

ADVISORY COMMITTEE COMMENT FORM
FOR PROPOSED CODE CHANGES
(This form must be submitted electronically)

IRC-30, R313.1

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Proposed Code Change - Language

SECTION R313
AUTOMATIC FIRE SPRINKLER SYSTEMS

R313.1 Townhouse automatic fire sprinkler systems. An automatic residential fire sprinkler system shall be installed in *townhouses*.

Exception: An automatic residential fire sprinkler system shall not be required when *additions* or *alterations* are made to existing *townhouses* that do not have an automatic residential fire sprinkler system installed.

R313.1.1 Design and installation. Automatic residential fire sprinkler systems for *townhouses* shall be designed and installed in accordance with Section P2904.

~~**R313.2 One- and two-family dwellings automatic fire systems.** An automatic residential fire sprinkler system shall be installed in one- and two-family *dwellings*.~~

~~**Exception:** An automatic residential fire sprinkler system shall not be required for *additions* or *alterations* to existing buildings that are not already provided with an automatic residential sprinkler system.~~

~~When provided, automatic residential fire sprinkler systems shall be designed and installed in accordance with NFPA 13D.~~

~~**R313.2.1 Design and installation.** Automatic residential fire sprinkler systems shall be designed and installed in accordance with Section P2904 or NFPA 13D.~~

SECTION R302
FIRE-RESISTANT CONSTRUCTION

(Sections proposed for no amendment not shown for clarity and to remain unchanged.)

R302.1 Exterior walls. Construction, projections, openings and penetrations of *exterior walls* of *dwellings* and accessory buildings shall comply with Table R302.1.

Exceptions:

1. Walls, projections, openings or penetrations in walls perpendicular to the line used to determine the *fire separation distance*.
2. Walls of *dwellings* and *accessory structures* located on the same *lot*.
3. Detached tool sheds and storage sheds, playhouses and similar structures exempted from permits are not required to provide wall protection based on location on the *lot*. Projections beyond the *exterior wall* shall not extend over the *lot line*.
4. Detached garages accessory to a *dwelling* located within 2 feet (610 mm) of a *lot line* are permitted to have roof eave projections not exceeding 4 inches (102 mm).
5. Foundation vents installed in compliance with this code are permitted.

(This table is already in the code and shown for information only. It provides certain reductions in exterior wall and opening protection.)

TABLE R302.1(2)
EXTERIOR WALLS—DWELLINGS WITH FIRE SPRINKLERS

EXTERIOR WALL ELEMENT		MINIMUM FIRE-RESISTANCE RATING	MINIMUM FIRE SEPARATION DISTANCE
Walls	Fire-resistance rated	1 hour—tested in accordance with ASTM E 119 or UL 263 with exposure from the outside	0 feet
	Not fire-resistance rated	0 hours	3 feet*
Projections	Fire-resistance rated	1 hour on the underside	2 feet*
	Not fire-resistance rated	0 hours	3 feet
Openings in walls	Not allowed	N/A	< 3 feet
	Unlimited	0 hours	3 feet*
Penetrations	All	Comply with Section R302.4	< 3 feet
		None required	3 feet*

R302.3 Two-family dwellings. *Dwelling units* in two-family dwellings shall be separated from each other by wall and/or floor assemblies having not less than a 1-hour fire-resistance rating when tested in accordance with ASTM E 119 or UL 263. Fire-resistance-rated floor-ceiling and wall assemblies shall extend to and be tight against the *exterior wall*, and wall assemblies shall extend from the foundation to the underside of the roof sheathing.

Exceptions:

1. ~~A fire-resistance rating of 1/2 hour shall be permitted in buildings equipped throughout with an automatic sprinkler system installed in accordance with NFPA 13.~~ Dwellings provided with an automatic fire sprinkler system complying with the requirements of section R313.

2. Wall assemblies need not extend through *attic* spaces when the ceiling is protected by not less than 5/8-inch (15.9 mm) Type X gypsum board and an *attic* draft stop constructed as specified in Section R302.12.1 is provided above and along the wall assembly separating the *dwellings*. The structural framing supporting the ceiling shall also be protected by not less than 1/2-inch (12.7 mm) gypsum board or equivalent.

R302.4 Dwelling unit rated penetrations. Penetrations of wall or floor/ceiling assemblies required to be fire-resistance rated in accordance with Section R302.2 or R302.3 shall be protected in accordance with this section.

Exception: Dwellings provided with an automatic fire sprinkler system complying with the requirements of section R313.

R302.5 Dwelling/garage opening/penetration protection. Openings and penetrations through the walls or ceilings separating the *dwelling* from the garage shall be in accordance with Sections R302.5.1 through R302.5.3.

Exception: Dwellings provided with an automatic fire sprinkler system complying with the requirements of section R313. (Note: This would be necessary only if sprinkler heads are required in garages by state amendment.)

R302.6 Dwelling/garage fire separation. The garage shall be separated as required by Table R302.6. Openings in garage walls shall comply with Section R302.5. This provision does not apply to garage walls that are perpendicular to the adjacent *dwelling unit* wall.

Exception: Dwellings provided with an automatic fire sprinkler system complying with the requirements of section R313. (Note: This would be necessary only if sprinkler heads are required in garages by state amendment.)

R302.7 Under-stair protection. Enclosed accessible space under stairs shall have walls, under-stair surface and any soffits protected on the enclosed side with 1/2-inch (12.7 mm) gypsum board.

Exception: Dwellings provided with an automatic fire sprinkler system complying with the requirements of section R313.

R302.9 Flame spread index and smoke-developed index for wall and ceiling finishes. Flame spread and smoke index for wall and ceiling finishes shall be in accordance with Sections R302.9.1 through R302.9.4.

Exception: Dwellings provided with an automatic fire sprinkler system complying with the requirements of section R313.

R302.11 Fireblocking. In combustible construction, fireblocking shall be provided to cut off all concealed draft openings (both vertical and horizontal) and to form an effective fire barrier between stories, and between a top *story* and the roof space.

Exception: Dwellings provided with an automatic fire sprinkler system complying with the requirements of section R313.

R302.12 Draftstopping. In combustible construction where there is usable space both above and below the concealed space of a floor/ceiling assembly, draftstops shall be installed so that the area of the concealed space does not exceed 1,000 square feet (92.9 m²). Draftstopping shall divide the concealed space into approximately equal areas.

Exception: Dwellings provided with an automatic fire sprinkler system complying with the requirements of section R313.

Where the assembly is enclosed by a floor membrane above and a ceiling membrane below, draftstopping shall be provided in floor/ceiling assemblies under the following circumstances:

1. Ceiling is suspended under the floor framing.
2. Floor framing is constructed of truss-type open-web or perforated members.

SECTION R310

EMERGENCY ESCAPE AND RESCUE OPENINGS

R310.1 Emergency escape and rescue required. *Basements*, habitable attics and every sleeping room shall have at least one operable emergency escape and rescue opening. Where *basements* contain one or more sleeping rooms, emergency egress and rescue openings shall be required in each sleeping room. Where emergency escape and rescue openings are provided they shall have a sill height of not more than 44 inches (1118 mm) measured from the finished floor to the bottom of the clear opening. Where a door opening having a threshold below the adjacent ground elevation serves as an emergency escape and rescue opening and is provided with a bulkhead enclosure, the bulkhead enclosure shall comply with Section R310.3. The net clear opening dimensions required by this section shall be obtained by the normal operation of the emergency escape and rescue opening from the inside. Emergency escape and rescue openings with a finished sill height below the adjacent ground elevation shall be provided with a window well in accordance with Section R310.2. Emergency escape and rescue openings shall open directly into a public way, or to a *yard* or court that opens to a public way.

Exceptions:

1. *Basements* used only to house mechanical *equipment* and not exceeding total floor area of 200 square feet (18.58 m²).
2. Dwellings provided with an automatic fire sprinkler system complying with the requirements of section R313.

SECTION R314

SMOKE ALARMS

R314.1 Smoke detection and notification. All smoke alarms shall be listed and labeled in accordance with UL 217 and installed in accordance with the provisions of this code and the household fire warning *equipment* provisions of NFPA 72.

R314.2 Smoke detection systems. Household fire alarm systems installed in accordance with NFPA 72 that include smoke alarms, or a combination of smoke detector and audible notification device installed as required by this section for smoke alarms, shall be permitted. The household fire alarm system shall provide the same level of smoke detection and alarm as required by this section for smoke alarms. Where a household fire warning system is installed using a combination of smoke detector and audible notification device(s), it shall become a permanent fixture of the occupancy and owned by the homeowner. The system shall be monitored by an *approved* supervising station and be maintained in accordance with NFPA 72.

Exception: Where smoke alarms are provided meeting the requirements of Section R314.4.

R314.3 Location. Smoke alarms shall be installed in the following locations:

1. In each sleeping room.

Exception: Dwellings provided with an automatic fire sprinkler system complying with the requirements of section R313.

2. Outside each separate sleeping area in the immediate vicinity of the bedrooms.
3. On each additional *story* of the *dwelling*, including *basements* and habitable attics but not including crawl spaces and uninhabitable *attics*. In *dwellings* or *dwelling units* with split levels and without an intervening door between the adjacent levels, a smoke alarm installed on the upper level shall suffice for the adjacent lower level provided that the lower level is less than one full *story* below the upper level.

Exception: Dwellings provided with an automatic fire sprinkler system complying with the requirements of section R313.

Proposed Code Change – Need and Reason

The installation of sprinkler systems in new homes and townhouses increases the safety levels of the homes and makes these passive systems unnecessarily redundant and costly. This proposal makes the installation of a sprinkler system optional but provides incentives for their installation to offset costs. Many exceptions are granted buildings in the IBC for sprinkler installation (fire-resistive substitution, reductions in separation requirements, increased travel distance, reduction in exiting requirements, exclusion of emergency exit windows). Many of those are included here. Fire sprinkler advocates state that 85% of the time one head extinguishes a fire. The means fires will be extinguished when they are small and before they have an opportunity to spread and thereby further justifying the proposed tradeoffs.

Proposed Code Change – Cost/Benefit Analysis

This proposal will result in lowers construction costs as opposed to a sprinkler requirement with no incentives.

Other Factors to Consider Related to Proposed Code Change

1. Is this proposed code change meant to:

change language contained in a published code book? If so, list section(s).
R302, R310, and R313

change language contained in an existing amendment in Minnesota Rule? If so, list Rule part(s).

delete language contained in a published code book? If so, list section(s).

delete language contained in an existing amendment in Minnesota Rule? If so, list Rule part(s).

neither; this language will be new language, not found in the code book or in Minnesota Rule.

2. Is this proposed code change required by a Minnesota Statute or new legislation? If so, please provide the citation to the Statute or legislation.

No

3. Will this proposed code change impact other sections of a published code book or of an amendment in Minnesota Rule? If so, please list the affected sections or rule parts.

No

4. Will this proposed code change impact other parts of the Minnesota State Building Code? If so, please list the affected parts of the Minnesota State Building Code.

No

5. Who are the parties affected or segments of industry affected by this proposed code change?

Home builders, homeowners, building designers.

6. Can you think of other means or methods to achieve the purpose of the proposed code change? If so, please explain what they are and why your proposed change is the preferred method or means to achieve the desired result.

No

7. Are you aware of any federal requirement or regulation related to this proposed code change? If so, please list the regulation or requirement.

No