

2010 Florida Building Code Takes Effect March 15, 2012

The 2010 Florida Building Code is scheduled to take effect as of March 15, 2012, as a replacement for the 2007 Florida Building Code. The new Code includes some 450+ changes to the existing Code. Key amendments include the adoption of the 2012 Florida Accessibility Code, adoption of the revamped Florida Building Code, Energy Conservation, and significant changes related to Wind Design, Fire Sprinkler Requirements, Construction in Flood-Prone Areas, and Roof Mitigation.

- **Accessibility.** The 2012 Florida Accessibility Code was adopted as part of the Florida Building Code by law, s.553.73(1)(a), Florida Statutes, and applies to public facilities and private facilities, places of public accommodation and all commercial facilities. The goal in adoption of the 2012 Florida Accessibility Code is to maintain the US Department of Justice Certification of the Code - as substantially equivalent to the ADA Standards - so compliance with the Code provides presumption of compliance with the ADA Standards.
- **Energy.** The Commission has moved Energy Provisions into a new volume of the Code – the Florida Building Code, Energy Conservation. Key changes include: (1) changes in duct sizing and the location of ducts and air handlers in single family homes, (2) an increase in efficiency standards by 5 percent, and (3) Code officials may approve alternate materials and methods (where a nationally recognized energy analysis procedure is used to demonstrate that a building or component will use less energy than a Code-compliant building or component).

Please be advised that any application for a building permit not completed and accepted by local government for processing on or before March 14, 2012 will be subject to the 2010 Florida Building Code.

- **Wind Design.** The 2010 Florida Building Code imposes significant changes related to Wind Design in accordance with standards created by the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE). The new ASCE standards create a new wind map for the state, and generally reduce design pressure across the entire state from 0 to 31 percent.
- **Fire Sprinklers.** Pursuant to Legislative Mandate, the 2010 Florida Building Code removes the Fire Sprinkler Requirements for one and two-family dwellings.
- **Construction in Flood-Prone Areas.** At the request of FEMA, the Florida Building Commission has included in the 2010 Florida Building Code further regulation of construction in flood-prone areas. These changes come directly from both the IBC and IRC and are consistent with the requirements of the National Flood Insurance Program. The 2010 Florida Building Code allows the Community Rating System to continue without having to meet the strict requirements for local technical amendments to the Code.

- **Mitigation.** The conditions where a new roof cover may be placed over an existing roof have been clarified. New prescriptive provisions for the retro-fit of roof overhangs being upgraded for wind uplift have been added.

In addition to the 2010 Florida Building Code, the Florida Division of State Fire Marshall completed the development of the 2010 edition of the Florida Fire Prevention Code (FFPC), which became effective December 31, 2011.

Complete applications submitted prior to March 15, 2012 will remain valid for 180 days from the application date. If a permit is not issued (or if a good faith effort is not made to obtain issuance of the permit for a period of 180 days after the date of application), a new application, with the current Code in effect, will be required before proceeding. The definition of a completed permit application can vary among jurisdictions.

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