

CHANGE TYPE: Addition

CHANGE SUMMARY: The construction of complying storm shelters is now required in critical emergency operations facilities where such facilities are located in geographical areas where the shelter design wind speed for tornadoes is at its highest.

2015 CODE: **423.3 Critical Emergency Operations.** In areas where the shelter design wind speed for tornadoes in accordance with Figure 304.2(1) of ICC 500 is 250 MPH, 911 call stations, emergency operation centers and fire, rescue, ambulance and police stations shall have a storm shelter constructed in accordance with ICC 500.

Exception: Buildings meeting the requirements for shelter design in ICC 500.

CHANGE SIGNIFICANCE: In order to establish minimum requirements for structures and spaces designated as hurricane, tornado or combination shelters, the IBC first referenced ICC 500, *ICC/NSSA Standard for the Design and Construction of Storm Shelters*, in the 2009 edition. However, in the 2009 and 2012 editions of the IBC, there are no scoping provisions to enact the technical requirements. Although the IBC did not mandate that storm shelters be provided, it did regulate their design if they were constructed. The 2015 IBC now provides scoping provisions that mandate the construction of complying storm shelters in critical emergency operations facilities where such facilities are located in geographical areas where the shelter design wind speed for tornadoes is at its highest, 250 miles per hour.

423.3 continues

423.3

Storm Shelters Serving Critical Emergency Operations Facilities



Fire station

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423.3 continued

Critical facilities, such as emergency operations centers, fire and police stations, and buildings with similar functions, are essential for the delivery of vital services or the protection of a community. It is important to protect the occupants of such critical facilities struck by tornadoes, as well as to maintain continuity of operations for those facilities. Emergency operation centers, as well as police and fire rescue facilities, are critical to disaster response because an interruption in their operation as a result of building or equipment failure may prevent rescue operations, evacuation, assistance delivery or general maintenance of law and order, which can have serious consequences for the community after a storm event. Section 423.3 now requires storm shelters in those critical emergency operations facilities located in those areas of the United States where the shelter design wind speed for tornadoes is established at 250 miles per hour. These areas include a substantial portion of the central United States, as shown in Figure 304.2(1) of ICC 500.

In addition to the necessary administrative and application provisions established in Chapter 1 and definitions provided in Chapter 2, the ICC 500 standard includes criteria for structural design, siting, occupancy, means of egress, access, accessibility and fire safety. In addition, essential features and accessories are regulated independently for tornado shelters and hurricane shelters. The exception indicates that a separate storm shelter space is not required where the entire building housing the critical emergency operations is designed to meet the shelter requirements of ICC 500.