

901.8.2

Removal of Existing Occupant-Use Hose Lines

CHANGE TYPE: Addition

CHANGE SUMMARY: Existing 1½-inch hose lines can be removed under certain circumstances.

2015 CODE: 901.8.2 Removal of Existing Occupant-Use Hose Lines. The fire code official is authorized to permit the removal of existing occupant-use hose lines where all of the following conditions exist:

1. Installation is not required by this code or the *International Building Code*.
2. The hose line will not be utilized by trained personnel or the fire department.
3. The remaining outlets are compatible with local fire department fittings.

CHANGE SIGNIFICANCE: IFC Section 905.3 identifies locations where standpipe systems are required. Both Class II and Class III standpipe systems consist of 1½-inch hose lines for occupant use. See the table below.

CLASSES OF STANDPIPE SYSTEMS

System	Hose and Connection Size
Class I	2½-inch hose connections to supply water for use by fire departments and those trained in handling heavy fire streams.
Class II	1½-inch hose stations to supply water for use primarily by the building occupants or by the fire department during initial response.
Class III	1½-inch hose stations to supply water for use by building occupants and 2½-inch hose connections for use by fire departments and those trained in handling heavy fire streams.

(From IFC Section 202)

In the past several editions of the code, there has been a reduction in the required installation of Class II systems. This is mainly a result of several key items:

- Maintenance of the hose lines frequently is marginal. The lack of maintenance has resulted in situations where an occupant is intending to fight a fire and grabs the hose nozzle; as the would-be firefighter approaches the fire, the occupant discovers that there is no water available because the cotton hose is mildewed and rotted. This puts the occupant in peril, because instead of exiting the building, the occupant is heading back toward the fire.
- OSHA requires that when hose lines for occupant use are provided, then the employees must be trained in their use. Training has been sporadic at best.
- Since most buildings are being equipped with a fire sprinkler system, the occupants should be instructed to let the fire sprinklers do their job while the occupants escape rather than stay near the fire to attempt to fight it.



Hose and nozzle removed from an existing Class II standpipe hose cabinet

Currently, Class II or III systems with 1½-inch hose lines are required in a few instances only. The 2015 IFC requires Class II systems with 1½-inch hose lines in

1. unsprinklered buildings with a story between 30 feet and 55 feet above the lowest level of fire department vehicle access (IFC 905.3.1, Exception 1), and
2. unsprinklered stages with an area greater than 1,000 square feet (IFC 905.3.4).

The requirement for installing 1½-inch hose lines is declining. There has been a shift in the philosophy of whether or not occupants should be asked to attempt to extinguish the fire or evacuate the structure. Therefore, removing the hose lines that would not be required if the building were built under today's code makes sense.

The new section states that the hose can be removed; it does not say that the system can be removed. The hose lines can be removed only if all specified criteria are met.

- The hose lines must not be required if the building were to be built under the current IFC and IBC.
- The facility does not have an on-site fire brigade or response team that consists of trained personnel who could utilize the hose lines.
- The fire department has determined that they will not utilize the hose lines.
- The connections that remain must be compatible with the fire department fittings. This will allow the fire department to connect its own fire hose and utilize these connections as a water source if it chooses to do so.