



Partners in Prevention

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FEMA's Building Science Branch and ICC Release Updated Publication

The International Codes® (I-Codes®), a family of building codes developed and maintained by the International Code Council, shares common goals with the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP): protection of public safety and reduced property damage.

[*Reducing Flood Losses through the International Codes: Coordinating Building Codes and Floodplain Management Regulations*](#) was developed by the International Code Council and FEMA to help state and local officials integrate the I-Codes into their current floodplain management regulatory processes related to structures, buildings, and other development to satisfy the requirements to participate in the NFIP. FEMA considers the latest editions of the I-Codes to be the minimum standards for hazard resistance, including flood hazards, high winds, and earthquake hazards.

“With ninety percent of all presidentially declared natural disasters in the United States involving flooding, the International Codes ensure buildings are constructed to better withstand severe flood damage,” said Code Council Executive Officer Dominic Sims, CBO. “We are pleased to partner with FEMA to share this valuable information to aid in the successful integration of the I-Codes into the current floodplain management regulatory processes of state and local jurisdictions.”

The new edition and its accompanying [model code-coordinated ordinances](#) contain updated and new content based on the 2018 I-Codes.

- Chapter 2 describes three approaches for coordinating the I-Codes and local floodplain management regulations and identifies several advantages and considerations when relying on the flood provisions of the codes.
- Chapter 3 explains several differences between the NFIP regulations, and the I-Code requirements related to specific terminology and provisions. Many requirements in the codes are more restrictive than the NFIP requirements, and some provisions are more specific.
- Chapter 4 contains a series of questions that states, and communities should consider and answer to know whether and how to modify existing floodplain management regulations to coordinate with building codes.

- Chapter 5 describes modifications that can be adopted to incorporate higher standards in state and local building codes that are based on the I-Codes to further increase building and community resilience to flood damage.
- Chapter 6 introduces the model code-coordinated ordinances prepared by FEMA.
- Appendix A lists cited references and other resources that are useful for understanding and interpreting the requirements of the NFIP.
- Appendix B provides sample checklists for a plan review and inspection.

Reducing Flood Losses can be downloaded [here](#).

The model code-coordinated ordinances can be downloaded from [here](#).

To view more of FEMA's Building Code Resources, [click here](#).

To learn more about FEMA's Building Science Branch, [visit our website](#).

Contact the Building Science helpline at FEMA-BuildingScienceHelp@fema.dhs.gov or 866-927-2104.