



# Bedford County

DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

## SIGNIFICANT CHANGES IN THE 2015 RESIDENTIAL CODES

Adopted in Virginia on September 4, 2018 and becomes fully effective September 4, 2019

### General Building

- Home automation and monitoring systems are now specifically exempt from code. No longer required to be monitored by an approved supervising station.
- Foundation anchor bolts must now be located in the center 1/3 of the sill plate.
- Tempered safety glass is now required around tubs, showers, hot tubs, pools and similar, when within 60" horizontally and within 60" vertically of the walking surface around them.
- Tempered safety glass is now required within a 60" arc of the bottom of stairs, for 180 degrees when glazing is less than 36" above the landing.
- Tempered safety glass on walls perpendicular to a door is now only required when within a 24" arc, on the hinge and swing side.
- Additions to basements do not require a new emergency egress opening when a properly sized window or door is accessible in the existing basement.
- Renovations to existing basements do not require the installation of an emergency egress opening unless a bedroom is added.
- Deck lateral load connections may now be made with a 750 lb. anchor strap, in 4 places equally spaced under the deck and within 2' of each end.
- Deck guardrail height is measured from the floor surface and no longer measured from adjacent permanent seating.
- Residential ramps may not slope any more than 1:12 accessing the required egress door. Maximum 1:8 slope to the remainder of the doors.
- Interior passage now clarifies that 34" minimum door sizes are required to kitchen and living areas, as well as a bedroom and a full bathroom when on the first floor. This does not apply to additions, renovations or repairs to an existing structure.
- Rooms with unsealed fireplaces are now required to be in insulated rooms, separated from other insulated spaces within the outside envelope.
- Smoke detectors must now be a minimum of 3' from full bathroom doors and 10' from cooking appliances if an ionization alarm with a silencing button. 20' without or 6' for photoelectric.
- Carbon Monoxide detector is now required inside a bedroom if the bedroom or it's adjoining bathroom is provided with a fuel burning appliance.
- Insulation is no longer required to be in contact with the underside of the floor if perimeter bands are properly insulated.
- Class 1, low permeable vapor barriers are now prohibited from being installed on the inside of walls.

### Mechanical

- All dwelling units are now required to have mechanical ventilation.
- Ductwork outside of insulated spaces must now be pressure tested before a certificate of occupancy may be issued. The installer is permitted to perform the test and properly document it.
- Building cavities may no longer be used as a duct for return or supply.
- Condensate pumps in uninhabitable spaces must now be connected to the appliance to shut down automatically in the event of a pump failure.
- Doors are no longer permitted to swing within 12" of an exterior appliance vent terminal.
- CSST gas piping is no longer required to be bonded if provided with an arc resistant jacket.
- The required #6 bond to standard CSST is still required and may no longer exceed 75' in length.
- Regulators installed with rigid pipe must now have a union provided within 12" on one side.

## Electrical

- Lights required in attics and crawl spaces must now be protected by location or with guards.
- A minimum of 75% of all lamps in a home must now be high efficiency.
- Combination AFCI breakers must now be used for bedroom circuits or restrictions will apply.
- Receptacles in laundry areas are now required to be GFCI protected.
- Dishwashers are now required to be GFCI protected, even when hard-wired.
- Receptacles within 6' of the edge of a tub or shower must now be GFCI protected.
- Outside outlets required within 6'6" of grade, are allowed on porches and decks if they remain readily accessible.
- A garage outlet must be provided for each car space and must be fed with a dedicated circuit that serves no other outlets.
- Optional electric car charging outlet(s) must be fed from independent, dedicated circuit(s).
- A neutral is no longer required in switch boxes for non-habitable rooms, 3 & 4 way switches, switched receptacles or automatic controls.
- Extra duty hoods (covers) now required for in use covers in wet locations.
- Dimmer controlled outlets are now prohibited unless listed and labeled for that use with non-standard configuration.

## Plumbing

- A tracer wire is now required for nonmetallic water lines as well as sewer, to the meter and exposed on one end.
- Water heater relief valves are now required to terminate with an air gap at no more than 6" or less than 2 pipe diameters above the floor or flood level of the receptor.
- Water heater drain pan piping must extend full size to a drain, receptor or the exterior of the building between 6" and 24" above grade. (Reminder: If no drain pan was originally provided, a drain pan is not required for a replacement)
- CPVC must now be glued in accordance with ASTM F 493 and the manufacturer's instructions. If primer is required, the glue must be orange. If one step glue and no primer used, it must be yellow.
- No primer is now required for PVC up to 4" if used for non-pressure drain, waste and vent and glue conforms to ASTM D 2564.
- Head pressure for drain, waste and vent water test has now been reduced from 10' head to 5'.
- Minimum clearance of piping to require nail guards has now been reduced from 11/2" to 11/4".
- Non-potable water must now be identified with appropriate signage and purple piping.

## Swimming Pools

- All pool motors must now be GFCI protected.
- Pool heaters must now have a switch in addition to the circuit breaker.
- Structures and equipment not permitted within 36" of the outside of the fence barrier, if located on the same property.