

## Home Builder Benefits to Adopting the 2009 IRC

### **R305.1 Minimum height (RB30-07/08)**

Contains a new provision that allows the ceiling height above bathroom fixtures to be “such that the fixture is capable of being used for its intended purpose.” This will allow builders to construct bathrooms under stairs and other sloped ceiling locations in new and existing homes, thereby not requiring the use of other locations at additional expense and reducing the square footage available for living space. The change was submitted by NAHB.

### **R311.5.3 Stair treads and risers (E60-07/08)**

New language requires that tread and riser dimensions be measured exclusive of carpeting. This will provide for more consistent interpretation and enforcement for builders and reduce disagreements between builders and code officials as to the correct method of measurement on carpeted stairs.

### **R317.2 Townhouses, exception (RB66-07/08)**

Reduces from two hours to one hour the required fire-resistance rating of common walls separating townhouses.

*Note: this change was part of the proposal to require sprinklers in all townhouses. Any modification to not require sprinklers should also retain the two-hour requirement.*

### **R319.4 Wood plastic composites (RB102-06/07 & RB55-07/08), and other related sections**

This adds criteria to the code for the use of these materials for decks, guards and handrails. Although previously accepted by code officials under alternate material provisions and ES reports, placing criteria for the material in the code should ease approval and acceptance for builders.

### **R401.3 Drainage, Exception (RB101-07/08)**

The section addresses the grading of the ground adjacent to foundation walls in situations where small yard space does not allow for the usual minimum 6:10 slope. Cost savings are difficult to quantify, but the deletion of a provision that was difficult to comply with should ease the approval process for builders. The change was submitted by NAHB.

**R404.1 Concrete and masonry foundation walls (RB149-06/07)**

The lateral support requirements that were new in the 2006 IRC, including Tables R404.1(1), (2) & (3) have been deleted, and the text returns to what was in the 2003 IRC and previous IRC & CABO codes. Table R404.1(2) had anchor bolt spacings as low as every 5 inches. This section of the 2006 IRC is considered onerous by home builders and was commonly modified by adopting jurisdictions. The change was submitted by NAHB and four concrete and masonry associations.

**Table R602.3(1) Fastener Schedule for Structural Members (RB133-07/08)**

The spacing for edge fasteners for attaching gypsum sheathing to supports is increased from 4 inches to 8 inches.

**R602.10 Wall bracing (RB142 through RB166-07/08)**

This extensive section has been completely rewritten by the ICC Ad Hoc Committee on Wall Bracing with the goal of making the section technically correct and easier to understand. The section has been the source of conflict between builders and code officials due to its complexity and misinterpretation. The new section should make plan reviews easier and quicker, and reduce disagreements between builders and code officials as to the correct application of the section.

**R602.10.3 Minimum length of braced panels (RB152-07/08)**

New text provides a simpler alternate method for bracing adjacent to garage doors in braced wall lines. The change was submitted by NAHB.

**R703.7.3.2 Lintels (RB196-07/08)**

The new section provides a more-economical method for spanning large masonry veneer openings such as occur above two-car garage door openings.

**R802.8 Lateral support & R806.1 Ventilation required (RB205-07/08)**

The new language provides simpler prescriptive requirements for openings in blocking that are necessary for venting closed rafter spaces. The change was submitted by NAHB.

**P2903.5 Water hammer (RP15-06/07)**

Water hammer arrestors are no longer required to be installed everywhere quick-closing valves are used.