



# Updating OSFM's Life Safety Code

Updated March 3, 2020

# Our Process: Slow, But Sure



OSFM worked diligently, talking with experts and stakeholders, considering what neighboring states are doing, addressing concerns raised during OSFM's earlier attempts to update to a newer edition, as well as researching why the Life Safety Code changes have been made in each edition since the 2000 edition.

# Moving Forward



With all of this information in mind as part of rule making, OSFM developed modifications to the 2015 edition of the Life Safety Code to make compliance with certain code requirements easier, but without reducing safety or losing the intent the Life Safety Code Technical Committee had in mind when developing the 2015 edition.

# What Will Not Change



*Fire sprinklers for one- and two-family homes remain as a recommendation only at the state level. Individual homeowners and communities will continue to make the choice whether to require home fire sprinklers.*

# What Will Not Change



*Fire sprinkler requirements for existing high-rise\* buildings remain as prescribed in the 2000 edition of the Life Safety Code and not as required in the 2015 edition.*

*\*(A high-rise building is defined by the Life Safety Code as one that is more than 75 ft measured to the floor level of the highest occupied story from the ground level where the fire department has access to the building.)*

# What Will Not Change



*Fire sprinkler requirements for existing assembly\* occupancies* remain as prescribed in the 2000 edition of the Life Safety Code and not as required in the 2015 edition.

\*(An assembly occupancy as defined by the Life Safety Code is a building or area where more than 50 people gather for entertainment, worship, dining, and/or awaiting transportation.)

# What Will Not Change



## *Day Care Occupancies:*

- Classification of day care centers and day care homes, along with staffing ratios in day care facilities, remain as prescribed by DCFS.
- Existing options for means of escape in basement day care homes remain.
- Existing day care centers are still not be required to provide rescue windows.

# What Is New



OSFM is addressing applicability of the OSFM-adopted code differently than in past attempts.

# What Is New: Home Rule



While not part of rule change, OSFM has determined that *home rule units*, such as Chicago, are able to choose to follow the OSFM-adopted code or assert their home rule exemption by adopting a local ordinance that specifies the fire protection requirements in that community.

Even in home rule units, the OSFM-adopted code still applies to state buildings, state licensed facilities, and other occupancies under the purview of OSFM.

# What Is New: Code Equivalency



For non-home rule units, a *code equivalency process* will help simplify enforcement, allowing the local code to become the primary code of enforcement.

Even in equivalency communities, the OSFM-adopted code still applies to state buildings, state licensed facilities, and other occupancies under the purview of the OSFM.

# What Is New: All Others



OSFM's adopted code is the primary code for:

- Areas that choose to utilize the OSFM-adopted code;
- Home rule units that do not assert their exemption; and
- Areas that do not qualify for a home rule exemption or are not granted a determination of equivalency.

Both the local authority and the OSFM may continue to jointly enforce the provisions of the code as adopted by the OSFM.

# What Is New: Permanently Moored Craft



The requirements previously found in this section related to Permanently Moored Vessels have been relocated into a standalone Part 149 for Permanently Moored Craft.

# What Is New: Door Locking



All occupancies except for schools that fall under the rules of the Illinois State Board of Education are provided guidance and be permitted to use door locking systems to help prevent unwanted intruder entry.

# What Is New: Story Level



Occupancies are permitted to use an alternative definition of “story level” to increase flexibility related to compliance with the Life Safety Code.

# What Is New: Historic Structures



Qualified buildings are permitted to use an alternative approach for compliance by using NFPA 914, *Code for Fire Protection in Historic Structures* (2010).

# What Is New: Multifamily Buildings



Multifamily buildings have the option for alternative compliance using NFPA 101A, *Guide for Alternative Approaches to Life Safety* (2016).

# What Is New: Day Care



- Alternative options for smoke detection in corridors outside day care homes located within a building of another occupancy are now permitted.
- Changes allowing certain extended travel distances through adjoining rooms to direct exits and rescue windows in day care centers are now permitted.

# What Is New: Sprinklers in New Buildings



*The 2015 edition of the Life Safety Code contains amended fire sprinkler protection requirements for new buildings.*

Amended provisions in the 2015 edition remove exemptions for fire sprinklers in newly built occupancies that were allowed under the 2000 edition. For example:

- New places of worship with an occupant load of 300 or more are no longer be exempt from fire sprinkler requirements.
- New night club type assembly buildings are now required to have fire sprinklers, regardless of size and occupancy load.

# What Is New: Sprinklers in New Buildings



Amended provisions in the 2015 edition remove similar exemptions for fire sprinklers in other newly built occupancies such as new high-rise buildings, new hotels and motels, new apartment buildings, new dormitories, and new shopping malls and anchor stores.

# What Is New: Sprinklers in New Buildings



## Additionally:

- New educational occupancies that are greater than 12,000 ft<sup>2</sup> in footprint are now required to have fire sprinklers. (This does not apply to public schools that fall under the Illinois State Board of Education rules, which have had a more stringent threshold for fire sprinkler protection since 1995.)
- New and existing residential board and care facilities (e.g., assisted living, large group homes with more than 16 residents) must be sprinklered if their occupants are classified as having an evacuation capability of “impractical.”

# What Is New: Group Homes



## *Group Homes (Facilities with 16 or less residents):*

- Existing small group homes that are already sprinklered must extend fire sprinklers into attic spaces, unless the location meets conditions for use of an alternative related to heat detection or building construction.
- Existing group homes must be sprinklered if their occupants are classified as having an evacuation capability of “impractical”.
- For these group home facilities which are inspected by the OSFM at the request of DHS, this applies throughout the state, regardless of the municipality.

# More Information



- OSFM website: [www.sfm.illinois.gov](http://www.sfm.illinois.gov)
- Fact Sheets provided at this hearing are also posted on the OSFM website.
- Text can be found by visiting <https://www2.illinois.gov/sites/sfm/Resources/Pages/Life-Safety-Code.aspx>.



**Thank You**