



Which Code Applies?

When it comes to different scopes of projects, the City of Dubuque has adopted various codes to address specific aspects of construction and safety.

Below is a synopsis of which ICC code books to use for different project scopes:

Residential Projects:

For residential projects such as single-family homes, duplexes, and townhomes (any of which are three stories or less, with separate egress), including their accessory structures, the applicable code book is the International Residential Code (IRC). The IRC covers requirements for building design and construction including areas like structural integrity, fire safety, plumbing, mechanical systems, and energy efficiency. Deck design and construction can be found in this code.

Commercial Projects:

For commercial buildings, multi-family dwellings (larger than a duplex, or anything over 3 stories), and non-residential structures, the International Building Code (IBC) is the primary code book to reference. The IBC provides comprehensive regulations for building design, construction, occupancy, and maintenance. It covers fire safety, structural requirements, accessibility, means of egress, electrical systems, and more.

Plumbing Projects:

For plumbing systems in both residential and commercial buildings, the Uniform Plumbing Code (UPC) is the relevant code book. The UPC addresses plumbing fixtures, water supply, drainage, venting, and sanitary systems. It ensures the proper installation and maintenance of plumbing systems to protect public health and safety.

Electrical Projects:

For electrical systems in buildings, the National Electrical Code (NEC) is the standard to follow. Although not an ICC code book, the NEC is widely adopted and recognized. It covers electrical installation and maintenance, focusing on safety measures, grounding, wiring methods, equipment, and electrical systems in residential, commercial, and industrial settings.

Fire Safety Projects:

For all project types, compliance with fire safety regulations is crucial. The International Fire Code (IFC) should be consulted. The IFC addresses fire prevention, life safety, fire suppression systems, emergency preparedness, hazardous materials, and other aspects related to fire safety in new and existing buildings.



Existing Building Renovation or Alteration Projects:

For projects involving the renovation or alteration of existing buildings, the International Existing Building Code (IEBC) should be consulted. The IEBC provides regulations and guidelines for the repair, alteration, addition, and change of occupancy in existing structures. It covers both structural and non-structural aspects to ensure the safety and code compliance of existing buildings.

Maintenance Requirements:

For maintenance requirements of existing buildings, the International Property Maintenance Code (IPMC) is the relevant code book. The IPMC provides regulations for the maintenance, operation, and occupancy of existing structures. It covers areas such as property appearance, structural conditions, sanitation, light and ventilation, plumbing, and electrical systems, ensuring that buildings are safe and habitable. In addition to the IPMC, the IFC should be consulted for additional maintenance requirements.

Energy Efficiency Projects:

For projects focused on energy efficiency and sustainable design, the International Energy Conservation Code (IECC) is the relevant code book. The IECC sets forth regulations for building envelope, lighting, heating, ventilation, air conditioning (HVAC), and other energy-consuming systems to promote energy conservation and reduce environmental impact.

It's important to note that code requirements may vary based on location and specific project circumstances. Refer to the "Current Adopted Codes" section on this page to determine the codes currently in effect. Additionally, the City of Dubuque does amend some of the code language and a list of Local amendments can be found on this page. Consulting with Inspection & Construction Services prior to starting construction will provide the most accurate information regarding which code books to use for a particular project.