

DEPARTMENT OF LICENSES AND INSPECTIONS CODE BULLETIN OF INFORMATION B-1801		CODE OF GENERAL ORDINANCES OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA <hr/> TITLE 4 — BUILDING CONSTRUCTION AND OCCUPANCY CODE
SUBJECT OF BULLETIN: <p style="text-align: center;">IMPLEMENTATION OF THE 2018 INTERNATIONAL CODES FOR PHILADELPHIA</p>		REFERENCE CODE SECTION(S): <p style="text-align: center;">PA UCC Act and Regulations</p>
ISSUED BY		
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TITLE: Building Code Official	PAGE 1 OF 3	

ISSUE #1

The Pennsylvania Uniform Construction Code (PA UCC) was amended by Act 36 of 2017 to allow the City of Philadelphia to adopt provisions of the 2018 International Codes, developed by the International Code Council, for the purpose of regulating the construction, alteration, repair and use of buildings in Philadelphia that do not meet the definition of "residential building" under section 103 of the UCC.

Residential buildings are defined by the UCC as, "Detached one-family and two-family dwellings and multiple single-family dwellings which are not more than three stories in height with a separate means of egress which includes accessory structures."

As residential buildings are regulated by the International Residential Code (IRC), Act 36 allows Philadelphia to adopt the 2018 edition of all other International Codes, without the amendments established by the UCC Review and Advisory Council in its review of the 2015 International Codes. This authorizes Philadelphia to enforce a single set of construction codes without State interference. including the accessibility provisions of the 2018 Codes as adopted by the State on January 1, 2019.

The 2018 International Codes become effective in Philadelphia on October 1, 2018 for all construction except that which is regulated under the IRC.

The 2015 International Codes, with amendments as determined by the UCC Review and Advisory Council become effective throughout Pennsylvania on October 1, 2018. This only includes the 2015 IRC in Philadelphia.

ISSUE #2

The PA UCC previously established that construction shall comply with the codes and standards in effect at the time that the design or construction contract was executed. Act 36 of 2017 amended this provision to read as follows:

"Where a design or construction contract was signed before the effective date of regulations for a subsequent Uniform Construction Code or International Fuel Gas Code issued under this act, the permit may be issued under the Uniform Construction Code or International Fuel Gas Code in effect at the time the design or construction contract was signed if the permit is applied for within six months of the effective date of the regulation or the period specified by a municipal ordinance, whichever is less."

BACKGROUND

Act 36 creates a confusing transition between the PA Uniform Construction Code that applies to all of Pennsylvania to a hybrid version where Philadelphia enforces the 2018 International Codes for all non-residential construction and the 2015 International Residential Code with UCC amendments, all effective October 1, 2018.

The 2016 PA Uniform Construction Code included the following:

2009 International Codes (with state legislative amendments)

2015 International Building Code (accessibility requirements)

- Chapter 11 was adopted and required that buildings and facilities also comply with the accessibility requirements found in other chapters of the International Building Code 2012 and in the *ICC/ANSI A117.1-2009 Accessible and Usable Buildings and Facilities* standard.
- Appendix E (Supplementary Accessibility Requirements) was adopted.

Additional individual provisions of the 2015 International Codes

- There were 16 code revisions adopted from the 2015 International Codes. These 16 code revisions amounted to a number of new and modified code sections (see Appendix A of Code Bulletin B-1601).

The 2018 Uniform Construction Code for Philadelphia includes the following:

- 2018 International Building Code
- 2018 International Existing Building Code
- 2018 International Mechanical Code
- 2018 International Energy Conservation Code
- The code revisions to the 2015 International Residential Code (as determined by the UCC Review and Advisory Council)
- 2018 International Fuel Gas Code
- 2018 ICC Performance Code
- 2017 National Electrical Code
- 2015 International Residential Code

The Philadelphia Administrative and Plumbing Codes continue as local construction codes and part of the 2018 Uniform Construction Code for Philadelphia.

POLICY

Beginning October 1, 2018, the Department will allow a grace period wherein a designer may choose to have his or her project reviewed under the new code provisions or the previous one. The Department will, therefore, allow permit application reviews under either the 2016 Uniform Construction Code or the 2018 Uniform Construction Code until Monday April 1, 2019.

Beginning Monday, April 1, 2019, all permit applications submitted for new buildings or renovations to existing buildings shall be reviewed under the 2018 Uniform Construction Code for Philadelphia.

If a building permit application for construction of a structure or alteration within a space was submitted prior to April 1, 2019 as designed to the 2016 PA Uniform Construction Code, and such permit was issued to begin the construction project, additional permit applications associated with that structure may continue to be reviewed under that code. The initial building permit application would include a permit application for foundations, but not demolition. A structure may include a single group of townhouses, but the construction of multiple buildings or multiple spaces within a structure as part of a larger, multi-phased project will not be subject to this grace period.

DIRECTION

Based on the Department's policy, plans examiners shall conduct permit application reviews under the code standards of the applicant's choice (among the two listed above) for all applications received up to and including Friday, March 29, 2019.

A construction permit applicant will be allowed to select one of the two versions for the review and indicate that on the application or plans. If no selection is made, the plans examiner will perform the review based on the 2018 Uniform Construction Code.

Building permits must contain reference to the selected code in "Description of Work" in order to ensure continuity of code provisions during inspections.

Applications submitted on and after Monday, April 1, 2019 for new buildings or projects may not request a review under the 2016 Uniform Construction Code provisions.

END OF CODE BULLETIN