



Construction Guidelines

Summary of common areas of inquiry based on the 2015 International Residential Code

All new single-family dwellings must comply with the following minimum requirements:

1. Hard wired, battery backup smoke detectors shall be installed in each bedroom, on every floor, and one in the basement. Attached garage areas shall be protected with either a hard wired, battery backup smoke detector or heat detector. Carbon monoxide alarms shall be installed outside of each separate sleeping area in the immediate vicinity of the bedrooms.
2. Each bedroom must have two means of egress in the event of a fire. The bedroom door shall be considered one means and an appropriate window shall be considered a second means of egress. For a window to be an appropriate means of egress, the clear opening of such window shall be no less than 24" in height and 20" in width with an opening dimension of 5.7 square feet. The top of the sill shall not be more than 44" above the floor and the window must be located within 20' from finished grade to be considered egress.
3. Stairs both interior and exterior shall comply with the following standards:
 - Stairways shall not be less than 36" wide, measured above the handrails.
 - The minimum headroom at all points shall be not less than 6'-8".
 - The maximum riser height shall be 7 ³/₄" measured vertically between the leading edges of adjacent treads.
 - The minimum tread depth shall be 10".
 - Handrails shall be provided on at least one side of stairs and shall be at least 34"-38". Balusters may not have openings larger than 4".
 - Porches, balconies decks, or raised floor surfaces located more than 30" from the floor or grade (measured to the grade below at any point within 36") shall have a guard not less than 36".
4. All breakers must be clearly labeled inside electrical panels.
5. All circuits along kitchen and bathroom countertops and in basement and garage areas shall be protected with Ground Fault Circuit Interrupters.
6. All living areas adjacent to garage areas must be separated by not less than 5/8" gypsum board or its equivalent. Living areas above the garage must also be separated by not less than 5/8" gypsum board or its equivalent.