODE(S):	Building				
SECTION(S)	L102.3				

Existing glass in corridor doors may be replaced with polished wired glass, without limitation to the opening size, when complying with this section, and not exceeding the existing opening size.

Approved:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Earl N. Greer".

Earl N. Greer, Building Official



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2009 IECC and ASHRAE 90.1-2007

CW No:	2012-B40	Page:	1	of	1
PUBLICATION:	November 8, 2001				
SUBJECT:	Corridors in Existing Schools				
CODE(S):	Building				
SECTION(S)	L102.3				

As an alternate to the requirement for rated corridors in existing schools, an automatic fire alarm system may be provided. The system shall consist of the following:

1. Smoke detectors in the exit corridors, common areas, offices and classrooms.
2. Manual pull-boxes by all exits from each floor of the building.
3. Automatic detectors (heat or smoke) in mechanical rooms, storage rooms and similar areas.

Approved:


Earl N. Greer, Building Official



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CW No:	2012-B41	Page:	1	of	1
PUBLICATION:	July 23, 1987				
SUBJECT:	Existing Exit Signs				
CODE(S):	Building				
SECTION(S)	L102.5				

Section L102.5 requires that exit signs be provided for existing buildings as required by Section 1011 of the current code. In some cases this will require exit signs that were not required under the previous code. Section L102.5 also makes exception to signs that are existing.

Existing signs will be considered as meeting the requirement of this section provided:

1. They have been maintained and are in compliance with the code under which the building was constructed.
2. They clearly indicate the direction of egress.
3. They are internally or externally illuminated or shall be of an approved self-luminous type.

The letters are at least 5 inches high and readily distinguishable.

Approved:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Earl N. Greer", written over a horizontal line.

Earl N. Greer, Building Official



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2009 IECC and ASHRAE 90.1-2007

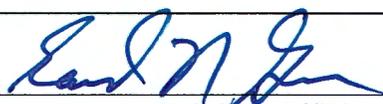
CW No:	2012-B42	Page:	1	of	1
PUBLICATION:	June 30, 1987				
SUBJECT:	Standpipes				
CODE(S):	Building				
SECTION(S)	L105.1				

Section L105.1 specifies that buildings over four (4) stories shall be provided with an approved Class I or Class III standpipe system. Section 905 only prescribes a size of outlet for these systems and not the installation standards.

Existing wet standpipes with two and one-half inch (2 ½") outlets that comply with the code that was in effect when the building was constructed and that have been properly maintained shall be considered as meeting the requirements of the section.

The other installation standards of Chapter 9 apply to new or added standpipes.

Approved:


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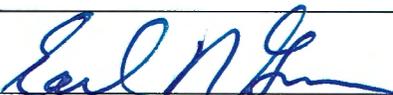
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2009 IECC and ASHRAE 90.1-2007

CW No:	2012-B43	Page:	1	Of	1
PUBLICATION:	October 24, 1990				
SUBJECT:	Fire Alarm Systems				
CODE(S):	Building				
SECTION(S)	L108				

The minimum requirement of this section is to provide a local fire alarm system for existing buildings that are either annexed into the City or were constructed within the City prior to code requirements for alarm systems.

The reference to Section 403 shall be considered only for the purpose of Section 403.4 requiring the evacuation alarm to sound on the floor of incidence, the floor above, the floor below and be heard clearly by all occupants of these floors.

Approved:


Earl N. Greer, Building Official



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CW No:	2012- B44	Page:	1	of	1
PUBLICATION:	September 20, 2012				
SUBJECT:	Risk Category and "Wind-Borne Debris Region"				
CODE(S):	Houston Adopted Building Code (2012)				
SECTION(S)	202.1 and 1609.3				

This is a code interpretation addressing the code provisions for protection of glazing as it relates to wind-born debris impact protection for Risk Category 3 structures constructed within the jurisdiction of the City of Houston under the provisions of the Houston Adopted IBC (2012).

This code interpretation requests clarification regarding the applicability of the code provisions associated with wind-born debris impact protection for windows and other building elements utilizing glazing for Risk Category III structures; specifically, schools constructed under the provisions of the Houston Adopted IBC (2012). In an attempt to simplify the code provisions addressing the minimum basic wind speed, Section 1609.3 of the IBC (2012) includes the following City of Houston amendment:

1609.3 Basic wind speed. *The ultimate design wind speed, V_{ult} , in mph, for the determination of the wind loads shall be determined by Figures 1609A, 1609B and 1609C. The ultimate design wind speed, V_{ult} for use in the design of Risk Category II buildings and structures shall be 139 mph. The ultimate design wind speed, V_{ult} , for use in the design of Risk Category III and IV buildings and structures shall be 150 mph. The ultimate design wind speed, V_{ult} , for use in the design of Risk Category I buildings and structures shall be 130 mph.*

Although the first sentence continues to identify Figures 1609A, 1609B and 1609C; the following three sentences strike the text that references to the three figures and replace it with a specific minimum basic wind speed applicable to each of the different Risk Categories specified in this section. Replacement of the referenced Figures (1609A, 1609B and 1609C) is only intended to stop the user from being forwarded to the three figures (maps) for the purpose of establishing the minimum basic wind speed applicable to the structure. This Houston amendment does not actually eliminate the three figures (Maps) from the Houston Adopted IBC (2012).

An unintended result of this Houston modification to simplify the minimum basic wind speed design for structures results in an assumption that these prescriptive wind speeds also regulate the glazing provisions for wind-borne debris regions as it has been assumed by some that Figures 1609A, 1609B and 1609C were deleted. This is not the case.

Each of these three figures (1609A, 1609B and 1609C) continues to be part of the Houston Adopted IBC (2012). As a result it is intended that the specific provisions of the definition of "**WIND-BORNE DEBRIS REGION**" located in Section 202.1 of the Houston Adopted IBC (2012) continue to apply to applicable windows and glazing located within the exterior walls of all new structures constructed under the Houston Adopted IBC (2012).



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WIND-BORNE DEBRIS REGION. Areas within hurricane-prone regions located:

1. Within 1 mile (1.61 km) of the coastal mean high water line where the ultimate design wind speed, V_{ult} , is 130 mph (58 m/s) or greater; or
2. In areas where the ultimate design wind speed is 140 mph (63.6 m/s) or greater; or Hawaii.

For Risk Category II buildings and structures and Risk Category III buildings and structures, except health care facilities, the windborne debris region shall be based on Figure 1609A. For Risk Category IV buildings and structures and Risk Category III health care facilities, the windborne debris region shall be based on Figure 1609B.

IBC (2012) Commentary: However, this definition of the wind-borne debris regions provides somewhat of an exception by allowing Figure 1609A to be used for establishing the wind-borne debris regions that are applicable to Risk Category III structures, other than health care facilities. This results in wind-borne debris regions applicable to Risk Category III (other than health care facilities) that are consistent with the areas that were defined in the prior editions of the code. At the same time, it should be noted that the wind-borne debris region established by Figure 1609B for Risk Category IV, as well as health care facilities that are Risk Category III, is an expansion of the wind-borne debris region defined in prior editions of the code.

As indicated in the definition and the excerpt from the IBC (2012) Commentary shown above; the windborne debris region shall be based on Figure 1609A – *Ultimate Design Wind Speeds, V_{ult}* , For Risk Category II buildings and Other Structures Risk even though the structures may actually be classified as a Risk Category II and III structure, except for health care facilities.

Based on the code provisions and intent of the definition "**WIND-BORNE DEBRIS REGION**" in Section 202.1 of the Houston Adopted IBC (2012) all glazing located in the exterior walls of a Risk Category III building would be based on the Houston specified minimum basic wind speed permitted for a Risk Category II structure. (IE: 139 mph.) This would apply to structures including but not limited to an elementary or secondary school with an occupant load greater than 250. The remaining building design would require compliance with the minimum basic wind speed design designated for a Risk Category III structure. (IE: 150 mph.)

Approved:


Earl N. Greer, Building Official



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2009 IECC and ASHRAE 90.1-2007

No:	2012-R01	Page:	1	of	1
PUBLICATION:	April 9, 2014				
SUBJECT:	Rooftop Applications Allowed Under the IRC				
CODE(S):	Residential Code				
SECTION(S)	101.2				

The scope of the Houston Residential Code is limited to three stories in height above grade plane. This interpretation is to clarify which rooftop structures are permitted in a three story residence without being considered a fourth story as it applies to the Residential Code.

Height, story is defined as the vertical distance from top to top of two successive tiers of beams or finished floor surfaces; and for the topmost story, from the top of the floor finish to the top of the ceiling joists or, where there is not a ceiling to the top of the roof rafters.

The following minor rooftop applications will not be considered as a fourth story:

- The stairway and enclosure with the minimum size for an interior landing leading directly to the roof.
- Exterior roof landing with minimum overhang for the required landing area.
- A mechanical room used exclusively to house mechanical equipment, with an equipment layout submitted in the plans.
- An open trellis, lattice or similar shade structure.

This interpretation will apply to plans submitted for the first time with an original application date on or after May 15, 2014.

Approved:

Earl N. Greer, Building Official



**City of Houston
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2009 IECC and ASHRAE 90.1-2007

CW No:	2012-R02	Page:	1	of	1
PUBLICATION:	February 14, 1989				
SUBJECT:	Residential Setback				
CODE(S):	Residential & Building				
SECTION(S)	R102 (IRC) and 102 (IBC)				

As established by Planning and Development, the location of residences relative to the frontal setback line will be considered in compliance when the outside face of the front wall is behind the setback line. Eaves and gutter overhangs, bay windows, and other limited architectural protrusions into the setback area are acceptable.

Approved:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Earl N. Greer".

Earl N. Greer, Building Official



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CW No:	2012-R03	Page:	1	of	2
PUBLICATION:	April 21, 1995				
SUBJECT:	Utility Inspection Procedure				
CODE(S):	Mechanical & Residential				
SECTION(S)	115 (UMC) and R109 (IRC)				

The following procedure applies only to dwellings of occupancy classification R-3.

A mechanical contractor may obtain a "utility inspection" up to 10 days prior to installing a condensing unit and/or kitchen ventilator provided the following conditions are met:

1. A temporary inspection fee has been paid in accordance with Section 118.3.2 of the Building Code. Such fee shall be paid by obtaining a separate HVAC permit in addition to the regular installation permit. The utility permit must be specified at the time of application as an "AY" permit type.
2. All other components of the HVAC system are complete and installed in accordance with code requirements.
3. Kitchen Ventilation:
 - (i) Ductwork serving future ventilation equipment, whether such ductwork is installed underground, within kitchen cabinetwork or elsewhere, must be installed prior to the utility inspection, be in accordance with code and prepared to accept the proposed ventilation equipment.
 - (ii) Electrical wiring serving future kitchen ventilation equipment shall be installed prior to the utility inspection, be in accordance with code and prepared to accept the proposed ventilation equipment.



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CW No:	2012-R03	Page:	2	of	2
Utility Inspection Procedure continued					

4. Air-Conditioning Condensing Unit:

- (i) Refrigeration piping, pipe insulation and control wiring serving future condensing unit(s) shall be installed to the point of connection to the proposed condensing unit, be in accordance with the code and prepared to accept the condensing unit(s).
- (ii) Electrical wiring serving a future condensing unit(s) shall be installed prior to the utility inspection, be in accordance with code and prepared to accept the proposed condensing unit(s).

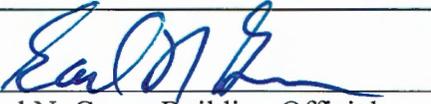
5. Final Inspection:

- (i) Upon installation of the ventilation or condensing unit, the mechanical contractor (permittee) shall notify the Mechanical Section in a manner established and consistent with the scheduling of any other inspection and shall request a final utility inspection. The mechanical contractor shall make all necessary preparations with builders, homeowners, etc., to facilitate the inspector's access to the property at the time of inspection.
- (ii) Such utility inspection shall be secured within ten (10) working days of the date of installation of either the proposed ventilation equipment or proposed condensing unit.

6. Non Conformance Sanctions:

- (i) Mechanical contractors (permittee), upon failure to secure final inspection as indicated in item 5 above, will be subject to sanctions including but not limited to the following:
 - a. The contractor's ability to obtain permits will be suspended until compliance is secured.
 - b. A Municipal Court citation may be issued pursuant to Section 110.2 of the Mechanical Code.
 - c. Additional use of the Utility Inspection procedure will be suspended.

Approved:


Earl N. Greer, Building Official



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No:	2012-R04	Page:	1	of	1
PUBLICATION:	April 16, 2014				
SUBJECT:	Residential Fire-Ratings and Location				
CODE(S):	Residential				
SECTION(S)	R302.1				

The residential code requires fire rating for construction and projections located within the minimum fire separation distance to the property line. This is to clarify the extent of rating for construction and projections of various types.

- Within 3 feet of the property line openings are not allowed.
- At 2 feet or less from the property line projections are not allowed.
- Stairs are allowed within 3 feet of the property line provided the side of the stair, parallel and closest to the property line is protected up to, and including, any required handrails or guardrails, whichever is higher, with a one hour rating.
- Minor shade structures, not exceeding 200 square feet that do not have a solid roof, and are not part of the egress path, are allowed with one hour rating of the columns and beams.
- Noncombustible stairs that were previously approved for permitting may utilize bullet point three or have the one hour rating protected with properly applied intumescent coating.

Any construction, walls, or projections, 3 feet or less from the property line shall have a maintenance agreement with the adjacent property owner.

Approved:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Earl N. Greer", written over a horizontal line.

Earl N. Greer, Building Official



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2009 IECC and ASHRAE 90.1-2007

No:	2012-R05	Page:	1	of	1
PUBLICATION:	October 7, 2013				
SUBJECT:	Continuity of Fire-Resistance-Rated Wall for Houses on Block & Base Foundations.				
CODE(S):	Residential				
SECTION(S)	R302.1, R302.2.1 and Tables R302.1(1) and R302.1(2)				

For clarification of the intent of the code, wall continuity must be maintained below the wall and through the block and base foundation wherever a fire-resistance-rating is required for the wall of a single family residence on block & base foundation is required to have a fire-resistance rating for the exterior wall based on the fire separation distance. The fire-resistance-rated wall or assembly "shall be continuous from the foundation to the underside of the roof sheathing".

Section R302.1 requires fire resistance rating for the full height of the exterior walls. Only foundation vents installed in compliance with the International Residential Code (IRC) are permitted as per exception No.5 of Section R302.1.

IRC Section R302.2.1 also requires continuity of the fire-resistance-rated wall separating townhouses.

For additional information reference is made to Building Code Enforcement standard drawings numbered 12-05-R and 12-06-R.

Approved:


Earl N. Greer, Building Official



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CW No:	2012-R06	Page:	1	of	1
PUBLICATION:	December 11, 2014				
SUBJECT:	Glass Block in Exterior Fire-Rated Walls				
CODE(S):	Residential & Building				
SECTION(S)	R302.1 (IRC), Table 705.8 (IBC)				

The code prohibits openings in exterior walls located within the minimum fire separation distance to the property line. In Group R-3 single family residences where openings are prohibited, fire-resistance rated masonry unit glass block may be used as part of the fire-resistance rated wall subject to the following criteria:

- The fire-resistance rating is based on NFPA 357 or UL 9 testing criteria with a hose stream test.
- The fire-resistance rated glass block portion of the wall is non-load bearing.
- The fire-resistance rated glass block is installed as a fixed partition that is not openable or moveable.
- Projections using glass block are not allowed.
- The maximum size area for the fire-resistance rated glass block is 120 square feet with the aggregate width at any floor level not to exceed 25 percent of the length of the wall.

Any construction, walls, or projections, 3 feet or less from the property line shall have a maintenance agreement with the adjacent property owner.

Approved:


Earl N. Greer, Building Official



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CW No:	2012-R07	Page:	1	of	1
PUBLICATION:	December 2, 2002				
SUBJECT:	Residential Garage Disappearing Stairs and Other Attic Access Openings				
CODE(S):	Residential				
SECTION(S)	R302.6				

Section R302.6 of the Residential Code states in part:

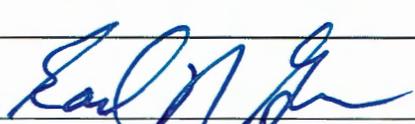
“Attic disappearing stairs shall be permitted to be installed in the garage ceiling provided the exposed panel is not less than $\frac{3}{8}$ inch thick fire-retardant-treated plywood or covered with a minimum 16 gage sheet metal.”

In addition to these two methods identified in the code for garage separations, the following methods are also acceptable for protecting the attic disappearing stairs and other attic access openings:

- untreated plywood protected with $\frac{1}{2}$ inch thick gypsum board
- untreated plywood protected with an intumescent paint

In all cases the opening protection material is applied to the garage side of the plywood.

Approved:


Earl N. Greer, Building Official



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CW No:	2012-R08	Page:	1	of	1
PUBLICATION:	January 15, 1990				
SUBJECT:	Existing Bedroom Windows				
CODE(S):	Residential				
SECTION(S)	R310.1.1				

Existing bedroom windows, including the frames that do not meet the current code may be replaced with not less than the same size opening in the same location.

All replaced glass will be required to meet the safety glazing requirements of section R308 and any applicable Energy Code requirements.

Approved:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Earl N. Greer".

Earl N. Greer, Building Official



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CW No:	2012-R09	Page:	1	of	1
PUBLICATION:	April 13, 2009				
SUBJECT:	Residential Post Tension Foundation				
CODE(S):	Residential				
SECTION(S)	R401.2				

A foundation for a residential structure or addition that is designed as a post-tension building element shall be documented in accordance with Section 1705.3 of the Building Code. This shall include sealed engineering design and qualified special inspection reports.

Approved:


Earl N. Greer, Building Official



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CW No:	2012-R10	Page:	1	of	1
PUBLICATION:	Revision December 10, 2013				
SUBJECT:	Block and Base Foundations				
CODE(S):	Residential & Building				
SECTION(S)	R403.1 & R403.2 (IRC) and 1809.9(IBC)				

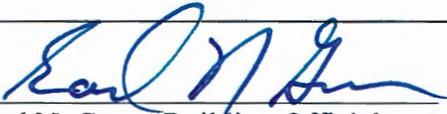
This policy is an acceptable alternate as per Section 104.11 of the Building Code for existing buildings when performing maintenance or repair of existing block and base foundations. This alternative shall apply to conventional light-frame construction designed with girders and supported on blocks and bases in such a manner that the building can be easily leveled any time after the full load has been applied. For repair of existing block and base foundations the following apply:

1. All loose material and vegetation must be removed to ensure solid bearing beneath bases.
2. End joints of girders shall occur over supports.
3. Minimum thickness of concrete bases shall be 4 inches.
4. The minimum width of the structure shall not be less than the overall height.
5. Girders shall not be placed further than the depth of the joist from the exterior wall.

For new and relocated buildings, as well as additions, block and base foundations shall be designed by a Texas registered Professional Engineer to comply with the applicable code sections, or in accordance with Code Enforcement Drawing #13-05-R

This interpretation is applicable to all building plans submitted on or after March 1, 2014.

Approved:


Earl N. Greer, Building Official



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No:	2012-R11	Page:	1	of	1
PUBLICATION:	July 11, 2013				
SUBJECT:	Design Values for visually graded Southern Pine dimensional lumber				
CODE(S):	Residential and Building				
SECTION(S)	Various				

Effective June 1, 2013, the Southern Forest Products Association modified and reduced the recognized design allowances of visually graded Southern Yellow Pine lumber.

The 2012 Building and Residential Codes were published and adopted prior to these reductions being known or published and currently contain less stringent allowances.

In response to this industry change, the City of Houston will utilize the new recognized span tables published by the Southern Pine Inspection Bureau as of June 1.

For ease of use, the span tables are included herein for reference and replace the following tables:

IRC

Floor Joists	R502.3.1 (1) - R502.3.1(2)
Cantilever Spans	R502.3.3 (1) - R502.3.3(2)
Girder and Header Spans	R502.5 (1) - R502.5(2)
Ceiling Joists	R802.4 (1) - R802.4(2)
Rafter Spans	R802.5.1 (1) - R802.5.1(8)

IBC

Floor Joists	2308.8(1) – 2308.8(2)
Header and Girder	2308.9.5 and 2308.9.6
Ceiling Joists	2308.10.2(1) - 2308.10.2(2)
Rafter Spans	2308.10.3(1) - 2308.10.3(6)

This change will not affect currently approved projects or plans that are in the plan review process nor other lumber species.

Approved:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Earl N. Greer".

Earl N. Greer, Building Official



City of Houston
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CODE WORD 2012

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2009 IECC and ASHRAE 90.1-2007

CW No:	2012-R12	Page:	1	of	1
PUBLICATION:	March 11, 1994				
SUBJECT:	Condensate Removal				
CODE(S):	Residential & Mechanical				
SECTION(S)	M1411.3 (IRC) and 312 (UMC)				

R-3 Occupancies

Air conditioning units installed in closets of R-3 residential buildings may discharge condensate into a funnel drain without a trap primer, provided that: the trap is above the floor, the funnel is above the platform and is accessible when the closet door is open.

All other occupancies

In any occupancy, when a cooling coil or cooling unit is located in an area where the required secondary condensate drain pipe cannot be routed to a point which can readily be observed, the secondary drain pan or standing overflow outlet may be connected to the main drain line downstream of the primary drain pan provided the following requirements are met:

1. A float-switch designed to shut off the cooling unit is installed in the primary drain pan.
2. Appropriate fittings for the condensate piping in use are employed to make the secondary to primary pipe connection.
3. Adequate pipe insulation is installed on and around the secondary to primary pipe connection.

Condensate drains shall not connect to the tailpiece of a kitchen sink or to any such fixture serving a food preparation area, nor shall secondary drains be stubbed-out over any such fixture in a food preparation area.

Approved:


Earl N. Greer, Building Official



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2012 IBC, 2012 IRC, 2014 NEC, 2012 UMC, 2012 UPC,
2009 IECC and ASHRAE 90.1-2007

CW No:	2012-R13	Page:	1	of	1
PUBLICATION:	April 29, 1987				
SUBJECT:	Combustion Air				
CODE(S):	Mechanical & Residential				
SECTION(S)	701.5 (UMC) and G2407.6.2 (IRC)				

As an alternate to the requirements of one half of the required combustion air opening being located within the lower 12 inches, all combustion air openings in an enclosure may be located within the upper 12 inches of the enclosure, provided there is an unobstructed area equal to twice the required opening area extending to the firebox.

Approved:

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Earl N. Greer, Building Official



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2009 IECC and ASHRAE 90.1-2007

CW No:	2012-R14	Page:	1	of	1
PUBLICATION:	February 15, 1995				
SUBJECT:	Attic Access to Gas Fired Furnaces				
CODE(S):	Mechanical & Residential				
SECTION(S)	904.1 (UMC) and G2406.2 (IRC)				

An access opening to a warm-air furnace located in a ventilated attic may be placed in the ceiling of a bedroom.

Approved:


Earl N. Greer, Building Official



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2009 IECC and ASHRAE 90.1-2007

CW No:	2012-R15	Page:	1	of	1
PUBLICATION:	April 1, 1991				
SUBJECT:	Size of Potable Water Piping				
CODE(S):	Residential & Plumbing				
SECTION(S)	P2903 (IRC) and 610 (UPC)				

	Fixture Units		=	Total Fixtures
	<i>Allowed</i>	<i>Each Item</i>		<i>Units</i>
Water Closets	2	3	=	6
Bathtubs (with or without shower head over)	2	2	=	4
Shower	1	2	=	2
Lavatory	3	1	=	3
Kitchen Sink	1	2	=	2
Clothes washer	1	2	=	2
Hose Bibb	1	3	=	3

Total = 22

Any residential remodel or addition which would exceed a total of 22 fixture units will be required to comply with the current code requirements for water sizing. (EXCEPTION: A residential remodel or addition which would total 23 or 24 fixture units may be approved by the Plumbing Division Manager.)

The City of Houston will allow the following sizing on existing residences being remodeled or added on to with an existing 5/8" meter and 3/4" building supply.

Current Code would require a 1" water meter and a 1" building supply for the same fixture total. (NOTE: The above information is based on an average 100' developed length from the meter to the farthest most outlet on the water system using Table 6-4., Pressure Range 30-45 psi)

This interpretation is only valid for additions and remodels of single family residences.

Approved: 
Earl N. Greer, Building Official



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No:	2012-R16	Page:	1	of	1
PUBLICATION:	August 13, 2013				
SUBJECT:	Water Pressure Testing				
CODE(S):	Residential and Plumbing				
SECTION(S)	P2903.3 (IRC) and 608.1 (UPC)				

The requirements for minimum water pressure are described differently in the International Residential Code and the Uniform Plumbing Code although they both set the minimum water supply pressure required for a building. Section P2903.3 of the IRC requires a static pressure of 40 psi at the building entrance while Section 608.1 of the UPC requires a residual pressure of 15 psi after accounting for pressure losses. They are considered equivalent and either may be accepted for a new single family residence.

New single family homes will be tested for both the static and residual pressures and must comply with at least one of these standards. A water pressure test of both static and residual shall be performed at the rough piping inspection, if the permanent water supply is available and connected, or at final inspection if the water supply was not available at the rough inspection. If the pressure is not in compliance with at least one of these test standards for either static or residual pressure, the developer/applicant will be required to modify the system to meet the standard, which in some cases may require that a tank and pump be installed.

Approved:


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CW No:	2012-M01	Page:	1	of	2
PUBLICATION:	October 15, 1996				
SUBJECT:	Utility Release Option				
CODE(S):	Mechanical, Electrical & Plumbing				
SECTION(S)	111 (UMC), 103 (UPC), 302.1 (NEC)				

PURPOSE: Utility release options allow such items as dishwashers, ranges, condensing units, charcoal cooktops and other such fixtures and appliances to be absent from the completed residence during the final inspection while providing approval for the release of utility connections.

PERMIT: A permit for each craft involved in a particular appliance or fixture is required in order to facilitate a Utility Release Option. Permits must be purchased at the same time the regular permit is obtained or at any point during construction of the house. This permit is a separate distinct project number from the original and should indicate "for appliances not set. REF: _____" (original project number)

PROCEDURE

Plumbing

A "temporary gas permit" must be obtained by the licensed plumber using the project number of the primary construction project. Contractors shall schedule a final inspection as usual. The existence of a temporary gas permit will indicate to the inspector that certain plumbing items will be absent. At the time the inspection is called into the Plumbing Section, the contractor shall clearly indicate that there is a temporary gas permit and that certain plumbing items will be absent at the time of the final inspection. All plumbing other than the specific item(s) to remain absent shall be complete and in compliance with the code. Upon approval by the inspector, the temporary gas permit will allow the gas utility company to install the gas meter.

The primary project will not be fully finalized until the absent appliances or fixtures are installed and inspected by the plumbing inspector. The primary project will remain active for a period of one-hundred eighty (180) days. During that period, it is expected that the absent equipment or fixture will be installed and inspected.

The plumbing contractor must remain vigilant and secure inspection on the primary permit as soon as the absent plumbing items are completed.



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CW No:	2012-M01	Page:	2	of	2
Utility Release Option continued					

Mechanical

Air conditioning contractors who will complete the installation of the environmental air conditioning system less the condensing unit, and/or complete the installation of the air-conditioning system less the kitchen ventilation device, must follow the provisions of Code Word 2006-34.

Electrical

A "Miscellaneous Electrical Permit" a separate distinct project number for "appliances not set REF: _____" for those items that will be absent at the time of final inspection must be obtained by the Master Electrician or Residential Appliance Installation Contractor using a new project number. This type of permit is called a "single trade miscellaneous permit". Contractors shall schedule a final inspection as usual. The existence of a miscellaneous permit will indicate to the inspector that certain electrical items will be absent. At the time the inspection is called into the Electrical Section, the contractor shall clearly indicate that there is a miscellaneous permit and that certain electrical items will be absent at the time of final inspection. All electrical other than the specific item(s) to remain absent shall be complete and in compliance with the code. Upon approval by the inspector, the electrical permit on the primary project number will be finalized. The miscellaneous permit remains active and at such time the absent items are complete, the contractor must call for inspection using the single trade miscellaneous permit number.

The single-trade project will remain active for a period of one-hundred eight (180) days. During that period, it is expected that the absent connection, equipment or fixture will be installed and inspected.

The electrical contractor or Residential Appliance Installation Contractor must remain vigilant and secure inspection as soon as the absent items have been installed.

Important Note:

Construction superintendents, builders, developers or others in control of construction projects must direct their MEP subcontractors to contact the Building Inspection Division, City of Houston, for instructions and assistance in establishing the appropriate utility release permits. Only licensed contractors may obtain the necessary permits.

Plumbing Inspection Section.....832-394-8870
Electrical Inspection Section.....832-394-8860
Mechanical Inspection Section.....832-394-8850

Approved: 
 Earl N. Greer, Building Official



City of Houston
Building Inspection
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2012 IBC, 2012 IRC, 2014 NEC, 2012 UMC, 2012 UPC,
2009 IECC and ASHRAE 90.1-2007

CW No:	2012-M02	Page:	1	of	2
PUBLICATION:	April 21, 1995				
SUBJECT:	Utility Inspection Procedure				
CODE(S):	Mechanical & Residential				
SECTION(S)	115 (UMC) and R109 (IRC)				

The following procedure applies only to dwellings of occupancy classification R-3.

A mechanical contractor may obtain a "utility inspection" up to 10 days prior to installing a condensing unit and/or kitchen ventilator provided the following conditions are met:

1. A temporary inspection fee has been paid in accordance with Section 118.3.2 of the Building Code. Such fee shall be paid by obtaining a separate HVAC permit in addition to the regular installation permit. The utility permit must be specified at the time of application as an "AY" permit type.
2. All other components of the HVAC system are complete and installed in accordance with code requirements.
3. Kitchen Ventilation:
 - (i) Ductwork serving future ventilation equipment, whether such ductwork is installed underground, within kitchen cabinetwork or elsewhere, must be installed prior to the utility inspection, be in accordance with code and prepared to accept the proposed ventilation equipment.
 - (ii) Electrical wiring serving future kitchen ventilation equipment shall be installed prior to the utility inspection, be in accordance with code and prepared to accept the proposed ventilation equipment.



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CW No:	2012-M02	Page:	2	of	2
Utility Inspection Procedure continued					

4. Air-Conditioning Condensing Unit:

- (i) Refrigeration piping, pipe insulation and control wiring serving future condensing unit(s) shall be installed to the point of connection to the proposed condensing unit, be in accordance with the code and prepared to accept the condensing unit(s).
- (ii) Electrical wiring serving a future condensing unit(s) shall be installed prior to the utility inspection, be in accordance with code and prepared to accept the proposed condensing unit(s).

5. Final Inspection:

- (i) Upon installation of the ventilation or condensing unit, the mechanical contractor (permittee) shall notify the Mechanical Section in a manner established and consistent with the scheduling of any other inspection and shall request a final utility inspection. The mechanical contractor shall make all necessary preparations with builders, homeowners, etc., to facilitate the inspector's access to the property at the time of inspection.
- (ii) Such utility inspection shall be secured within ten (10) working days of the date of installation of either the proposed ventilation equipment or proposed condensing unit.

6. Non Conformance Sanctions:

- (i) Mechanical contractors (permittee), upon failure to secure final inspection as indicated in item 5 above, will be subject to sanctions including but not limited to the following:
 - a. The contractor's ability to obtain permits will be suspended until compliance is secured.
 - b. A Municipal Court citation may be issued pursuant to Section 110.2 of the Mechanical Code.
 - c. Additional use of the Utility Inspection procedure will be suspended.

Approved:


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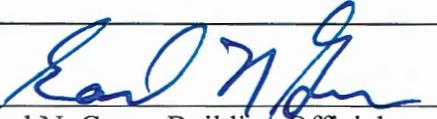
CW No:	2012-M03	Page:	1	of	1
PUBLICATION:	June 3, 1988				
SUBJECT:	Natural Gas Piping in Air Plenums and Ducts				
CODE(S):	Mechanical				
SECTION(S)	303				

Fuel gas piping may be installed in accessible above-ceiling spaces used as a return air plenum provided no valves or pipe unions are located in such spaces.

Fuel gas piping shall not be run through a circulating air duct, ventilating duct, chimney or gas vent. They are allowed to run through a combustion air duct or combustion air chase or enclosure.

CROSS REFERENCE: NFPA 54, Houston Plumbing Code Section 1210.2.3.

Approved:


Earl N. Greer, Building Official



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CW No:	2012-M04	Page:	1	of	1
PUBLICATION:	March 11, 1994				
SUBJECT:	Condensate Removal				
CODE(S):	Residential & Mechanical				
SECTION(S)	M1411.3 (IRC) and 312 (UMC)				

R-3 Occupancies

Air conditioning units installed in closets of R-3 residential buildings may discharge condensate into a funnel drain without a trap primer, provided that: the trap is above the floor, the funnel is above the platform and is accessible when the closet door is open.

All other occupancies

In any occupancy, when a cooling coil or cooling unit is located in an area where the required secondary condensate drain pipe cannot be routed to a point which can readily be observed, the secondary drain pan or standing overflow outlet may be connected to the main drain line downstream of the primary drain pan provided the following requirements are met:

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2. Appropriate fittings for the condensate piping in use are employed to make the secondary to primary pipe connection.
3. Adequate pipe insulation is installed on and around the secondary to primary pipe connection.

Condensate drains shall not connect to the tailpiece of a kitchen sink or to any such fixture serving a food preparation area, nor shall secondary drains be stubbed-out over any such fixture in a food preparation area.

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CW No:	2012-M05	Page:	1	of	1
PUBLICATION:	February 4, 1994				
SUBJECT:	Fire and Radiation Dampers in Existing Fire-rated Ceiling Assemblies				
CODE(S):	Mechanical				
SECTION(S)	605				

Existing fire or radiation dampers may remain in existing fire-rated ceiling assemblies provided such fire or radiation dampers are not removed and reinstalled, or altered. Additionally, such fire or radiation dampers must exist in a condition acceptable to code regulations in effect at the time of their original installation.

Existing fire or radiation dampers in existing ceiling assemblies may be relocated within the ceiling assembly provided such relocation does not require the fire or radiation damper assembly to be disconnected from its existing connecting air duct. Additional ducts shall not be added to facilitate relocation of the fire or radiation damper assembly.

New openings in the ceiling assembly shall be protected in accordance with Section 605 of the Houston Mechanical Code.

Approved:


Earl N. Greer, Building Official



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CW No:	2012-M06	Page:	1	of	1
PUBLICATION:	June 11, 1994				
SUBJECT:	Listed Type 1 Commercial Kitchen Exhaust Systems				
CODE(S):	Mechanical				
SECTION(S)	507 and 508				

Exhaust hoods tested in accordance with U.L. Standard 710, listed and labeled by an approved testing agency are acceptable for use with commercial cooking equipment if installed in accordance with manufacturer's instructions and terms of their listing.

Ancillary components of the exhaust hood must comply with the terms of listing. Where listing conditions or manufacturer's instructions do not address a specific item, the provisions of Sections 507 and 508 of the Houston Mechanical Code shall govern that item.

The components and configuration of each such system incorporating a listed hood is subject to the review and approval of the Building Official prior to its installation. Plans shall be submitted for review in accordance with Section 112 of the Houston Uniform Mechanical Code.

Approved:


Earl N. Greer, Building Official



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CW No:	2012-M07	Page:	1	of	1
PUBLICATION:	April 29, 1987				
SUBJECT:	Combustion Air				
CODE(S):	Mechanical & Residential				
SECTION(S)	701.5 (UMC) and G2407.6.2 (IRC)				

As an alternate to the requirements of one half of the required combustion air opening being located within the lower 12 inches, all combustion air openings in an enclosure may be located within the upper 12 inches of the enclosure, provided there is an unobstructed area equal to twice the required opening area extending to the firebox.

Approved:

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CW No:	2012-M08	Page:	1	of	1
PUBLICATION:	February 15, 1995				
SUBJECT:	Attic Access to Gas Fired Furnaces				
CODE(S):	Mechanical & Residential				
SECTION(S)	904.1 (UMC) and G2406.2 (IRC)				

An access opening to a warm-air furnace located in a ventilated attic may be placed in the ceiling of a bedroom.

Approved:


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Code Word No. M-09

Ventilation Air Supply

**TABLE 402.1
MINIMUM VENTILATION RATES IN BREATHING ZONE^{1, 2}**

OCCUPANCY CATEGORY ⁴	PEOPLE OUTDOOR Air Rate R _P (cfm/person)	AREA OUTDOOR Air Rate R _A (cfm/ft ²)	DEFAULT OCCUPANT Density ³ (people/1000 ft ²)
CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES			
Booking/waiting	7.5	0.06	50
Cell	5	0.12	25
Day room	5	0.06	30
Guard stations	5	0.06	15
DRY CLEANERS / LAUNDRIES			
Coin-operated dry cleaner	15	—	20
Coin-operated laundries	7.5	0.06	20
Commercial dry cleaner	30	0.06	30
Commercial laundry	25	—	10
Storage, pick up	7.5	0.12	30
EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES			
Art classroom	10	0.18	20
Classrooms (ages 5-8)	10	0.12	25
Classrooms (age 9 plus)	10	0.12	35
Computer lab	10	0.12	25
Day care (through age 4)	10	0.18	25
Day care sickroom	10	0.18	25
Lecture classroom	7.5	0.06	65
Lecture hall (fixed seats)	7.5	0.06	150
Media center ^a	10	0.12	25
Music/theater/dance	10	0.06	35
Multi-use assembly	7.5	0.06	100
Science laboratories ^e	10	0.18	25
University/college laboratories	10	0.18	25
Wood/metal shop	10	0.18	20



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OCCUPANCY CATEGORY ⁴	PEOPLE OUTDOOR Air Rate R _P (cfm/person)	AREA OUTDOOR Air Rate R _A (cfm/ft ²)	DEFAULT OCCUPANT Density ³ (people/1000 ft ²)
FOOD AND BEVERAGE SERVICE			
Bars, cocktail lounges	7.5	0.18	100
Cafeteria/fast food dining	7.5	0.18	100
Kitchen (cooking) ⁱ	7.5	0.12	20
Restaurant dining rooms	7.5	0.18	70
GENERAL			
Break rooms	5	0.06	25
Coffee stations	5	0.06	20
Conference/meeting	5	0.06	50
Corridors	—	0.06	—
Occupiable storage rooms for liquids or gels ^b	5	0.12	2
HOSPITALS, NURSING AND CONVALESCENT HOMES			
Autopsy rooms	—	0.5	20
Medical Procedure rooms (Dental Office)	15	—	20
Operating rooms	30	—	20
Patient rooms	25	—	10
Physical therapy	15	—	20
Recovery and ICU	15	—	20
HOTELS, MOTELS, RESORTS, DORMITORIES			
Bedroom/living room	5	0.06	10
Barracks sleeping areas	5	0.06	20
Dormitory sleeping areas	5	0.06	—
Gambling casinos	7.5	0.16	—
Laundry rooms, central	5	0.12	10
Laundry rooms with in dwelling units	5	0.12	10
Lobbies/pre-function	7.5	0.06	30
Multipurpose assembly	5	0.06	120
OFFICE BUILDINGS			
Breakrooms	5	0.12	50
Occupiable storage rooms for dry materials	5	0.06	2
Office space	5	0.06	5
Main entry lobbies	5	0.06	10
Reception areas	5	0.06	30
Telephone/data entry	5	0.06	60



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OCCUPANCY CATEGORY ⁴	PEOPLE OUTDOOR Air Rate R _P (cfm/person)	AREA OUTDOOR Air Rate R _A (cfm/ft ²)	DEFAULT OCCUPANT Density ³ (people/1000 ft ²)
MISCELLANEOUS SPACES			
Bank or bank lobbies	7.5	0.06	15
Bank vaults/safe deposit	5	0.06	5
Computer (not printing)	5	0.06	4
General manufacturing (excludes heavy industrial and processes using chemicals)	10	0.18	7
Pharmacy (prep. area)	5	0.18	10
Photo studios	5	0.12	10
Shipping/receiving ^b	10	0.12	2
Sorting, packing, light assembly	7.5	0.12	7
Telephone closets	—	0.00	—
Transportation waiting	7.5	0.06	100
Warehouses ^b	10	0.06	—
PUBLIC ASSEMBLY SPACES			
Auditorium seating area	5	0.06	150
Courtrooms	5	0.06	70
Legislative chambers	5	0.06	50
Libraries	5	0.12	10
Lobbies	5	0.06	150
Museums (children's)	7.5	0.12	40
Museums/galleries	7.5	0.06	40
Places of religious worship	5	0.06	120
RESIDENTIAL			
Common corridors	—	0.06	—
Dwelling unit ^{f, g}	5	0.06	See footnote f
RETAIL			
Sales (except as below)	7.5	0.12	15
Barber shop	7.5	0.06	25
Beauty and nail salons ^h	25	0.25	25
Coin-operated laundries	7.5	0.12	25
Mall common areas	7.5	0.06	40
Pet shops (animal areas)	7.5	0.18	10



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OCCUPANCY CATEGORY ⁴	PEOPLE OUTDOOR Air Rate R _P (cfm/person)	AREA OUTDOOR Air Rate R _A (cfm/ft ²)	DEFAULT OCCUPANT Density ³ (people/1000 ft ²)
Supermarket	7.5	0.06	8
SPORTS AND ENTERTAINMENT			
Bowling alley (seating)	10	0.12	40
Disco/dance floors	20	0.06	100
Gambling casinos	7.5	0.18	120
Game arcades	7.5	0.18	20
Gym, stadium (play area)	—	0.30	30
Health club/aerobics room	20	0.06	40
Health club/weight rooms	20	0.06	10
Sports arena (play area)	—	0.30	—
Spectator areas	7.5	0.06	150
Stages, studios ^d	10	0.06	70
Swimming (pool & deck) ^e	—	0.48	—

For SI units: 1 cubic foot per minute = 0.0283 m³/min, 1 square foot = 0.0929 m²

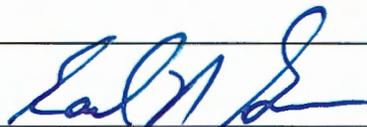
Notes:

- 1 This table applies to no-smoking areas. Rates for smoking-permitted spaces must be determined using other methods.
- 2 Volumetric airflow rates are based on an air density of 0.075 pounds of dry air per cubic foot (lb_{da}/ft³) (1.201 kg_{da}/m³), which corresponds to dry air at a barometric pressure of 1 atm (101 kPa) and an air temperature of 70°F (21°C). Rates shall be permitted to be adjusted for actual density but such adjustment is not required for compliance with this chapter.
- 3 The default occupant density shall be used where actual occupant density is not known.
- 4 Where the occupancy category for a proposed space or zone is not listed, the requirements for the listed occupancy category that is most similar in terms of occupant density, activities, and building construction shall be used.

ITEM-SPECIFIC NOTES FOR TABLE 402.1

- ^a For high school and college libraries, use values shown for Public Spaces- Library.
- ^b Rate is capable of not being sufficient where stored materials include those having potentially harmful emissions.
- ^c Rate does not allow for humidity control. Additional ventilation or dehumidification shall be permitted to be required to remove moisture.
- ^d Rate does not include special exhaust for stage effects, (e.g., dry ice vapors, smoke).
- ^e No class of air has been established for this occupancy category.
- ^f Default occupancy for dwelling units shall be two persons for studio and one-bedroom units, with one additional person for each additional bedroom.
- ^g Air from one residential dwelling shall not be recirculated or transferred to other space outside of that dwelling.
- ^h Provide minimum 20% outdoor makeup air to A/C System through fixed openings.
- ⁱ Where the hood is eliminated for enclosed single batch low temperature chemical dishwashers, the ventilation shall be designed by a licensed design professional to accommodate the latent and sensible heat load emitted from such appliances

Approved:



 Earl N. Greer, Building Official



City of Houston
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2009 IECC and ASHRAE 90.1-2007

CW No:	2012-P01	Page:	1	of	2
PUBLICATION:	October 15, 1996				
SUBJECT:	Utility Release Option				
CODE(S):	Mechanical, Electrical & Plumbing				
SECTION(S)	111 (UMC), 103 (UPC), 302.1 (NEC)				

PURPOSE: Utility release options allow such items as dishwashers, ranges, condensing units, charcoal cooktops and other such fixtures and appliances to be absent from the completed residence during the final inspection while providing approval for the release of utility connections.

PERMIT: A permit for each craft involved in a particular appliance or fixture is required in order to facilitate a Utility Release Option. Permits must be purchased at the same time the regular permit is obtained or at any point during construction of the house. This permit is a separate distinct project number from the original and should indicate "for appliances not set. REF: _____" (original project number)

PROCEDURE

Plumbing

A "temporary gas permit" must be obtained by the licensed plumber using the project number of the primary construction project. Contractors shall schedule a final inspection as usual. The existence of a temporary gas permit will indicate to the inspector that certain plumbing items will be absent. At the time the inspection is called into the Plumbing Section, the contractor shall clearly indicate that there is a temporary gas permit and that certain plumbing items will be absent at the time of the final inspection. All plumbing other than the specific item(s) to remain absent shall be complete and in compliance with the code. Upon approval by the inspector, the temporary gas permit will allow the gas utility company to install the gas meter.

The primary project will not be fully finalized until the absent appliances or fixtures are installed and inspected by the plumbing inspector. The primary project will remain active for a period of one-hundred eighty (180) days. During that period, it is expected that the absent equipment or fixture will be installed and inspected.

The plumbing contractor must remain vigilant and secure inspection on the primary permit as soon as the absent plumbing items are completed.



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CW No:	2012-P01	Page:	2	of	2
Utility Release Option continued					

Mechanical

Air conditioning contractors who will complete the installation of the environmental air conditioning system less the condensing unit, and/or complete the installation of the air-conditioning system less the kitchen ventilation device, must follow the provisions of Code Word 2006-34.

Electrical

A "Miscellaneous Electrical Permit" a separate distinct project number for "appliances not set REF: _____" for those items that will be absent at the time of final inspection must be obtained by the Master Electrician or Residential Appliance Installation Contractor using a new project number. This type of permit is called a "single trade miscellaneous permit". Contractors shall schedule a final inspection as usual. The existence of a miscellaneous permit will indicate to the inspector that certain electrical items will be absent. At the time the inspection is called into the Electrical Section, the contractor shall clearly indicate that there is a miscellaneous permit and that certain electrical items will be absent at the time of final inspection. All electrical other than the specific item(s) to remain absent shall be complete and in compliance with the code. Upon approval by the inspector, the electrical permit on the primary project number will be finalized. The miscellaneous permit remains active and at such time the absent items are complete, the contractor must call for inspection using the single trade miscellaneous permit number.

The single-trade project will remain active for a period of one-hundred eight (180) days. During that period, it is expected that the absent connection, equipment or fixture will be installed and inspected.

The electrical contractor or Residential Appliance Installation Contractor must remain vigilant and secure inspection as soon as the absent items have been installed.

Important Note:

Construction superintendents, builders, developers or others in control of construction projects must direct their MEP subcontractors to contact the Building Inspection Division, City of Houston, for instructions and assistance in establishing the appropriate utility release permits. Only licensed contractors may obtain the necessary permits.

Plumbing Inspection Section.....832-394-8870
Electrical Inspection Section.....832-394-8860
Mechanical Inspection Section.....832-394-8850

Approved:


Earl N. Greer, Building Official



City of Houston
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No:	2012-P02	Page:	1	of	1
PUBLICATION:	August 13, 2013				
SUBJECT:	Water Pressure Testing				
CODE(S):	Residential and Plumbing				
SECTION(S)	P2903.3 (IRC) and 608.1 (UPC)				

The requirements for minimum water pressure are described differently in the International Residential Code and the Uniform Plumbing Code although they both set the minimum water supply pressure required for a building. Section P2903.3 of the IRC requires a static pressure of 40 psi at the building entrance while Section 608.1 of the UPC requires a residual pressure of 15 psi after accounting for pressure losses. They are considered equivalent and either may be accepted for a new single family residence.

New single family homes will be tested for both the static and residual pressures and must comply with at least one of these standards. A water pressure test of both static and residual shall be performed at the rough piping inspection, if the permanent water supply is available and connected, or at final inspection if the water supply was not available at the rough inspection. If the pressure is not in compliance with at least one of these test standards for either static or residual pressure, the developer/applicant will be required to modify the system to meet the standard, which in some cases may require that a tank and pump be installed.

Approved:


Earl N. Greer, Building Official



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CW No:	2012-P03	Page:	1	of	1
PUBLICATION:	April 1, 1991				
SUBJECT:	Size of Potable Water Piping				
CODE(S):	Residential & Plumbing				
SECTION(S)	P2903 (IRC) and 610 (UPC)				

	Fixture Units		=	Total Fixtures
	<i>Allowed</i>	<i>Each Item</i>		<i>Units</i>
Water Closets	2	3	=	6
Bathtubs (with or without shower head over)	2	2	=	4
Shower	1	2	=	2
Lavatory	3	1	=	3
Kitchen Sink	1	2	=	2
Clothes washer	1	2	=	2
Hose Bibb	1	3	=	3

Total = 22

Any residential remodel or addition which would exceed a total of 22 fixture units will be required to comply with the current code requirements for water sizing. (EXCEPTION: A residential remodel or addition which would total 23 or 24 fixture units may be approved by the Plumbing Division Manager.)

The City of Houston will allow the following sizing on existing residences being remodeled or added on to with an existing 5/8" meter and 3/4" building supply.

Current Code would require a 1" water meter and a 1" building supply for the same fixture total. (NOTE: The above information is based on an average 100' developed length from the meter to the farthest most outlet on the water system using Table 6-4., Pressure Range 30-45 psi)

This interpretation is only valid for additions and remodels of single family residences.

Approved: 
Earl N. Greer, Building Official



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CW No:	2012-P04	Page:	1	of	1
PUBLICATION:	February 10, 2015				
SUBJECT:	Sanitary Drainage (Materials)				
CODE(S):	Plumbing				
SECTION(S)	701.1 and 715.1				

This Code Interpretation is to clarify that the use of SDR-26 building sanitary drainage pipe is an acceptable equivalent material to the code specified SDR-35 sanitary drainage pipe identified in Sections 701.1 and 715.1 of the Houston Adopted Plumbing Code for plastic drainage pipe sizes 8-inch and larger.

The material specifications identify that the outside diameter remains the same for both materials at nominal 15.300-inch. The nominal inside diameter of the pipe is reduced slightly from 7.920-inch for 8-inch SDR-35, to 7.754-inch for the same size SDR-26 pipe.

Additional differences noted include the color of the material as well as the requirement for use of fittings specifically designed for SDR 26 pipe. SDR-35 and SDR-26 pipe and fittings are not interchangeable. Both SDR-35 and SDR-26 material and fittings are color coordinated for proper application, installation and inspection. In areas subject to truck and automobile traffic, the SDR-26 material is slightly thicker providing a beneficial increase in strength.

Although the proposed SDR 26 material is not specifically identified in Section 701.1 and 715.1 of the Houston Adopted UPC (2006), where SDR-35 is specified for pipe sizes 8-inch or larger, there is no significant difference in the raw material used, the installation, or the required test standards associated with manufacture of the two products.

SDR 26 provides an increase in strength while the material and method is, for the purpose intended, equivalent to the minimum prescribed in this code in quality, strength, effectiveness, fire resistance, durability and safety.

The use of SDR-26 for pipe sizes 8-inches and larger is approved where compliance with the manufacturer's installation instructions is strictly followed.

Approved:

Earl N. Greer, Building Official



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CW No:	2012-P05	Page:	1	of	1
PUBLICATION:	November 1, 1993				
SUBJECT:	Floor Drains and Indirect Waste Receptors in Walk-in Coolers and Freezers				
CODE(S):	Plumbing & City Code of Ordinances				
SECTION(S)	801.2.2 (UPC) and 20.21 item 17 (City Code of Ordinances)				

Section 801.2.2 allows floor drains and indirect waste receptors in walk-in coolers and freezers to be connected to a separate drain line discharging to an outside receptor.

However, the Code of Ordinances 20.21, item 17 prohibits the direct connection of any floor drain or indirect waste receptor in walk-in coolers or freezers.

To maintain compatibility with the Health Department requirements, all floor drains and indirect waste receptors in walk-in coolers and freezers shall be indirectly connected to the sanitary sewer system.

Approved:


Earl N. Greer, Building Official



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CW No:	2012-P06	Page:	1	of	1
PUBLICATION:	January 4, 1996				
SUBJECT:	Grease Interceptors				
CODE(S):	Plumbing				
SECTION(S)	1014 and Table 1014.3.6				

Grease interceptors may be installed in series for one establishment provided the capacity of the first interceptor is not less than 1000 gallons and the total of all the interceptors is equal or greater than the capacity required.

Approved:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Earl N. Greer", written over a horizontal line.

Earl N. Greer, Building Official



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CW No:	2012-P07	Page:	1	of	1
PUBLICATION:	April 16, 1987				
SUBJECT:	Grease Traps				
CODE(S):	Plumbing				
SECTION(S)	1014.1				

This section requires an approved type grease trap to be installed in the waste line leading from food establishments such as restaurants, cafes, lunch counters, cafeterias, bars, clubs, and hotel kitchens where large quantities of grease may be introduced into the drainage or sewage system.

This requirement shall not apply to day-care facilities, churches, employee lunch rooms and similar occupancies utilizing domestic type cooking equipment

Approved:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Earl N. Greer", written over a horizontal line.

Earl N. Greer, Building Official



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CW No:	2012-P08	Page:	1	of	2
PUBLICATION:	September 20, 2012				
SUBJECT:	Community Grease Interceptor Requirements				
CODE(S):	Plumbing				
SECTION(S)	1014.3.4.2				

This interpretation applies to grease interceptors with multiple waste-streams in multi-tenant buildings such as food courts in malls, commercial strip developments, or mid- and high-rise buildings with food service tenants that have space limitations that prevent locating the grease interceptors at each business. Community grease interceptor systems are unique in that maintenance engineers are employed onsite, or available on call 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. In addition, the Community Grease Interceptor system must comply with all portions of Houston Amended UPC (2012). These installations feature compact designs with onsite building management and maintenance capabilities that can specifically address interceptor related issues.

While a separate grease interceptor is required for each individual fat, oil or grease (FOG) producing business specified facilities providing documentation from the building owner or building management, may utilize a community grease interceptor system for multiple tenant connections, subject to the following conditions.

Community Grease Interceptor Requirements:

- a) The building owner provides a letter on company letterhead accepting responsibility for obtaining the City of Houston's Department of Health and Human Services (HDHHS) Class A, B or C, generator operating permits for the proposed community grease interceptor. *Ref. Class definitions in: City of Houston Code of Ordinances, Ch. 47. Water & Sewers, Art. XI. Transportation and Treatment of Certain Wastes, Section 47-417.*
- b) The owner accepts responsibility for all interceptor maintenance and cleaning of all common grease interceptor systems regardless of lease agreements with tenants.
- c) Interceptors are sized appropriately per code with engineering calculations for the total load of all food service tenants connected to the individual interceptor. Each individual food service tenant shall submit these calculations when the food service tenant construction documents are submitted to the City for plan review and approval.
- d) The owner provides trained maintenance personnel 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and
- e) The owner agrees to make available to all food service tenants a current copy of the engineering calculations accurately describing all connected loads.



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Community Grease Interceptor Requirements					

In this Section, the term "business establishment" refers to the specific business that produces effluent that contain FOG's. These are generally food service establishments but may include qualified facilities or building owners complying with this interpretation.

These items must be provided for all projects affecting connected tenants as well as any proposed new connections. Projects with occupant load increases and lease expansions of existing connected tenants will require that the *Community Grease Interceptor* documentation also be attached to the construction documents when submitting to the City for plan review and permit approval.

***CITY OF HOUSTON CODE OF ORDINANCES, CH. 47. WATER & SEWERS, ART. XI.
Transportation and Treatment of Certain Wastes, Section 47-417.***

Responsibilities of Agents and Employees.

The responsibilities created under Chapter 47 Article XI, for Class A site operators, biological pretreatment service providers, disposers, generators and transporters shall extend to the owners and other persons having possession and control of the site, facilities or equipment as well as to their officers, agents and employees having responsibilities for their operations.

(Ord. No. 97-196, § 4, 2-19-97; Ord. No. 07-544, § 6, 5-9-07; Ord. No. 08-1229, § 6, 12-30-08)

Class - A Site Operator, means a person having ownership or control of a site where Class A waste is generated

Class - A Waste, means wastes and wastewater removed from domestic septic tanks used by single or multiple residential units, schools, hotels/motels, restaurants, and similar establishments that primarily generate waste of a type associated with domestic/residential uses. Class A waste does not include waste removed from a septic tank that receives non-domestic types of commercial wastewater or receives industrial wastewater, nor does the term include grease removed from a grease trap or grit trap/lint trap waste.

Class - B Waste, means oily water, FOG, grease trap waste, sewage sludge, and portable toilet waste.

Class - C Waste, means any materials collected in a septic tank, grit trap, lint trap, retention pond, utility service vault or any similar device, which materials result from or are incidental to any process of industrial, manufacturing, institutional or commercial operations including, but not limited to, mobile or stationary car or truck washing, pavement washing, environmental testing facilities and commercial laundries or Laundromats. However, this term shall not include domestic septic tank waste.

NOTE: Each generator permit or registration certificate shall be conspicuously posted at the site for which it is issued. Upon request the permit or registration certificate shall be available for inspection. Sec. 47-427. Additional agents and employees responsibilities are identified in Chapter 47 of the City Code of Ordinances Article XI

<p>Approved: </p> <p>Earl N. Greer, Building Official</p>



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CW No:	2012-P09	Page:	1	of	1
PUBLICATION:	March 6, 1995				
SUBJECT:	Floor Drains for S-1, S-2, and M Occupancies				
CODE(S):	Plumbing				
SECTION(S)	1017.1				

A separator and all necessary floor drains will be required in service station bays and repair garages. They will not be required in garages used only for vehicle parking or under service station pump canopies.

Approved: 
Earl N. Greer, Building Official



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CW No:	2012-P10	Page:	1	of	1
PUBLICATION:	March 9, 1995				
SUBJECT:	Location of Downspouts				
CODE(S):	Plumbing				
SECTION(S)	Chapter 11				

Gutters and downspouts accepting roof water are to be designed using Chapter 11, City of Houston Plumbing Code. All downspouts shall be connected to the gutter not to exceed 60' - 0" distance between downspout connections.

Approved:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Earl N. Greer", written over a horizontal line.

Earl N. Greer, Building Official



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CW No:	2012-P11	Page:	1	of	1
PUBLICATION:	February 27, 2002				
SUBJECT:	Storm Water Plan Review Requirement for Building Permits				
CODE(S):	Plumbing				
SECTION(S)	Chapter 11				

The following types of projects on private property do not require a storm water plan review:

1. Pothole repair in existing parking lots.
2. Asphalt resurfacing (not exceeding 2" in depth) of existing parking lots.
3. Sidewalks and driveways.
4. Carports constructed over an existing pavement where the construction will not cause roof drainage to cross adjacent property lines.
5. Single family residential additions on lots with an area of 15,000 sq. ft. or less and a ratio of impervious cover to lot area of 65% or less.

Notes:

-Single family lots with common driveways (example: 8-plex townhomes) are reviewed under the IBC, and they require a storm water plan review.

-Site improvement plans need to be reviewed and approved prior to submittal of complete building plans.

Approved:


Earl N. Greer, Building Official



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CW No:	2012-N01	Page:	1	of	2
PUBLICATION:	January 21, 2003				
SUBJECT:	Commercial Energy Code Compliance at Certain Stages of Construction				
CODE(S):	Commercial Energy (2009 IECC or ASHRAE 90.1-2007)				
SECTION(S)	All				

In order to provide consistency in requirements, the attached guidelines have been developed to determine the level of energy code compliance required for each type of project or stage of construction listed in the table.

For the purpose of this Code Word “building envelope” shall mean the structural portion of the building surrounding conditioned space that separates conditioned and unconditioned spaces.

City of Houston Energy Code Compliance Policy

Scope	Condition	Results
New Shell Buildings <i>(applies when the occupancy is likely to have future air conditioning or heating)</i> i.e. retail / office / warehouse	Location & extent of building envelope is not known at present <i>(i.e. spec office/warehouse)</i>	No building envelope requirements in walls or roof at this stage. Glazing must meet the maximum U-factor and SHGC* for the specified code and construction specified: *subject to projection factor reductions.
	Shell is for building that will be fully conditioned <i>(i.e. strip centers, multi-story)</i>	Full building envelope compliance required, depending on applicable code. Vestibules shall not be required unless the actual space configuration is completely known.
New Build Out <i>(first time build-out in shell structure)</i>	Shell has a compliant building envelope.	Mechanical, Electrical, and Plumbing compliance only.
	Shell has a non-compliant building envelope	Full building envelope compliance and Mechanical, Electrical, and Plumbing compliance for the new build out.
Change in Occupancy	New occupancy uses more energy.	Apply Energy Code to altered portions.
	New occupancy uses the same or less energy.	No energy requirements.
Historical Buildings		Those items that do not jeopardize the historical designation shall be required.



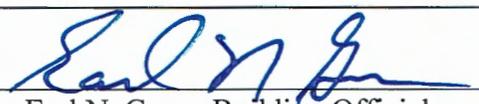
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Commercial Energy Code Compliance at Certain Stages of Construction continued					

City of Houston Energy Code Compliance Policy

Scope	Condition	Results
Previously Unconditioned Spaces <i>(adding air conditioning equipment to unconditioned spaces or buildings, or adding-on to a conditioned space inside an unconditioned space)</i> i.e. add-on to an office inside a warehouse.	All walls and roof/ceiling already exist in the unconditioned space	Building envelope components surrounding entire newly conditioned area shall comply. Other affected systems shall also comply.
	Adding a conditioned space to a previously unconditioned area with new walls or ceilings.	New and changed portions of the building envelope need to comply. Affected systems other than the building envelope components shall comply. If the new change in space configuration triggers the vestibule requirements, a vestibule shall be installed. <i>Note: ¹ Any existing wall, ceiling or roof that changes status from "not" being part of a building envelope to becoming part of a new building envelope needs to comply. ² Any building envelope that previously surrounded conditioned space is not changing status and may remain as built.</i>
Remodels / Alterations / Repairs <i>Note: Windows that are completely replaced including frame and sash must comply. Note: window glazing may be replaced without complying.</i>	Work affects the building envelope	Building envelope or portion of the building envelope must comply if a substantial full span of the wall area "corner to corner", or ceiling "edge to edge", is exposed or altered. Affected systems other than the building envelope components shall comply.
	Work does not affect the building envelope	No building envelope compliance required. Other affected systems shall comply.
Electrical <i>(Any work involving light switches or that involve partitions resulting in changing office sizes will trigger switching requirements)</i>	Work does not involve changing or adding light fixtures	No requirements for electrical budget analysis. Existing fixtures may be relocated.
	Work involves changing or adding light fixtures	In the electrical energy budget, analyze only the area to be served by the lights that are removed. Determine the Energy Code maximum wattage for just that area and the new lights can be installed as long as they comply.
	Work involves obvious overall reduction in wattage (<i>i.e. removing lights or replacement lights are all low watt</i>)	Electrical energy budget analysis does not need to be completed.

Approved: 
 Earl N. Greer, Building Official



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CW No:	2012-E01	Page:	1	of	2
PUBLICATION:	October 15, 1996				
SUBJECT:	Utility Release Option				
CODE(S):	Mechanical, Electrical & Plumbing				
SECTION(S)	111 (UMC), 103 (UPC), 302.1 (NEC)				

PURPOSE: Utility release options allow such items as dishwashers, ranges, condensing units, charcoal cooktops and other such fixtures and appliances to be absent from the completed residence during the final inspection while providing approval for the release of utility connections.

PERMIT: A permit for each craft involved in a particular appliance or fixture is required in order to facilitate a Utility Release Option. Permits must be purchased at the same time the regular permit is obtained or at any point during construction of the house. This permit is a separate distinct project number from the original and should indicate "for appliances not set. REF: _____" (original project number)

PROCEDURE

Plumbing

A "temporary gas permit" must be obtained by the licensed plumber using the project number of the primary construction project. Contractors shall schedule a final inspection as usual. The existence of a temporary gas permit will indicate to the inspector that certain plumbing items will be absent. At the time the inspection is called into the Plumbing Section, the contractor shall clearly indicate that there is a temporary gas permit and that certain plumbing items will be absent at the time of the final inspection. All plumbing other than the specific item(s) to remain absent shall be complete and in compliance with the code. Upon approval by the inspector, the temporary gas permit will allow the gas utility company to install the gas meter.

The primary project will not be fully finalized until the absent appliances or fixtures are installed and inspected by the plumbing inspector. The primary project will remain active for a period of one-hundred eighty (180) days. During that period, it is expected that the absent equipment or fixture will be installed and inspected.

The plumbing contractor must remain vigilant and secure inspection on the primary permit as soon as the absent plumbing items are completed.



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Utility Release Option continued					

Mechanical

Air conditioning contractors who will complete the installation of the environmental air conditioning system less the condensing unit, and/or complete the installation of the air-conditioning system less the kitchen ventilation device, must follow the provisions of Code Word 2006-34.

Electrical

A "Miscellaneous Electrical Permit" a separate distinct project number for "appliances not set REF: _____" for those items that will be absent at the time of final inspection must be obtained by the Master Electrician or Residential Appliance Installation Contractor using a new project number. This type of permit is called a "single trade miscellaneous permit". Contractors shall schedule a final inspection as usual. The existence of a miscellaneous permit will indicate to the inspector that certain electrical items will be absent. At the time the inspection is called into the Electrical Section, the contractor shall clearly indicate that there is a miscellaneous permit and that certain electrical items will be absent at the time of final inspection. All electrical other than the specific item(s) to remain absent shall be complete and in compliance with the code. Upon approval by the inspector, the electrical permit on the primary project number will be finalized. The miscellaneous permit remains active and at such time the absent items are complete, the contractor must call for inspection using the single trade miscellaneous permit number.

The single-trade project will remain active for a period of one-hundred eight (180) days. During that period, it is expected that the absent connection, equipment or fixture will be installed and inspected.

The electrical contractor or Residential Appliance Installation Contractor must remain vigilant and secure inspection as soon as the absent items have been installed.

Important Note:

Construction superintendents, builders, developers or others in control of construction projects must direct their MEP subcontractors to contact the Building Inspection Division, City of Houston, for instructions and assistance in establishing the appropriate utility release permits. Only licensed contractors may obtain the necessary permits.

Plumbing Inspection Section.....832-394-8870
Electrical Inspection Section.....832-394-8860
Mechanical Inspection Section.....832-394-8850

Approved: 
 Earl N. Greer, Building Official



City of Houston
Building Inspection
CODE WORD 2012

INTERPRETATIONS AND APPLICATIONS OF
THE HOUSTON ADOPTED CODES
2012 IBC, 2012 IRC, 2014 NEC, 2012 UMC, 2012 UPC,
2009 IECC and ASHRAE 90.1-2007

CW No:	2012-F01	Page:	1	of	1
PUBLICATION:	February 28, 2000				
SUBJECT:	Hazardous Materials Storage Canopies				
CODE(S):	Building & Fire				
SECTION(S)	903.2.5 (IBC) and 5004.13 (IFC)				

An automatic fire-extinguishing system will not be required for an open canopy that meets the requirements of Section 5004.13 of the Fire Code and is used for sheltering outdoor hazardous material unless the sprinkler system is required by the Fire Code for outdoor storage. The canopy will be classified in the appropriate H occupancy classification with the notation on the permit "Canopy for Hazard Material Storage." All such structures shall be routed to the Fire Department for approval.

Approved:


Earl N. Greer, Building Official



City of Houston
Building Inspection
CODE WORD 2012

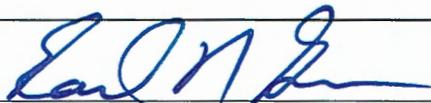
INTERPRETATIONS AND APPLICATIONS OF
THE HOUSTON ADOPTED CODES
2012 IBC, 2012 IRC, 2014 NEC, 2012 UMC, 2012 UPC,
2009 IECC and ASHRAE 90.1-2007

CW No:	2012-F02	Page:	1	of	1
PUBLICATION:	September 20, 2012				
SUBJECT:	Elevator Signage				
CODE(S):	Building Code and Fire Code				
SECTION(S)	3002.3 (IBC) and 607.2 (IFC)				

The City of Houston Fire Code Section 607.2 requires an approved pictorial sign to be posted adjacent to each elevator call station.

The approved pictorial sign shall also contain a correctly oriented diagram showing the location and identification of the stairs on the floor in relationship to the elevator. The top of the sign shall not exceed 6 feet (1.8 m) above the floor level.

Approved:


Earl N. Greer, Building Official



City of Houston
Building Inspection
CODE WORD 2012

INTERPRETATIONS AND APPLICATIONS OF
THE HOUSTON ADOPTED CODES
2012 IBC, 2012 IRC, 2014 NEC, 2012 UMC, 2012 UPC,
2015 IECC and ASHRAE 90.1-2013

CW No:	2012- N02	Page:	1	of	1
PUBLICATION:	October 21, 2016				
SUBJECT:	Appendix RB Interpretations				
CODE(S):	Houston Adopted Residential Energy Code (2015)				
SECTION(S)	Appendix RB				

This code word is for the purpose of clarifying 3 sections of Appendix RB from the adopted 2015 IECC Residential Provisions.

***RB103.4 Obstructions.** Solar-ready zones shall be free from obstructions, including but not limited to vents, chimneys, and roof-mounted equipment.*

This section specifically indicates that solar ready zones shall be free from obstructions. However, because the layout of future solar panels is not known or required to be shown, it is interpreted that this section is addressing more permanent obstructions that are not easily relocated such as chimneys, gas-fired equipment flues, and roof mounted equipment. Easily relocated items such plumbing and mechanical vent pipes may initially be located in the solar zone.

***RB103.5 Roof load documentation.** The structural design loads for roof dead load and roof live load shall be clearly indicated on the construction documents.*

As indicated in the published commentary for this section, the loads for the roof, not the loads of any future solar installed equipment, shall be documented in the plans as a reference point for future designers and solar installation contractors.

***RB103.7 Electrical service reserved space.** The main electrical service panel shall have a reserved space to allow installation of a dual pole circuit breaker for future solar electric installation and shall be labeled "For Future Solar Electric." The reserved space shall be positioned at the opposite (load) end from the input feeder location or main circuit location.*

This section specifically calls out a reserved space on the load side of the panel, for the purpose of backfeeding the bus bar within the cabinet. In this interpretation it is the intent of this section that all proposed installations be compliant with the provisions of the National Electrical Code (NEC). As called out in the NEC, line side connections are allowed, with the typical installation utilizing a wireway ahead of the panel. Due to this NEC approved installation method, as an alternate to providing a reserved space, and understanding that the wireway is typically installed at the same time as the solar energy system, a reserved space is not initially required.

Approved:


Earl Greer, Building Official