

# IFC®

INTERNATIONAL FIRE CODE®

CODE AND  
COMMENTARY

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2009 International Fire Code® Commentary

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## PREFACE

The principal purpose of the Commentary is to provide a basic volume of knowledge and facts relating to building construction as it pertains to the regulations set forth in the 2009 *International Fire Code*. The person who is serious about effectively designing, constructing and regulating buildings and structures will find the Commentary to be a reliable data source and reference to almost all components of the built environment.

As a follow-up to the *International Fire Code*, we offer a companion document, the *International Fire Code Commentary*. The basic appeal of the Commentary is thus: it provides in a small package and at reasonable cost thorough coverage of many issues likely to be dealt with when using the *International Fire Code* — and then supplements that coverage with historical and technical background. Reference lists, information sources and bibliographies are also included.

Throughout all of this, strenuous effort has been made to keep the vast quantity of material accessible and its method of presentation useful. With a comprehensive yet concise summary of each section, the Commentary provides a convenient reference for regulations applicable to the construction of buildings and structures. In the chapters that follow, discussions focus on the full meaning and implications of the code text. Guidelines suggest the most effective method of application, and the consequences of not adhering to the code text. Illustrations are provided to aid understanding; they do not necessarily illustrate the only methods of achieving code compliance.

The format of the Commentary includes the full text of each section, table and figure in the code, followed immediately by the commentary applicable to that text. At the time of printing, the Commentary reflects the most up-to-date text of the 2009 *International Fire Code*. As stated in the preface to the *International Fire Code*, the content of sections in the code which begin with a letter designation (i.e., Section 607.2) are maintained by another code development committee. Each section's narrative includes a statement of its objective and intent, and usually includes a discussion about why the requirement commands the conditions set forth. Code text and commentary text are easily distinguished from each other. All code text is shown as it appears in the *International Fire Code*, and all commentary is indented below the code text and begins with the symbol ❖.

Readers should note that the Commentary is to be used in conjunction with the *International Fire Code* and not as a substitute for the code. **The Commentary is advisory only**; the code official alone possesses the authority and responsibility for interpreting the code.

Comments and recommendations are encouraged. For through your input, we can improve future editions. Please direct your comments to the Codes and Standards Development Department at the Chicago District Office.

The International Code Council would like to extend its thanks to the following individuals for their contributions to the technical content of this commentary:

David Fredrickson  
Gene Boecker  
Marcelo Hirschler

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