



2021 Building and Fire Codes Adoption Executive Summary

The City of Corpus Christi is currently utilizing the International Code Council's (ICC) 2015 edition with local amendments. The ICC updates their codes every three (3) years, but the City continues adopting updated Construction Codes on a six (6) year cycle, rather than a three (3) year cycle to minimize the challenges to citizens and staff associated with Code updates.

The Development Services Department has been reviewing the 2021 building and fire related codes since March of 2021 with engaged stakeholder involvement including 21 technical review committee meetings and over 50 public discussions including presentations in each City Council district.

A total of 218 sections of the 2021 code were amended. Some updates to the current code include:

Building Code - 39

- Defines and regulates puzzle rooms (escape rooms), shipping containers, and mechanical-access enclosed parking garages.
- Expands the use of Type IV construction (heavy timber) - tall wood buildings.
- Adds flexibility for rooftop canopies and luminated egress paths for high rises.

Mechanical Code - 4

- Machinery rooms exceeding 1,000 square feet, will require two remote exits providing additional egress to protect machinery room occupants from asphyxiating, in the event of a refrigerant discharge.
- Requiring a means to adjust airflow in all distribution, exhaust, and ventilating systems by an approved method.

Electrical Code - 21

- Adds flexibility to the location of existing upgraded boxes and the use of wiring sizes and types.
- Expands ground fault and arc fault protection areas.
- Adds surge protection for 1- & 2-family dwellings

Plumbing Code - 21

- Adds allowance for multiple-user toilet facilities to serve as credit.
- Adds alternative – Rainwater Harvesting Systems

Swimming Pool Code - 10

- Adds design and safety requirements for splash pads.
- Creates requirements for construction fencing and barriers.

Fire Code - 75

- Adds sprinkler requirements to certain types of existing assembly occupancies and high-rise residential buildings.
- Refines requirements for Energy Storage Systems (ESS) and storage of distilled spirits and wines.

With the adoption of the most updated code, Development Services is proposing an effective date of August 1, 2023, to allow ample time for projects already in design and scope to submit while allowing time for our department to actively assist the community with training and understanding of the 2021 codes.