

EXISTING BUILDINGS

Existing buildings are permitted to continue without change as long as they are maintained in accordance with the code under which they were constructed. This is sometimes called *grandfathering* or a *grandfather clause* in the code. It would not be reasonable to require buildings to comply with new provisions in the codes every three years they are revised. The building jurisdiction does, however, have the authority to require that existing buildings comply with minimum standards for the general safety and welfare of the public and occupants of a building. For example, if a building has been damaged by a fire, the building official can require that the building be repaired, or demolished if the structure is beyond repair. [Ref. 102.6]

The IBC requires existing buildings to comply with the *International Existing Building Code* (IEBC). An existing building is a structure that has been previously occupied. When a building is constructed as a shell building and not initially occupied, it is still considered a new building and must comply with the requirements of the IBC. Once it is occupied, any work involving an alteration, addition, repair or change of occupancy must comply with the IEBC (Figure 1-8). In previous editions of the codes, existing buildings were regulated in both the IBC and the IEBC. It was decided to remove the existing building provisions in the 2015 IBC. This eliminated any potential conflicts or confusion between the two regulations. [Ref. 102.6]



FIGURE 1-8 Addition to existing church building

International Existing Building Code

The IEBC regulates any work that is done to an existing building. It was developed in 2000 to provide options to building owners when doing work on an existing building (Figure 1-9). It is founded on principles intended to encourage the use and reuse of existing buildings that adequately protect public health, safety and welfare. The provisions are intended to not unnecessarily increase construction costs. The code is applicable any time an owner does a repair, alteration, addition or changes the occupancy of a building.

The IEBC generally requires any new work to a building comply with the current codes adopted by the jurisdiction. The code provides three compliance methods for an owner based on the work they are doing. The three methods are prescriptive, work area and performance compliance. Each of these methods address repairs, alterations, additions and change of occupancy.



FIGURE 1-9 Existing building regulated by the IEBC