



Anderson County

## Building and Codes Department

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### Adoption of the 2015 IRC

The South Carolina Building Codes Council has adopted the 2015 IRC (International Residential Code), which goes into effect beginning July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2016. Any permits that were pulled prior to this date will still fall under the 2012 IRC. The 2009 International Energy Conservation Code (IECC) is still in effect.

We know the Home Builders Association(s) play a significant role in the adoption process of the codes. Various State Modifications were made that reduces the impact of the 2015 IRC including the deletion of the requirement of Sprinkler Systems in One and Two-Family Dwellings. A list of all the State Amendments will be made available on our website.

We have also updated our Residential Checklist for your use and is available on our website. There are some changes which are highlighted that reflect changes out of the 2015 IRC. **Note: *The Residential Checklist is not intended to include all the code changes in the 2015 IRC. It is impossible to develop a complete list of all the changes without duplicating the adopted codes.*** We would suggest you purchase a copy of the 2015 IRC to make sure you are up-to-date on all applicable changes.

We have also developed a “Significant Changes” list as noted below that we think will be helpful. There are a few items that will have an immediate impact that you need to know. Again, this does not include all the changes to the 2015 IRC.

1. **R302.13 Fire Protection of Floors** – When the adoption of the 2012 IRC took place a bill was passed and signed by the Governor that postponed the enforcement of this change, which was originally R501.3. With the adoption of the 2015 IRC the State has amended this section giving an exception for Floor Assemblies located directly over a crawlspace (Modification IRC 2015 06).

**R302.13 Fire Protection of Floors.** *Floor assemblies that are not required elsewhere in this code to be fire-resistance rated, shall be provided with ½ inch gypsum wall board membrane, 5/8 inch wood structural panel membrane, or equivalent on the underside of the floor framing member.*

Even though the State has deleted the requirement to protect a floor assembly that is located over a crawlspace, all other floors would have to be protected if you are not using dimensional lumber or structural composite lumber equal to or greater than 2 x 10 nominal dimension, or other approved floor assemblies demonstrating equivalent fire performance. An example would be a floor assembly in a walkout basement scenario. If a minimum 2 x 10 nominal dimension lumber is not used then you would have to protect the underside of the floor.



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2. **R311.7.3 Vertical Rise** – A flight of stairs shall not have a vertical rise larger than 147 inches (12’- 3”) between floor levels or landings. Previously the maximum vertical rise was 144 inches (12’- 0”).
3. **R315.3 Location** – Where a fuel burning appliance is located within a bedroom or attached bathroom, a carbon monoxide alarm shall be installed within the bedroom.
4. **Table R403.1(1), Table R403.1(2) and Table R403.1(3)** – Minimum width and thickness for concrete footing tables have expanded. Now you have 3 separate footing tables that cover Light Frame Construction (R403.1(1)), Light Frame Construction with Brick Veneer (R403.1(2)) and Cast-in-place Concrete or Fully Grouted Masonry Walls (R403.1(3)).

We have condensed these tables down in our Residential Inspection Checklist Handout as noted below based on a soil bearing pressure of 2000 psf and a snow or roof live load of 20 psf.

	<b>R403.1(1)</b>	<b>R403.1(2)</b>	<b>R403.1(3)</b>
	Conventional Light Frame Construction	Light Frame Construction with Brick Veneer	Concrete or Fully Grouted Masonry Walls
1 Story Slab on Grade	12 x 6	12 x 6	12 x 6
1 Story with Crawl Space	12 x 6	12 x 6	14 x 6
1 Story Plus Basement	14 x 6	15 x 6	19 x 6
2 Story Slab on Grade	12 x 6	12 x 6	18 x 6
2 Story with Crawl Space	12 x 6	15 x 6	22 x 6
2 Story Plus Basement	16 x 6	20 x 6	26 x 8
3 Story Slab on Grade	12 x 6	15 x 6	24 x 7
3 Story with Crawl Space	14 x 6	19 x 6	28 x 9
3 Story Plus Basement	19 x 6	24 x 7	33 x 11

*Footing sizes are based on 32 foot wide house with load bearing center wall that carries half of the tributary attic and floor framing. For every 2 feet of adjustment to the width of the house, add or subtract 2 inches of footing width and 1 inch of footing thickness (but no less than 6 inches thick).*

5. **R506.2.3 Vapor Retarder** – The State has modified this section, State Modification IRC 2015 19, to delete “Garages” from exception 1. All garages, attached or detached, now are required to have a 6-mil vapor retarder between the concrete floor slab and the base course or the prepared subgrade where no base course exists.
6. **R507 Exterior Decks** – This whole section has been modified and expanded which also includes Table R507.5 Deck Joist Spans for Common Lumber Species, Table R507.6 Deck Beam Span Lengths and Table R507.8 Deck Post Height.
7. **Table R602.7.5** – The minimum number of full height studs at each end of headers in exterior walls has increased.

Header Span (Feet)	Maximum Stud Spacing (inches) Per Table R602.3(5)	
	16	24
≤ 3’	1	1
4’	2	1
8’	3	2
12’	5	3
16’	6	4

8. **R905.2.8.5 Drip Edge** – The State has modified this section, Modification IRC 2015 22, which now reads “A drip edge shall be provided at eaves and rake edges of asphalt shingle roofs where required by the manufacturer”.
  
9. **P2503.5.1 Rough Plumbing** – The minimum height for a water test for DWV systems has been reduced from 10 feet to 5 feet.
  
10. **E3901.9 Basements, Garages and Accessory Buildings** – Not less than one receptacle outlet, in addition to any provided for specific equipment, shall be installed in each separate unfinished portion of a basement, in each attached garage, and in each detached garage or accessory building that is provided with electrical power. *The branch circuit supplying the receptacles in a garage shall not supply outlets outside of the garage and not less than one receptacle outlet shall be installed for each motor vehicle space.*  
  
Receptacles in a garage are now required to be on a dedicated circuit. Also, for each motor vehicle space that you have, one receptacle outlet is required.
  
11. **Appendix J Existing Buildings & Structures** – This was adopted by the State, Modification IRC 2015 37, to provide uniform enforcement guidance when it comes to renovating, modifying or updating existing residential structures that fall under the scope of the IRC.

Again, this is not an all-inclusive list of changes that have taken place in the 2015 IRC. Please contact our office if you need further clarification.

Sincerely,



Barry W. Holcombe, CBO  
Building & Codes Manager