



Code Outreach Program – Property Maintenance of One- and Two-Family Homes Part II

Please take 2 minutes to fill out our [survey](#) at the end of this document to help DBSC improve our outreach to Code Users.

This edition of the Code Outreach program is the second part of a two-part edition intended to provide guidance on the requirements for maintaining one- and two-family homes in a clean, safe, and sanitary condition. [Part I](#) focused on pointing out some common code sections of the adopted [2015 International Property Maintenance Code](#) (IPMC); this Part II will address the adopted [2015 International Fire Code](#) (IFC), as amended by the [2017 Uniform Code Supplement](#) (the Supplement). This is not intended to be a full review of the requirements of either code book.

2015 IFC Scope

The scope and purpose of the 2015 IFC is provided in Section 101.2.6 of the Supplement, which indicates the provisions of the 2015 IFC apply to all matters affecting or relating to structures, processes, premises and safeguards regarding all of the following:

1. The hazard of fire and explosion arising from the storage, handling or use of structures, materials or devices;
2. Conditions hazardous to life, property or public welfare in the occupancy of structures or premises;
3. Fire hazards in the structure or on the premises from occupancy or operation;
4. Matters related to the construction, extension, repair, alteration or removal of fire suppression or alarm systems; and
5. Conditions affecting the safety of fire fighters and emergency responders during emergency operations.

The Supplement goes on to detail various provisions of the 2015 IFC in Section 101.2.6.1 through 101.2.6.2.8. This includes construction and design provisions; administrative, operational, and maintenance provisions; maintenance of required and non-required safeguards; testing and operation of equipment; rendering of equipment inoperable; and unsafe structures and equipment. Please note, there is no exception within the Scope provided to one- and two-family homes to these provisions. Each Section should be reviewed individually for its applicability to various occupancies and uses.

When citing violations, please note the parties responsible for mitigation. In some cases, it may be a property owner, a tenant/occupant, or both.

General Safety Provisions

Chapter 3 of the 2015 IFC governs *“the occupancy and maintenance of all structures and premises for precautions against fire and the spread of fire and general requirements of fire safety.”* Discussed below are various provisions applicable to the maintenance of one- and two-family homes such as: accumulation of combustible waste material, ignition sources, vacant premises, general storage, etc. Please note many other provisions of Chapter 3 apply to the protection of one- and two-family homes and their premises from fire and spread of fire.

Combustible Waste Material

Section 304.1 prohibits the accumulation of *combustible waste material*. Section 304 outlines what types of, and where, accumulation is prohibited. Included in the definition of combustible waste material are: wastepaper, wood, hay, straw, weeds, litter, or combustible or flammable waste or rubbish; and weeds, grass, vines, or other growth that is capable of being ignited. For these materials not to be considered a nuisance or a hazard to the public health, safety, or welfare, they shall be stored as indicated in Section 304.

Ignition Sources

Section 305 requires that combustible materials shall be kept away from ignition sources, and the sources maintained in a manner approved by the Authority Having Jurisdiction.

Vacant Premises

Section 311 requires the removal of *“all accumulations of combustible materials, flammable or combustible waste or rubbish”* from *“temporarily unoccupied buildings, structures, premises or portions thereof, including tenant spaces.”*

General Storage

Section 315 regulates where material storage is allowed and how it shall be maintained; inside and outside storage is addressed in this Section.

Fire Service Features

Section 504 requires access to building openings and roofs. Specifically, access *“shall be maintained readily accessible for emergency access by the fire department.”*

Means of Egress

Section 1001.1 of the 2015 IFC directs the user to see the [2015 International Residential Code \(IRC\)](#) (2015 IRC) for general means of egress requirements; however, Section 1031 of the 2015 IFC applies to buildings governed by the 2015 IRC.

Section 1031 of the 2015 IFC indicates that all “required” means of egress from occupied building areas be *“continuously maintained free from obstructions or impediments to full instant use in the case of fire or other emergency.”* Required maintenance includes preventing the accumulation of snow and ice.

Please look for our next edition of the Code Outreach Program at the beginning of next month.

[Method of Contact Questionnaire](#)

DBSC - A Division of Department of State
OFPC – An Office of the Division of Homeland Security & Emergency Services

If you have questions pertaining to the Code Outreach Program, email us at COP.codes@dos.ny.gov

If you have questions pertaining to the Uniform Code or Energy Code, email our technical support group at: codes@dos.ny.gov

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