

The following is reproduced from a handout provided by the Office of the State Building Inspector.

SIGNIFICANT CHANGES FROM 95 CABO FOUND IN THE 2003 INTERNATIONAL RESIDENTIAL CODE (IRC)

Note that for brevity, not all changes in the referenced code are included herein (nothing beats reading the code when trying to learn it). The 2004 Amendment to the 1999 State Building Code, which adopts the 2003 IRC, the 2003 IECC and the 2002 NEC has been approved and will be effective for all permits applied for in CT on or after 9/1/04. The amendment is available on our website at www.state.ct.us/dps/dfebs/osbi

- IRC applies to all one- and two-family detached and to multiple single-family in townhouse (side by side) configuration.
- Height limit for IRC is 3 stories; unlimited area.
- Use BOCA/96 for one- and two-family only when four stories or more; for stacked multiple-single-family; or for mixed use building – otherwise use IRC.
- Basic wind speeds revised – much higher numbers, yet affect fewer towns for special nailing of asphalt shingle, etc. (basically applies to lower 1/3 of state).
- Includes seismic requirements for townhouses in Fairfield County for masonry veneer and masonry and concrete walls.
- Includes provisions for construction in flood-hazard areas – similar to current BOCA
- Townhouses are no longer defined as having a property line, so IRC is applicable to condominium ownership
- Includes expanded information on dwelling unit separations for two-family and townhouses, including penetrations
- Bathroom ceiling height = 6'-8" over fixture and at required front clearance.
Showers = 6'-8" for 30" x 30" area @ showerhead
- Glazing adjacent to stairs, ramps and landings within 36 inches horizontally of the walking surface will require safety glass if the bottom of the glazing is less than 60 inches above the walking surface. Glazing at the bottom of stairways that is within 60 inches horizontally of the bottom tread will require safety glass if the bottom of the glazing is less than 60 inches above the nose of the tread.
- Basements with habitable space will require emergency escape openings (can utilize bulkheads in basements). Windows used for escape from basements must be above grade or have code-compliant window wells.
 CT Supplement – exception for all habitable basements with two remote stairs and for existing basements being converted to habitable space.
- Emergency escape windows must achieve required clearances through normal operation – no more take-out sash or removable hardware to achieve minimum dimensions (24" high, 20" wide, 44" max. above floor, 5.7 s.f. clear opening; unless opening is 44" or less above exterior grade, then 5.0 s.f. clear is OK)
 CT Supplement – exception allows take-out sash for existing buildings undergoing alteration or window replacement.
- Information regarding ramps included (1:8 max. slope)
- Required exit door shall not require travel through a garage
- Landings required on both sides of exterior doors except non-required doors with stairs of 2 or fewer risers on the exterior side

- Decks relying on the building for support shall be positively anchored to structure – no nails at ledgers
- Open riser stairs still allowed – but, must limit opening between treads so that 4 inch sphere wont pass
- Handrails required for four or more risers
- Handrail height range 34 to 38
- Specific requirements provided for handrails with perimeter greater than 6 inches
- Table R301.5 adds 50 psf load for guard rail infill components
- Openings in guards alongside stairs shall not pass 4 3/8 inch sphere. Level guards remain at 4 inch sphere.
- Must provide address identification readable from the street
- Table R502.3.3(1) contains span information for cantilevered floor joists supporting exterior wall and truss roof. Table R502.3.3(2) contains span information for cantilevered floor joists supporting exterior balcony.
- Attic live loads: 10 psf, no storage and no access; 20 psf. Limited storage with no fixed stair; 30 psf with fixed stair and storage or sleeping room; 40 psf with fixed stair and other than storage or sleeping (ie: recreation or home office)
- Decks not supported by the dwelling need not have frost-protected footings
- Frost depth exception for free-standing accessory structures increased to 400 square feet with eave height of 10 feet or less
- Increased framing requirements (especially bracing) for high-wind areas
- Includes requirements for information to be included on truss drawings
- Includes foam-plastic insulation concrete form requirements
- Joist tables based on species and grade, rather than F_b and E
- Factors for required reduction of allowable rafter spans in Tables based on the height of ceiling joists or collar ties are provided
- Includes information on steel framing
- Includes information on EIFS (exterior insulation finish systems)
- IRC requires 4 inches clearances to combustibles at the rear of masonry fireplaces (2 inches at sides and front)
- Rumford fireplaces covered by IRC
- Includes simplified prescriptive energy requirements based on zone (heating degree days) that can be used in place of International Energy Conservation Code if glazing is limited to 15% for detached and 25% for townhouses. Still allows trade-off methods of IECC.
- Electrical Chapters will be based on 2002 NEC, and can be used as an alternate to the National Electrical Code.
- Appendices include information on wind loads, manufactured housing, patio covers, pool barriers and sound-transmission between dwelling units

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