

Proposed Change

R101.2 Scope. The provisions of the International Residential Code for One- and Two-family Dwellings shall apply to the construction, alteration, movement, enlargement, replacement, repair, equipment, use and occupancy, location, removal and demolition of detached one- and two-family dwellings and townhouses not more than 3,600 square feet per story and three stories above grade plane in height with a separate means of egress and their accessory structures not more than three stories above grade plane in height. [Remainder unchanged]

Reason:

There currently exists no limitation on the size of a residential structure under the IRC. Examples have been documented of residential structures being constructed under the IRC that have so large a footprint that emergency egress has become a safety concern.

This proposed change is based on the largest braced wall length allowed under the IRC, which is 60 feet for steel braced walls, and uses that dimension to create a 60 by 60 ft. box, which is how 3,600 square feet per story was derived. With the three story limitation, this means the total allowable floor area for the IRC would be 10,800 square feet. This is far larger than the vast majority of residential structures currently being built and should not pose a problem for the home building industry. Residential structures larger than this limitation can still be built, they would simply have to use the International Building Code, which contains more appropriate provisions for structures of this size. However, this limitation would prevent structures from being built that could present a significantly increased fire safety hazard due to inadequate means of emergency egress.