



The Electrical Association of Philadelphia

Stay Informed: Critical Updates on IRC Code Changes in PA

Marc Faulkner, Faulkner Inspection Services

As many of you are aware, building codes are updated every three years. In Pennsylvania, the review process begins after the International Code Council (ICC) codes are published. This involves evaluating changes between code cycles, considering public comments, and consulting with the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) to adopt, modify, or reject these changes.

Currently, the PA Review and Advisory Council (RAC) is assessing changes to the ICC codes for adoption in PA, specifically for single-family dwellings and structures under the International Residential Code (IRC). Note that the RAC does not review or amend the National Electrical Code (NEC).

The review of changes from the 2018 to the 2021 IRC started on November 15, 2021, with a 90-day public comment period, which ended on February 13, 2022. Subsequent public comment periods concluded on March 12, 2023. Since then, TAC meetings have been held to discuss recommendations for the final report, due on October 1, 2024. The new codes are expected to be implemented on July 13, 2025.

Many in the electrical trade have not traditionally been involved in this process, relying instead on second-hand information. However, with the advent of the Uniform Construction Code and the adoption of ICC codes, it's more crucial than ever to get involved or commit to ongoing education.

Why This Matters to You:

If you perform electrical work in PA, especially on projects involving single-family dwellings, two-family dwellings, townhouses, or any structure under the IRC, you need to be aware of the 16 electrical code sections currently under scrutiny. During TAC meetings, there was no consensus on these sections, meaning the RAC will make the final determination. These sections include:

- E3601.8 – Emergency Disconnects for services
- E3606.5 (5.1, 5.2, 5.3) – Surge Protection for services
- E3902.1 through E3902.12 – Expanded GFCI Protection for 240-volt receptacle outlets
- E4002.11 – Receptacles located in a shower/bathtub space

Additionally, three sections of the electrical code are recommended for modification, and one section is recommended for non-adoption. The RAC will deliberate from April 18, 2024, to June 27, 2024, after which the amendments will be final and incorporated into the UCC for enforcement. Public comments are no longer accepted.

If you or your inspectors are unaware of these changes, it could lead to significant issues. While it may be too late to influence the amendments, it's not too late to educate yourself. Equip yourself with the knowledge now to avoid complications later.

Stay tuned for forthcoming education from the EAP once changes are announced.