

Concise Explanatory Statement

Rhode Island Government Register

In accordance with the Administrative Procedures Act, R.I. Gen. Laws § 42-35-2.6, following is a concise explanatory statement:

AGENCY: Rhode Island Department of Business Regulation

DIVISION: Fire Safety Code Board of Appeal and Review

RULE IDENTIFIER: 450-RICR-00-00-7

REGULATION TITLE: RI Fire Code

RULEMAKING ACTION: Full rulemaking, Amendment

COMMENT PERIOD: December 2, 2025, to January 1, 2026

A. Statement of Purpose of the Amendments

The Fire Safety Code Board of Appeal and Review (“Board”) has proposed amendments to this regulation to move from the 2018 edition of the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 1, Fire Code, to the 2021 edition, with annexes.

Summary of the proposed amendments:

- Formatting improvements have been made throughout the document. Chapter sections no longer include separate RICR numbering because the additional numbers were confusing to read and often conflicting with the model code section numbers. After each Chapter heading the regulation now clearly states whether that NFPA 1 Chapter has been adopted in full or with changes.
- Throughout the regulation, updates to NFPA 1 model code citations were made for consistency with numbering changes to the 2021 edition of NFPA 1.
- Throughout the regulation, typographical errors were corrected, and descriptive words or phrases added or modified for clarity or for consistency with statutory language, without changing the substantive requirements.
- §§ 7.1 and 7.2 – added authority and incorporation by reference sections as required by the APA.
- § 7.3(D) & (E) - For clarity, the Fire Code includes the effective date in the body of the regulation. Given that the completion timeline for this regulation is unknown currently, we have added a placeholder for the purposes of posting the regulation for public comment as MONTH DAY, 2026. After completion of the public comment period, the Board will select an effective date in accordance with the APA, insert that date into the regulation and explain it in the CES.
- § 7.3.1 – Added explanations for the abbreviations used in this code.

- Added section 1.3.1.1 to clearly define that the scope of the regulations regarding one-, two- and three-family dwellings is limited to smoke alarms and CO alarms only as set forth by statute.
- § 1.7.7.6 was amended to reflect current practice. This is just a clarification. No change to status quo.
- § 1.11.2.1 was amended to accurately describe the current practice of the OSFM for providing appellate rights notification to property owners. The brochure referred to never existed. No change to status quo.
- § 1.11.2.3 was amended to accurately describe the current practice of the OSFM for providing appellate rights notification to property owners. The brochure referred to never existed. No change to status quo.
- Chapter 2 – Deleted reference to NFPA 720 because that standard no longer exists as it has been incorporated into NFPA 72 (which is adopted in Part 10 of this Title).
- Chapter 2 – Amended the reference to NFPA 855 to refer to the 2023 edition, which includes provisions for lithium batteries that are not included in the 2020 edition.
- Chapter 10 – Deleted requirements that have been relocated to Chapter 12 for consistency with NFPA 1.
- Chapter 12 – Added the content deleted from Chapter 10 with no substantive changes.
- Chapter 13 – § 13.3.2.8.1 was deleted because it conflicted with the statutory provisions of RIGL 23-28.6-21 regarding sprinklers. It has been replaced with new amendments to model code sections 13.3.2.6.1 (formerly 13.3.2.8.1) and 13.3.2.7.1 clarifying the statutory requirements for sprinklers in places of assembly, including night clubs. These amendments preserve the status quo.
- § 13.3.2.19 was reserved as those provisions relate to one- and two-family dwellings. Pursuant to state law, this Code does not have jurisdiction over one- and two-family dwellings. The model code conflicts with the statutory provisions of RIGL 23-28.1-2(b)(2)(i).
- The sub-heading “high-rise modifications” was deleted as it was unnecessary and could be confusing.
- §§ 13.6.5 and 13.6.6 are provisions that exist in the 2018 model code. However, they were deleted from the 2021 code. They are noted as reserved here for clarity to indicate that they are not in effect anymore.
- Chapter 38 – Chapter renamed “cannabis” from “Marijuana” with new requirements for CO₂-enriched environments.
- Chapter 39 - Collects all existing references to Wastewater Treatment and Collection Facilities in one place for quick reference. No change to status quo.
- Chapter 46 – New chapter on Addictive Manufacturing (3D Printing), primarily regulating combustible dust.

- Annexes: The 2018 model code had Annexes A through G. In the 2021 model code, Annex B was deleted, and the remaining Annexes were renumbered.

B. Summary of the Regulatory Analysis

Structural improvement to the formatting of the regulation makes it more user friendly for fire and building officials, design professionals and property owners to read in conjunction with the NFPA model code.

Overall, these amendments decrease costs by providing some flexibility with a few state-specific amendments which either clarify existing provisions; make reasonable updates to existing state-specific amendments; and codify current practices and recent blanket variances. These amendments result in simpler, more user-friendly codes, updated to reflect the actual practices in this state and provide a few exceptions. These state-specific amendments reflect a balance between providing relief for a few common matters routinely considered by the Board and maintaining high safety standards.

For a more information, refer to the Regulatory Analysis which can be found under the “Rulemaking Documents” tab on the RICR website for this regulation under the name “Additional Documentation.”

In the development of the proposed amendment consideration was given to: (1) alternative approaches; (2) overlap or duplication with other statutory and regulatory provisions; and (3) significant economic impact on small business. No alternative approach, duplication, or overlap was identified based upon available information.

C. Summary of Comments Resulting in Post-Comment Changes

No comments were received. No changes were made except for inserting the effective date of the regulation, March 1, 2026, in § 7.3(D) & (E) as described in the Notice of Proposed Rulemaking.