STATE BUILDING CODE INTERPRETATION NO. 13-06

CODE: 2009 International Residential Code  
       2009 International Building Code

SECTION: R101.2/101.2, Scope

QUESTION: The State of Washington adopted both the International Residential (IRC) and the International Building Code (IBC).

Leaving the R-3 definition in the IBC implies that “Buildings that do not contain more than two dwelling units” are R-3 structures and may be built under the IBC. Yet the International Residential Code is also the code for one and two-family dwellings.

When a single family dwelling unit and a non-residential occupancy (not a live/work unit) are located in the same building, does the IRC or IBC apply?

If separate fire areas are established via a fire barrier, can the dwelling portion be constructed under the International Residential Code or must it be constructed under the IBC?

If a fire wall is constructed to separate the units, can the dwelling portion be constructed under the International Residential Code or must it be constructed under the IBC?

ANSWER: The IRC applies to detached one and two family dwellings and townhouses. A dwelling unit within a mixed occupancy building is not detached and must comply with the IBC.

SUPERSEDES: None

REQUESTED BY: Thurston County