

2021 I-Code Local Changes

The City of Philadelphia is governed by the Pennsylvania Construction Code Act (PCCA), which requires statewide adoption of the Uniform Construction Code (UCC). The UCC incorporates the 2021 I-Codes with certain amendments. The City of Philadelphia may further amend the codes, subject to applicable conditions and limitations.

The tables below summarize changes to be adopted by the City, including administrative provisions, together with the corresponding ordinance numbers and associated links.

Administrative Code (Sub-Code A)	Local Change (Bill No. 260393)
A-203.3.2	Updates reference to current ISO accreditation standards.
A-301.1.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Expands excavation permit exemptions to include structures accessory to one- and two-family dwellings, sign structures, and minor work not posing a threat to adjacent properties.• Corrects PWD stormwater management approval threshold.• Adds building permit requirement for site work in steep slope or Wissahickon Watershed areas to verify limits of disturbance.
A-301.2.5	Modifies zoning permit exemptions by removing expired temporary allowances for outdoor entertainment and aligning accessory structure references with the Zoning Code.
A- 302.12	Adds section on abandonment of work to reflect current practice and create a more appropriate violation category.
A-305.2	Modifies prerequisite approvals for building, demolition, and excavation permit issuance: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Adds requirement for Department of Public Health Dust Control Permit for areas of disturbance $\geq 5,000$ sq ft, consistent with DPH regulations.2. Corrects DPH water quality approval requirements for on-site wells. Removes requirement for Commerce Department approval of waterfront structures.

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A-402.8.1	Establishes a maximum lead time for initial inspection notification to ensure pre-construction review reflects actual site conditions at project start.
A-506 and 601	Updates reference for fine provisions to align with corresponding 2021 code sections.
Building Code (Sub-Code B)	Local Change (Bill No. 260394)
B -307 and 408	Modifies flammable gas classification and allowances, to support refrigerant changes.
B-1504.9 (and definitions) (modification of an existing local change)	Updates the cool roof ordinance to replace references to the discontinued Energy Star Roof Products Program with performance standards established by the Cool Roof Rating Council (CRRC). Compliance shall be demonstrated using CRRC-rated initial and aged solar reflectance and thermal emittance values, as specified in this Code
B-1705.21	Establishes a Special Inspection category for air barrier and duct leakage testing, aligning with the specialized testing and certification requirements of the Energy Code.
IECC Residential Code (IRC section in parentheses, where applicable)	Local Change (Bill No. 250644)
R401.2.5, R408.1, R408.2 (N1101.13.5, N1108.1, N1108.2)	Requires an additional energy package to improve efficiency. The developer/ builder can select from 5 options, allowing for the most economical solution for the project.
R403.3.5, R403.3.6 (N1003.3.5, N1103.3.6)	Requires air leakage testing for ducts within the building thermal envelope.
R404.1 (N1104.1.)	Increases required percentage of high efficacy lamps from 90% to 100%.

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R404.1.1	Sets limits for exterior lighting loads serving multi-family buildings.
R404.2 (N1104.2)	Requires rooms with permanently installed lights to be controlled by dimmers or occupancy sensors.
R404.3 (N1104.3)	Requires automatic shut-off or light-sensing controls for exterior lighting exceeding 30 watts.
Mechanical Code (Sub-Code M)	Local Change (Bill No. 260391)
M-307.2.2.1	Modifies condensate discharge provisions to align with the Philadelphia Plumbing Code (Section P-314.2.1.1).
M-1101.2.1	Adds listing and labelling for any high probability equipment utilizing Group A2L, A2, A3 and B1 refrigerants.
Table M-1103.1	Revises tables to identify: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Edits to recognize A2L refrigerants as an independent refrigerant safety group classification • Introduction of new parameters for lower flammability limit considerations and specific LFL points for specified refrigerants • Refrigerant quantity limit reductions for Refrigerant Concentration Limits (RCL) Revises refrigerant safety group classifications based on ASHRAE 34.
M-1104.3.1	Revises to specifically require the use of Group A1 and A2L for any high probability systems used for human comfort, with exceptions based on quantity of refrigerants and occupancy type.
M-1104.3.2	Revises to prohibit the use of Group A3 & B3 refrigerants in high probability systems with additional exceptions based on occupancy types and quantity of refrigerants. Removed Table 1104.3.2 associated with refrigerant quantity limitations based on redundancy with proposed modifications under M1104.3.1 & M1104.3.2.
M-1106.4	Revises provisions for machinery room requirements associated with A2L & B2L refrigerant systems to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Detection limits requirements to achieve more accurate detection and response times to refrigerant leaks • Emergency shut-off response times for refrigerant leaks • Revised ventilation requirements, with machinery room ventilation designs to be based on standard ASHRAE 15 Removes previous language associated with required machinery room provisions for Group A2L refrigerant system associated with hazardous locations for electrical requirements of NFPA 70.

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M1107.4 & M1107.5	Revises refrigerant piping and pipe fittings materials.
M1109.2.2	Revises to pipe enclosure exceptions for pipes installed outside the building where protected from damage.
M1109.2.3	Clarifications to refrigerant piping installation locations to specifically prohibit installations within interior exit stairways when piping is exposed.
M1109.2.5	Revises exceptions to refrigerant pipe shaft requirements to broaden exceptions to all refrigerant safety group classifications where refrigerant quantity limits are not exceeded under Table M-1103.1
M1109.2.6	Revises provisions to recognize the need to allow authorized personnel access to exposed pipes with very hot or very cold piping surfaces.
M1109.2.7	Revises provisions for piping identification requirements specific to A2L & B2L refrigerant systems.
M1109.3	Revises provisions for use of Group A2L, A2, A3, B2L, B2, and B3 refrigerants, to include specific requirements for continuous mechanical ventilation for the use of Group A2, A3, B2, or B3 refrigerants
M1109.4	Removes provisions for Group A2, A3, B2, and B3 refrigerant systems based on redundancy with the revisions identified in M1109.3.
M1109.7	Revises provisions associated with test gases permitted for use in refrigerant piping system testing.
M1110.3	Revises provisions associated with test gases permitted for use in refrigerant piping system testing.
M1110.5	Revises provisions to revise refrigerant piping system testing requirements.
Plumbing Code (Sub-Code P)	Local Change (Bill No. 250645)
Chapter 2	Retains 2018 definitions for private and public. Add Mech Code definition for plenum.
314.2.1.1	Retains 2018 language. Omit section on condensate discharge. 2023 amendments address allowable disposal outlets.

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403.1/ 403.2	Retains 2018 language. Omit reference to urinal. The 2023 amendments adopting provisions for all-gender facilities include a prohibition on urinals with these facilities.
403.3.1/403.5	Retains 2018 language explicitly referencing accessibility requirements of the Bldg Code.
404.3	Retains 2018 language. Do not adopt ASTM C1822 (geopolymer concrete) for covering exposed pipes.
412.3/412.4	Clarify that stated flow rate is a minimum value.
606.7	Retains 2018 language for labeling of bundled water distribution pipe.
609.2	Adds reference to water distribution to reflect Phila definitions,
610.1	Includes exception for disinfection/ analysis for one and two family dwellings regulated by the Residential Code. Consistent with current practice.
705.2.4 and 705.10.4	Retains 2018 language. Omit push-fit fitting allowance for DWV due to production issues. and revisit product status during next code cycle change.
718/719	Incorporates two new methods for building sewer repair, relining and rehab, but limits to one- and two-family dwellings. Requirements are taken from IPC but relisted as a change due to section changes.
915.1	Retains 2018 language that restricts use for food waste disposers.
919.2.10/919.4	Clarification to base sizing/ velocity break on the height of the stack and not the overall building
919.3.5	Language is clarified to support intent and resolve conflict. Stack must be same diameter as building sewer w/ min 4” size.
1002.3	Clarifies the prohibition on internal partition traps (incl bottle traps) due to maintenance concerns. Revisit product development next code cycle.
1002.4.1.5	Retains 2018 language to omit fixture drain method and allow only certified trap seal devices.
1102.6	Retains 2018 language to cross reference materials section and omit references for testing.

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Residential Code (Sub-Code R)	Local Change (Bill No. 260395)
R-905.18 (and definitions) (modification of an existing local change)	Updates the cool roof ordinance to maintain consistency with corresponding IBC provisions.
R-E3901.4.2.1	Reintroduces peninsular countertops and islands in the minimum receptacle requirements for kitchen and dining areas, as referenced in the 2018 IRC. The updated PA UCC does not account for peninsular counters.
R-M1411	Updates refrigerant provisions, aligning with changes to the Mechanical Code.