



CITY OF SAN ANTONIO
DEVELOPMENT SERVICES DEPARTMENT
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2015 COSA I-Codes Update & Summary of Proposed Major Code Changes

- **2015 codes with local amendments presented to Quality of Life and Infrastructure and Growth on Jan 20th and 21st. City Council adopted Jan 29th – with effective date May 1st, 2015 (except 2015 Energy Code – summer 2015)**
- Every 3 years, the International Code Council (ICC) publishes updated building-related, fire and property maintenance codes. COSA generally adopts these updated codes to utilize the most current national safety codes and allow the latest construction methods.
- Since January 2014, Development Services Department (DSD) led the review of the updated codes with significant stakeholder involvement.
- COSA reviewed the updated versions of the following ten (10) building-related, fire and property maintenance codes:
 - 2015 Int'l Building Code
 - 2015 Int'l Existing Building Code
 - 2015 Int'l Residential Code
 - 2015 Int'l Fire Code
 - 2015 San Antonio Property Maintenance Code (based upon 2015 IPMC)
 - 2015 Int'l Mechanical Code
 - 2015 Int'l Fuel Gas Code
 - 2015 Int'l Plumbing Code
 - 2014 National Electrical Code
 - 2015 Int'l Energy Conservation Code
- Twenty-Nine (29) Code Review Committee open public meetings held last year
- New codes to go into effect May 1st, 2015
 - Projects submitted to DSD for permit after effective date to meet 2015 codes
 - Effective date of new energy code will be delayed until ComCheck and ResCheck software is available – approx July 1st.
- Below is a summary of the major proposed changes to the City's codes.

Building Code (commercial buildings)

- Clarifies limit of 2500 sq.ft for group B occupancies with commercial kitchens/cafeterias
- Creates a Condition 1 and Condition 2 for Group I-1, I-2 and R-4 Occupancies to better coordinate requirements of state custodial care facilities regulations.
- Allows 40,000 sq.ft. smoke compartments in Groups I-2 (formerly 22,500 max)
- Allows multiple story podium buildings
- Reduced occupant load factor for mercantile uses (30 gross OLF now 60 gross OLF)
- Allows exception to roof guards around mechanical equipment
- Exit system can now run through an enclosed elevator lobby

Existing Building Code

- Allowance for fire barriers to be used to separate additions from existing buildings rather than fire walls

Fire Code

- Fire sprinkler system required where multiple fire areas of Group A occupancies share exit access components and the combined occupant load is 300 or more.
- Assembly occupancies on roofs can now kick in fire sprinkler system for building
- Clarification of fire system safety factor calculations for designers
- Aerial apparatus access requirements modified - more alternatives added

Residential Code (single family homes, duplexes, townhomes)

- Increases permit exception threshold from 120 to 300 sq.ft. for 1-story accessory structures
- Adds low level, detached decks 300 sq.ft. or less to permit exemption list

Electrical Code

- Modifies electric fence requirements to allow in C2 and C3 zones plus reduces residential buffer from 300 ft. to 150 ft.
- Additional locations require GFCI protection in dwellings.
- Electric equipment 800 amps or more requires panic hardware at exit doors.
- AFCI protection now required at dormitories.
- Tamper resistant receptacles now required in guest rooms of hotels/motels.

Mechanical Code

- Outdoor air and local exhaust required R-2, R-3, and R-4 occupancies
- Dryer exhaust duct power ventilator now permitted as an option for longer duct lengths

Plumbing and Fuel Gas Codes

- Air Admittance Valves now permitted as an option for design
- Single Stack Vent System now permitted as an option for design
- Small spaces intended for quick, takeout, pickup, drop off 300 square feet or less do not require public toilet facilities
- Drinking fountains required for an occupant load of 30 (previously 15)
- Hot water now optional for public hand wash facilities in commercial buildings

Energy Code

- Adopt the 2015 IECC with minor amendments rather than 2012.
- Skylights now required in commercial buildings
- New residential Energy Rating Index number as compliance option modified 59
- Previous Sustainable Stakeholder Building Committee replaced with Construction Board to review energy code every three years.

San Antonio Property Maintenance Code

- Clarifies fence maintenance requirements (e.g., replacement of missing wooden slats, etc.)
- Additional address identification requirements for the rear of residential properties with an access alley longer than 10 lots in length.
- Clarified overcrowding limits in residential occupancies