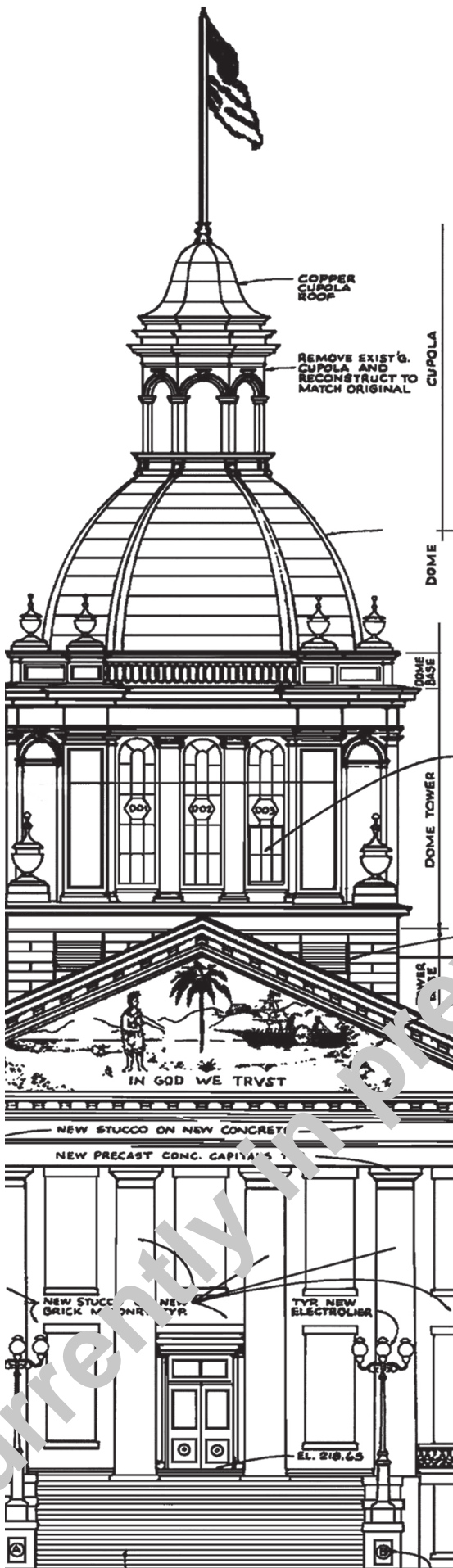




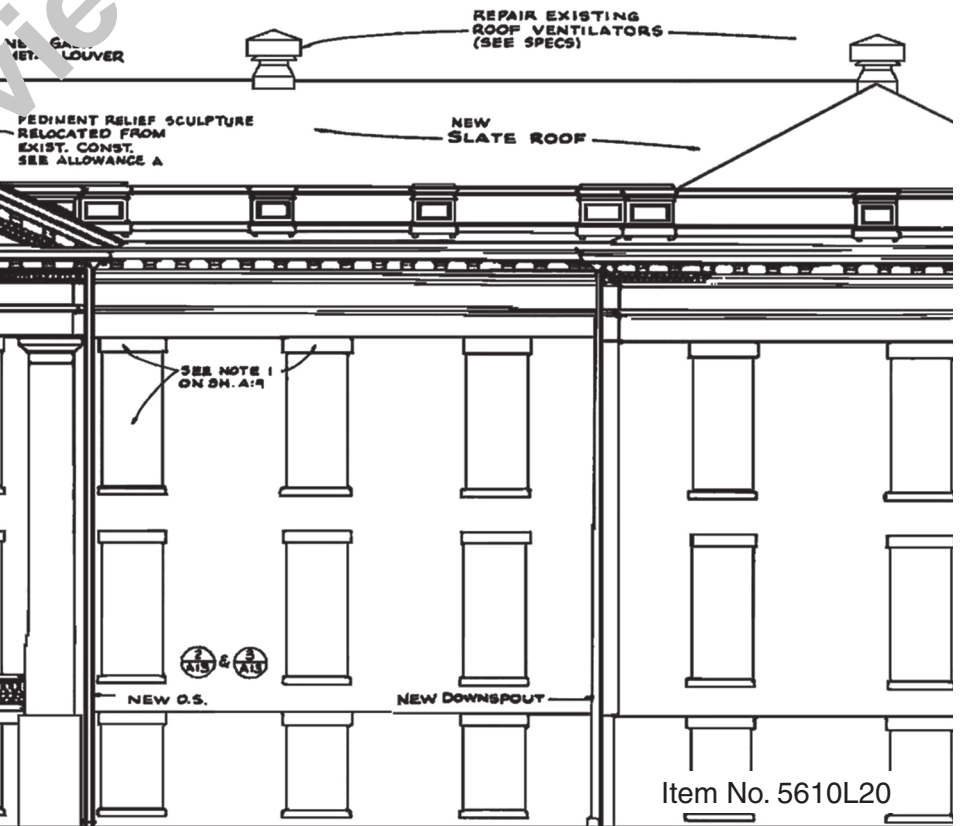
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(2020)

Residential



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PREFACE

History

The State of Florida first mandated statewide building codes during the 1970s at the beginning of the modern construction boom. The first law required all municipalities and counties to adopt and enforce one of the four state-recognized model codes known as the “state minimum building codes.” During the early 1990s a series of natural disasters, together with the increasing complexity of building construction regulation in vastly changed markets, led to a comprehensive review of the state building code system. The study revealed that building code adoption and enforcement was inconsistent throughout the state and those local codes thought to be the strongest proved inadequate when tested by major hurricane events. The consequences of the building code system failure were devastation to lives and economies and a statewide property insurance crisis. The response was a reform of the state building construction regulatory system that placed emphasis on uniformity and accountability.

The 1998 Florida Legislature amended chapter 553, *Florida Statutes*, Building Construction Standards, to create a single state building code that is enforced by local governments. As of March 1, 2002, the *Florida Building Code*, which is developed and maintained by the Florida Building Commission, supersedes all local building codes. The *Florida Building Code* is updated every three years and may be amended in the interim in accordance with criteria set out in section 553.73, Florida Statutes.

Scope

The *Florida Building Code* is based on national model building codes and national consensus standards, in addition to Florida-specific provisions. The code incorporates all building construction-related regulations for public and private buildings in the State of Florida other than those specifically exempted by section 553.73, Florida Statutes. It has been harmonized with the *Florida Fire Prevention Code*, which is developed and maintained by the Department of Financial Services, Office of the State Fire Marshal, to establish unified and consistent standards.

The model codes used for the *Florida Building Code*, 7th Edition (2020) include: the 2018 editions of the *International Building Code*®; the *International Plumbing Code*®; the *International Mechanical Code*®; the *International Fuel Gas Code*®; the *International Residential Code*®; the *International Existing Building Code*®; the *International Energy Conservation Code*®; the *National Electrical Code*, 2017 edition, for substantive criteria from ASHRAE Standard 90.1-2016. State and local codes adopted and incorporated into the code include the *Florida Building Code*, *Accessibility*, and special hurricane protection standards for the High-Velocity Hurricane Zone.

The code is composed of nine main volumes: the *Florida Building Code, Building*, which also includes state regulations for licensed facilities; the *Florida Building Code, Plumbing*; the *Florida Building Code, Mechanical*; the *Florida Building Code, Fuel Gas*; the *Florida Building Code, Existing Building*; the *Florida Building Code, Residential*; the *Florida Building Code, Energy Conservation*; the *Florida Building Code, Accessibility* and the *Florida Building Code, Test Protocols for High-Velocity Hurricane Zones*. Chapter 27 of the *Florida Building Code, Building*, adopts the *National Electrical Code*, NFPA 70, by reference.

Under certain strictly defined conditions, local governments may amend technical requirements to be more stringent than the code. All local technical amendments to the *Florida Building Code* must be adopted in accordance with the requirements of section 553.73(4), Florida Statutes, and reported to the Florida Building Commission, then posted on www.floridabuilding.org in legislative format for 30 days prior to being enforced. Local amendments to the *Florida Building Code* and the *Florida Fire Prevention Code* may be obtained from the Florida Building Commission website, or from the Florida Department of Business and Professional Regulation or the Florida Department of Financial Services, Office of the State Fire Marshal, respectively.

Adoption and Maintenance

An updated edition of the *Florida Building Code* is adopted triennially by the Florida Building Commission. The code may also be amended between updates in order to incorporate the Florida Building Commission's interpretations into the code, address conflicts, and update standards, among other statutorily specified reasons. Minimum requirements for permitting, plans review and inspections are established by the code, and local jurisdictions may adopt additional administrative requirements that are more stringent. Local technical amendments are subject to strict criteria established by section 553.73(4), Florida Statutes. They are subject to Commission review during each triennial update of the code, and may be either adopted into the updated edition of the code or repealed. Local technical amendments are also subject to appeal according to the procedure established by section 553.73(4), Florida Statutes.

Eleven Technical Advisory Committees (TACs), which are constituted consistent with American National Standards Institute (ANSI) Guidelines, review proposed code changes and clarifications of the code and make recommendations to the Commission. These TACs whose membership is constituted consistent with American National Standards Institute (ANSI) Guidelines include Accessibility; Joint Building Fire (a joint committee of the Commission and the State Fire Marshall); Building Structural; Code Administration/Enforcement; Electrical; Energy; Mechanical; Plumbing and Fuel Gas; Roofing; Swimming Pool; and Special Occupancy (state agency construction and facility licensing regulations).

The Commission may only issue official code interpretations using procedures set out by Chapter 120, Florida Statutes. To obtain such an interpretation, a request for a declaratory statement must be made to the Florida Building Commission in a manner that establishes a clear set of facts and circumstances and identifies the section of the code in question. Requests are analyzed by staff, reviewed by the appropriate Technical Advisory Committee, and sent to the Florida Building Commission for action. These interpretations establish precedents for situations having similar facts and circumstances and are typically incorporated into the code in the next code amendment cycle. Non-binding interpretations are available from the Building Officials Association of Florida's website (www.BOAF.net) and a binding interpretation process is available online at www.floridabuilding.org.

Marginal Markings

Solid vertical lines in the margins within the body of the code indicate a change from the requirements of the *Florida Building Code, Residential, 6th Edition (2017)* to the *Florida Building Code, Residential, 7th Edition (2020)*, effective December 31, 2020.

Sections deleted from the base code are designated "Reserved" in order to maintain the structure of the base code.

Italicized Terms

Selected terms set forth in Chapter 2, Definitions, are italicized where they appear in code text (except those in Sections 1903 through 1905, where italics indicate provisions that differ from ACI 318). Such terms are not italicized where the definition set forth in Chapter 2 does not impart the intended meaning in the use of the term. The terms selected have definitions that the user should read carefully to facilitate better understanding of the code.

Acknowledgments

The *Florida Building Code* is produced through the efforts and contributions of building designers, contractors, product manufacturers, regulators and other interested parties who participate in the Florida Building Commission's consensus processes, Commission staff and the participants in the national model code development processes.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

<i>Part I—Administrative</i>	1	R306 Sanitation	54
CHAPTER 1 SCOPE AND ADMINISTRATION	1	R307 Toilet, Bath and Shower Spaces	55
PART 1—SCOPE AND APPLICATION	1	R308 Glazing	55
Section		R309 Garages and Carports	56
R101 General	1	R310 Emergency Escape and Rescue Openings	59
R102 Applicability (Reserved)	1	R311 Means of Egress	61
PART 2—ADMINISTRATION AND ENFORCEMENT	1	R312 Guards and Window Fall Protection	64
Section		R313 Automatic Fire Sprinkler Systems (Reserved)	65
R103 Department of Building Safety (Reserved)	1	R314 Smoke Alarms	65
R104 Duties and Powers of the Building Official (Reserved)	1	R315 Carbon Monoxide Alarms	66
R105 Permits (Reserved)	1	R316 Foam Plastic	66
R106 Construction Documents (Reserved)	1	R317 Protection of Wood and Wood-based Products against Decay	68
R107 Temporary Structures and Uses (Reserved)	1	R318 Protection against Termites	69
R108 Fees (Reserved)	1	R319 Site Address	71
R109 Inspections (Reserved)	1	R320 Accessibility	71
R110 Certificate of Occupancy (Reserved)	2	R321 Elevators and Platform Lifts	71
R111 Service Utilities (Reserved)	2	R322 Flood-resistant Construction	72
R112 Board of Appeals (Reserved)	2	R323 Storm Shelters	76
R113 Violations (Reserved)	2	R324 Solar Energy Systems	76
R114 Stop Work Order (Reserved)	2	R325 Mezzanines	77
<i>Part II—Definitions</i>	3	R326 Swimming Pools, Spas and Hot Tubs	78
CHAPTER 2 DEFINITIONS	3	R327 Airport Noise	78
Section		R328 Stationary Storage Battery Systems	78
R201 General	3	CHAPTER 4 FOUNDATIONS	79
R202 Definition	3	Section	
<i>Part III—Building Planning and Construction</i>	21	R401 General	79
CHAPTER 3 BUILDING PLANNING	21	R402 Materials	82
Section		R403 Footings	82
R301 Design Criteria	21	R404 Foundation and Retaining Walls	97
R302 Fire-resistant Construction	48	R405 Foundation Drainage	125
R303 Light, Ventilation and Heating	53	R406 Foundation Waterproofing and Dampproofing	126
R304 Minimum Room Areas	54	R407 Columns	127
R305 Ceiling Height	54	R408 Under-floor Space	128
		CHAPTER 5 FLOORS	129
		Section	
		R501 General	129
		R502 Wood Floor Framing	129

TABLE OF CONTENTS

R503 Floor Sheathing 130
 R504 Pressure Preservative-treated Wood
 Floors (On Ground) 131
 R505 Cold-formed Steel Floor Framing 131
 R506 Concrete Floors (On Ground). 131
 R507 Exterior Decks 132

CHAPTER 6 WALL CONSTRUCTION 139

Section
 R601 General 139
 R602 Wood Wall Framing 139
 R603 Cold-formed Steel Wall Framing 142
 R604 Wood Structural Panels 142
 R605 Particleboard. 142
 R606 General Masonry Construction. 142
 R607 Glass Unit Masonry 149
 R608 Exterior Concrete Wall Construction. 150
 R609 Exterior Windows and Doors 197
 R610 Structural Insulated Panel Wall
 Construction 226

CHAPTER 7 WALL COVERING 239

Section
 R701 General 239
 R702 Interior Covering 239
 R703 Exterior Covering 244
 R704 Soffits 265

CHAPTER 8 ROOF-CEILING CONSTRUCTION 269

Section
 R801 General 269
 R802 Wood Roof Framing 269
 R803 Roof Sheathing 273
 R804 Cold-formed Steel Roof Framing 273
 R805 Ceiling Finishes 273
 R806 Roof Ventilation 274
 R807 Attic Access 275

CHAPTER 9 ROOF ASSEMBLIES 277

Section
 R901 General 277
 R902 Fire Classification. 277
 R903 Weather Protection 277
 R904 Materials. 278
 R905 Requirements for Roof Coverings 278

R906 Roof Insulation. 288
 R907 Rooftop-mounted Photovoltaic Systems 288
 R908 Existing Roofing 288

CHAPTER 10 CHIMNEYS AND FIREPLACES. . . 293

Section
 R1001 Masonry Fireplaces 293
 R1002 Masonry Heaters 297
 R1003 Masonry Chimneys 297
 R1004 Factory-built Fireplaces 302
 R1005 Factory-built Chimneys 302
 R1006 Exterior Air Supply 302

Part IV—Energy Conservation. 305

CHAPTER 11 [RE]ENERGY EFFICIENCY 305

Section
 N1101 General. 305

Part V—Mechanical 307

CHAPTER 12 MECHANICAL ADMINISTRATION 307

Section
 M1201 General. 307
 M1202 Existing Mechanical Systems 307

CHAPTER 13 GENERAL MECHANICAL SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS 309

Section
 M1301 General. 309
 M1302 Approval. 309
 M1303 Labeling of Appliances 309
 M1304 Type of Fuel. 309
 M1305 Appliance Access. 309
 M1306 Clearances from Combustible Construction . . . 310
 M1307 Appliance Installation 313
 M1308 Mechanical Systems Installation 314

CHAPTER 14 HEATING AND COOLING EQUIPMENT AND APPLIANCES. 315

Section
 M1401 General. 315
 M1402 Central Furnaces 315
 M1403 Heat Pump Equipment 315
 M1404 Refrigeration Cooling Equipment 315

M1405 Baseboard Convectors 315
 M1406 Radiant Heating Systems 315
 M1407 Duct Heaters 316
 M1408 Vented Floor Furnaces 316
 M1409 Vented Wall Furnaces 317
 M1410 Vented Room Heaters 317
 M1411 Heating and Cooling Equipment 317
 M1412 Absorption Cooling Equipment 318
 M1413 Evaporative Cooling Equipment 318
 M1414 Fireplace Stoves 319
 M1415 Masonry Heaters 319

CHAPTER 15 EXHAUST SYSTEMS 321

Section
 M1501 General 321
 M1502 Clothes Dryer Exhaust 321
 M1503 Range Hoods 322
 M1504 Installation of Microwave Ovens 323
 M1505 Overhead Exhaust Hoods 323
 M1506 Exhaust Ducts and Exhaust Openings 323
 M1507 Mechanical Ventilation 323

CHAPTER 16 DUCT SYSTEMS 325

Section
 M1601 Duct Construction 325
 M1602 Return Air 328

CHAPTER 17 COMBUSTION AIR 329

Section
 M1701 General 329

CHAPTER 18 CHIMNEYS AND VENTS 331

Section
 M1801 General 331
 M1802 Vent Components 331
 M1803 Chimney and Vent Connectors 332
 M1804 Vents 333
 M1805 Masonry and Factory-built Chimneys 333

CHAPTER 19 SPECIAL APPLIANCES, EQUIPMENT AND SYSTEMS 335

Section
 M1901 Ranges and Ovens 335
 M1902 Sauna Heaters 335
 M1903 Stationary Fuel Cell Power Plants 335
 M1904 Gaseous Hydrogen Systems 335

CHAPTER 20 BOILERS AND WATER HEATERS 337

Section
 M2001 Boilers 337
 M2002 Operating and Safety Controls 337
 M2003 Expansion Tanks 337
 M2004 Water Heaters Used for Space Heating 338
 M2005 Water Heaters 338
 M2006 Pool Heaters 338

CHAPTER 21 HYDRONIC PIPING 339

Section
 M2101 Hydronic Piping Systems Installation 339
 M2102 Baseboard Convectors 339
 M2103 Floor Heating Systems 339
 M2104 Low Temperature Piping 341
 M2105 Ground-Source Heat-Pump System Loop Piping 341

CHAPTER 22 SPECIAL PIPING AND STORAGE SYSTEMS 345

Section
 M2201 Oil Tanks 345
 M2202 Oil Piping, Fitting and Connections 345
 M2203 Installation 345
 M2204 Oil Pumps and Valves 346

CHAPTER 23 SOLAR THERMAL ENERGY SYSTEMS 347

Section
 M2301 Thermal Solar Energy Systems 347

Part VI—Fuel Gas 349

CHAPTER 24 FUEL GAS 349

Section
 G2401 General 349
 G2402 General 349
 G2403 General Definitions 349
 G2404 General 355
 G2405 Structural Safety 356
 G2406 Appliance Location 356
 G2407 Combustion, Ventilation and Dilution Air 357
 G2408 Installation 361
 G2409 Clearance Reduction 361
 G2410 Electrical 364

TABLE OF CONTENTS

G2411 Electrical Bonding 365

G2412 General 365

G2413 Pipe Sizing 366

G2414 Piping Materials 388

G2415 Piping System Installation 390

G2416 Piping Bends and Changes in Direction. 392

G2417 Inspection, Testing and Purging. 392

G2418 Piping Support 394

G2419 Drips and Sloped Piping. 395

G2420 Shutoff Valves 395

G2421 Flow Controls 396

G2422 Appliance Connections. 396

G2423 Compressed Natural Gas Motor
Vehicle Fuel-dispensing Facilities 397

G2424 Piping Support Intervals. 397

G2425 General 398

G2426 Vents. 399

G2427 Venting of Appliances 400

G2428 Sizing of Category I Appliance
Venting Systems 409

G2429 Direct-vent, Integral Vent, Mechanical Vent
and Ventilation/Exhaust Hood Venting 421

G2430 Factory-built Chimneys 421

G2431 General 421

G2432 Decorative Appliances for Installation
in Fireplaces 421

G2433 Log Lighters 421

G2434 Vented Gas Fireplaces
(Decorative Appliances). 421

G2435 Vented Gas Fireplace Heaters 421

G2436 Vented Wall Furnaces 421

G2437 Floor Furnaces 422

G2438 Clothes Dryers 422

G2439 Clothes Dryer Exhaust 422

G2440 Sauna Heaters 423

G2441 Pool and Spa Heaters 424

G2442 Forced-air Warm-air Furnaces 424

G2443 Convection Burners 425

G2444 Unit Heaters 425

G2445 Unvented Room Heaters. 425

G2446 Vented Room Heaters. 426

G2447 Cooking Appliances 426

G2448 Water Heaters 426

G2449 Air-Conditioning Appliances 426

G2450 Illuminating Appliances 426

G2451 Infrared Radiant Heaters 427

G2452 Boilers 427

G2453 Chimney Damper Opening Area 427

G2454 Outdoor Decorative Appliances. 427

Part VII—Plumbing 429

**CHAPTER 25 PLUMBING
ADMINISTRATION 429**

Section

P2501 General 429

P2502 Existing Plumbing Systems 429

P2503 Inspection and Tests. 429

**CHAPTER 26 GENERAL PLUMBING
REQUIREMENTS 431**

Section

P2601 General 431

P2602 Individual Water Supply and
Sewage Disposal 431

P2603 Structural and Piping Protection 431

P2604 Trenching and Backfilling 432

P2605 Support 432

P2606 Penetrations 433

P2607 Waterproofing of Openings 433

P2608 Workmanship 433

P2609 Materials Evaluation and Listing. 433

CHAPTER 27 PLUMBING FIXTURES 435

Section

P2701 Fixtures, Faucets and Fixture Fittings 435

P2702 Fixture Accessories 435

P2703 Tail Pieces 435

P2704 Access to Slip-Joint Connections. 435

P2705 Installation 435

P2706 Waste Receptors. 435

P2707 Directional Fittings 437

P2708 Showers 437

P2709 Shower Receptors 437

P2710 Shower Walls 438

P2711 Lavatories. 438

P2712 Water Closets 438

P2713 Bathtubs 439

P2714 Sinks 439

P2715 Laundry Tubs 439

P2716 Food-waste Disposer 439

P2717 Dishwashing Machines 439
 P2718 Clothes Washing Machine 439
 P2719 Floor Drains 439
 P2720 Whirlpool Bathtubs 439
 P2721 Bidet Installations 440
 P2722 Fixture Fitting 440
 P2723 Macerating Toilet Systems 440
 P2724 Speciality Temperature Control Devices
 and Valves 440
 P2725 Nonliquid Saturated Treatment Systems 440

CHAPTER 28 WATER HEATERS 441

Section
 P2801 General 441
 P2802 Solar Water Heating Systems 441
 P2803 Water Heaters Used for Space Heating 441
 P2804 Relief Valves 442

CHAPTER 29 WATER SUPPLY AND DISTRIBUTION 443

Section
 P2901 General 443
 P2902 Protection of Potable Water Supply 443
 P2903 Water Supply System 446
 P2904 Dwelling Unit Fire Sprinkler Systems 450
 P2905 Heated Water Distribution Systems 451
 P2906 Materials, Joints and Connections 462
 P2907 Changes in Direction 466
 P2908 Support 466
 P2909 Drinking Water Treatment Units 466
 P2910 Nonpotable Water Systems 466
 P2911 On-site Nonpotable Water Reuse Systems 469
 P2912 Nonpotable Rainwater Collection
 and Distribution Systems 471
 P2913 Reclaimed Water Systems 473

CHAPTER 30 SANITARY DRAINAGE 475

Section
 P3001 General 475
 P3002 Materials 475
 P3003 Joints and Connections 477
 P3004 Determining Drainage Fixture Units 479
 P3005 Drainage System 479
 P3006 Sizing of Drain Pipe Offsets 483
 P3007 Sumps and Ejectors 483

P3008 Backwater Valves 484
 P3009 Subsurface Landscape Irrigation
 Systems (Reserved) 484
 P3010 Replacement of Underground Building Sewers
 and Building Drains by Pipe
 Bursting Methods 484
 P3011 Replacement of Underground Sewers by
 PVC Fold and Form Methods 484

CHAPTER 31 VENTS 487

Section
 P3101 Vent Systems 487
 P3102 Vent Stacks and Stack Vents 487
 P3103 Vent Terminals 487
 P3104 Vent Connections and Codes 488
 P3105 Fixture Vents 488
 P3106 Individual Venting 488
 P3107 Common Venting 488
 P3108 Waste Venting 489
 P3109 Waste Stack Venting 489
 P3110 Air-Admittance Venting 489
 P3111 Combination Waste and Vent System 490
 P3112 Island Fixture Venting 490
 P3113 Vent Pipe Sizing 490
 P3114 Air Admittance Valves 491

CHAPTER 32 TRAPS 493

Section
 P3201 Fixture Traps 493

CHAPTER 33 STORM DRAINAGE 495

Section
 P3301 General 495
 P3302 Subsoil Drains 495
 P3303 Sumps and Pumping Systems 495

Part VIII—Electrical 497

CHAPTER 34 GENERAL REQUIREMENTS 497

Section
 E3401 General 497
 E3402 Building Structure Protection (Reserved) 497
 E3403 Inspection and Approval (Reserved) 497
 E3404 General Equipment
 Requirements (Reserved) 497

TABLE OF CONTENTS

E3405 Equipment Location and Clearances (Reserved) 497

E3406 Electrical Conductors and Connections (Reserved) 497

E3407 Conductor and Terminal Identification (Reserved) 497

CHAPTER 35 ELECTRICAL DEFINITIONS (RESERVED) 499

CHAPTER 36 SERVICES (RESERVED) 501

CHAPTER 37 BRANCH CIRCUIT AND FEEDER REQUIREMENTS (RESERVED) 503

CHAPTER 38 WIRING METHODS (RESERVED) 505

CHAPTER 39 POWER AND LIGHTING DISTRIBUTION (RESERVED) 507

CHAPTER 40 DEVICES AND LUMINAIRES (RESERVED) 509

CHAPTER 41 APPLIANCE INSTALLATION (RESERVED) 511

CHAPTER 42 SWIMMING POOLS [ELECTRICAL PROVISIONS] (RESERVED) 513

CHAPTER 43 CLASS 2 REMOTE-CONTROL, SIGNALING AND POWER LIMITED CIRCUITS (RESERVED) 515

CHAPTER 44 HIGH-VELOCITY HURRICANE ZONES 517

Section

R4401 High-Velocity Hurricane Zones—Exterior Wall Coverings 517

R4402 High-Velocity Hurricane Zones—Roof Assemblies and Rooftop Structures 517

R4403 High-Velocity Hurricane Zones—General. 517

R4404 High-Velocity Hurricane Zones—Foundations and Retaining Walls 517

R4405 High-Velocity Hurricane Zones—Concrete. 517

R4406 High-Velocity Hurricane Zones—Light Metal Alloys 517

R4407 High-Velocity Hurricane Zones—Masonry. 517

R4408 High-Velocity Hurricane Zones—Steel. 517

R4409 High-Velocity Hurricane Zones—Wood. 517

R4410 High-Velocity Hurricane Zones—Glass and Glazing 517

R4411 High-Velocity Hurricane Zones—Gypsum Board and Plaster 517

R4412 High-Velocity Hurricane Zones—Plastics. 517

CHAPTER 45 PRIVATE SWIMMING POOLS 519

Section

R4501 General. 519

Part IX—Referenced Standards 527

CHAPTER 46 REFERENCED STANDARDS 527

APPENDIX A SIZING AND CAPACITIES OF GAS PIPING 557

APPENDIX B SIZING OF VENTING SYSTEMS SERVING APPLIANCES EQUIPPED WITH DRAFT HOODS, CATEGORY I APPLIANCES, AND APPLIANCES LISTED FOR USE WITH TYPE B VENTS 569

APPENDIX C EXIT TERMINALS OF MECHANICAL DRAFT AND DIRECT-VENT VENTING SYSTEMS 579

APPENDIX D RECOMMENDED PROCEDURE FOR SAFETY INSPECTION OF AN EXISTING APPLIANCE INSTALLATION 581

APPENDIX E FLORIDA STANDARD FOR MITIGATION OF RADON IN EXISTING BUILDINGS 587

APPENDIX F FLORIDA STANDARD FOR PASSIVE RADON-RESISTANT NEW RESIDENTIAL BUILDING CONSTRUCTION 595

APPENDIX G PIPING STANDARDS FOR VARIOUS APPLICATIONS 601

APPENDIX H PATIO COVERS 605

Section

AH101 General. 605

AH102 Definition. 605

AH103 Exterior Walls and Openings	605	AO103 Automatic Vehicular Gates	629
AH104 Height	605		
AH105 Structural Provisions	605	APPENDIX P SIZING OF WATER PIPING SYSTEM	631
AH106 Special Provisions for Aluminum Screen Enclosures in Hurricane-prone Regions	605	Section	
APPENDIX I PRIVATE SEWAGE DISPOSAL . . .	609	AP101 General	631
Section		AP102 Information Required	631
AI101 General	609	AP103 Selection of Pipe Size	631
APPENDIX J EXISTING BUILDINGS AND STRUCTURES	611	AP201 Selection of Pipe Size	648
Section		APPENDIX Q TINY HOUSES	651
AJ101 Purpose and Intent.	611	Section	
AJ102 Compliance	611	AQ101 General	651
AJ103 Preliminary Meeting	612	AQ102 Definitions	651
AJ104 Evaluation of an Existing Building	612	AQ103 Ceiling Height.	651
AJ105 Permit	612	AQ104 Lofts	651
AJ201 Definitions.	612	AQ105 Emergency Escape and Rescue Openings	652
AJ301 Repairs	613	APPENDIX R LIGHT STRAW-CLAY CONSTRUCTION.	653
AJ401 Renovations.	613	Section	
AJ501 Alterations.	613	AR101 General	653
AJ601 Reconstruction	614	AR102 Definitions	653
APPENDIX K SOUND TRANSMISSION	617	AR103 Nonbearing Light Straw- Clay Construction	653
Section		AR104 Thermal Insulation	654
AK101 General	617	AR105 Referenced Standard.	654
AK102 Air-borne Sound	617	APPENDIX S STRAWBALE CONSTRUCTION . . .	655
AK103 Structural-borne Sound	617	Section	
AK104 Referenced Standards	617	AS101 General	655
APPENDIX L PERMIT FEES.	619	AS102 Definitions	655
APPENDIX M HOME DAY CARE—R-3 OCCUPANCY	621	AS103 Bales	655
Section		AS104 Finishes	656
AM101 General	621	AS105 Strawbale Walls—General	657
AM102 Definition	621	AS106 Strawbale Walls—Structural	659
AM103 Means of Egress	621	AS107 Fire Resistance	662
AM104 Smoke Detection	622	AS108 Thermal Insulation	663
APPENDIX N VENTING METHODS	623	AS109 Referenced Standards	663
APPENDIX O AUTOMATIC VEHICULAR GATES	629	APPENDIX T RECOMMENDED PROCEDURE FOR WORST-CASE TESTING OF ATMOSPHERIC VENTING SYSTEMS UNDER N1102.4 OR N1105 CONDITIONS ≤ 5ACH₅₀	665
Section		Section	
AO101 General	629	T101 Scope	665
AO102 Definition	629		

TABLE OF CONTENTS

T202 General Definitions 665
T301 Testing Procedure..... 665

**APPENDIX U SOLAR-READY PROVISIONS—
DETACHED ONE- AND
TWO-FAMILY DWELLINGS,
MULTIPLE SINGLE-FAMILY
DWELLINGS (TOWNHOUSES) ... 667**

Section

U101 Scope 667
U102 General Definition 667
U103 Solar-ready Zone 667

INDEX 669