

ELECTRICAL CONTRACTORS

Key electrical installation changes to the building and residential codes include those that:

- Require separate **carbon monoxide detectors** or **combination smoke/carbon monoxide detectors** in 1- and 2-family dwellings and townhouses that contain fuel-fired heating equipment. This is for new dwelling units and those being renovated under the parameters of Section R313.5 of the Portsmouth Residential Code Amendments. Consult the actual code text for the exact placement of both smoke and carbon monoxide detectors.

NOTE: The State of New Hampshire requires carbon monoxide detectors in all new or “substantially rehabilitated” dwellings created or renovated effective Jan. 1, 2010. (RSA 155:10 (a), as amended by HB 120-FN-LOCAL, 3/24/2009).

FAQs

- *What is the required height of a residential guardrail?*

A guardrail must be at least 36 inches high along open sides of a walking surface where the falling distance to the ground is over 30 inches. Along a stair, the guardrail must be at least 34 inches high. For residences, openings in a guardrail must be narrower than 4 inches.

FAQs (Cont.)

- *When are arc-fault circuit breakers required?*

They are required when new 120-volt, 15- and 20-ampere circuits are installed in a residential occupancy, *except* those supplying a kitchen, bathroom, unfinished basement or garage. (NEC-08, 210.12).

- *What is the maximum water temperature allowed at residential plumbing fixtures?*

The maximum allowed temperature is 120 degrees F for showers, and 130 degrees F for all other fixtures.

- *When do existing unlined chimneys need to be lined?*

GAS: Existing chimneys are permitted to have their use continued when an appliance is replaced by an appliance of similar type, input rating and efficiency and when the chimney is inspected and sized for the new appliance.

OIL: Always requires a lined chimney.

CITY OF PORTSMOUTH, NH

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www.cityofportsmouth.com/inspection

City of Portsmouth

OVERVIEW OF MAJOR CHANGES TO THE INTERNATIONAL CONSTRUCTION CODES

Adopted 2009



Inspection Department: (603) 610-7243

Overview

In 2009, the City of Portsmouth incorporated into its city ordinances the construction codes adopted by the State of New Hampshire. They are the 2006 editions of the International Building, Residential, Fire, Energy Conservation, Plumbing and Mechanical Codes.

This pamphlet is intended to explain some of the major changes contained in Portsmouth's adoption of these model codes. It is divided into sections to provide information to homeowners, contractors/developers, plumbing/mechanical contractors, and electrical contractors.

HOMEOWNERS

Building permits are required for most construction projects. Additions of any kind, and renovations that alter or add rooms within a structure, top the list of projects requiring permits. Repairs generally do not require a permit unless their value exceeds \$3,000. (Special conditions apply to the Historic District and homeowners are advised to consult with the Inspection Department prior to exterior work to homes.)

A major code change is that, except in the Historic District, permits no longer are needed for re-roofing, even if the new roof's value exceeds \$3,000. Specific language regarding all the adopted codes and when permits are required can be found at: www.cityofportsmouth.com/inspection/codes. Construction permit fees are listed at: www.cityofportsmouth.com/inspection/fees.

CONTRACTORS/DEVELOPERS

Key changes to the building and residential codes include those that:

- Specify the minimum work progress necessary to keep a building permit active.
- Allow the City to engage in third-party outside plan review services.
- Define and regulate "Live Work" occupancies.
- Require all "Unlimited Area Buildings" to be of non-combustible construction.
- Require fire sprinklers in upholstered furniture stores larger than 4,800 square feet.
- Require fire alarm pull stations in buildings with sprinkler systems.
- Disallow "nuclear" exit signs.
- Update referenced trade standards.
- Require fire sprinklers in new townhouse buildings with four or more dwellings per structure.
- Require carbon monoxide detection in 1- and 2-family detached structures and townhouses (new and most remodeling).

***NOTE:** Effective April 1, 2010, the NH State Energy Code will be the 2009 edition of the International Energy Conservation Code.*

PLUMBING / MECHANICAL CONTRACTORS

Key changes to the plumbing and mechanical codes include those that:

- Clarify the minimum ceiling heights of plumbing fixtures to be 6'- 8".
- Provide for options in the requirement for accessible drinking fountains.
- Require pre-rinse sink in commercial kitchens (Health requirement).
- Regulate tankless water heater temperature controls.
- Establish maximum water temperatures in child care occupancies.
- Require hot water temperature maintenance at 50 feet.
- Limit/restrict use of air admittance valves.
- Mandate use of NFPA 54 as the Fuel Gas Code with local amendments.
- Mandate use of NFPA 96 as the commercial cooking equipment design /installation standard.
- Add and increase installation requirements for CSST gas piping systems.

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