

**September 23, 2019**

Doug Orth  
State Building Code Council Chair  
1500 Jefferson Street SE  
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Olympia, WA 98504

Doug,

On behalf of the Washington Association of Building Officials (WABO), I am submitting a public comment relating to the SBCC recommended code changes in the CR102 document dated August 7, 2019. This public comment recommends modifications to item #42, WAC 51-51-0325 in the CR102 making changes to Section R325.6.

WABO Technical Code Development had additional discussions with organizations that would be impacted by this significant code change, as well as took recommendations from extensive testimony provided to the International Code Council on a similar proposal.

This public comment will address the concerns and issues that were discussed and provides a better code with less financial impact. We believe this public comment will provide an acceptable resolution to concerns about habitable attics outlined in the Residential Code and modified by the proposed language in the CR102.

Thank you for the work the Building Code Council does and the opportunity to present our ideas for modifications.

Sincerely,

Micah Chappell

Technical Code Development Committee Chair,  
Washington Association of Building Officials

# State Building Code Council

## Public Comment

Sections R325.1, 325.6, (New) Section R326, R327, R328, and P2904.1.1:

Amend sections to read as follows:

**R325.1 General.** Mezzanines shall comply with Sections R325 through R325.5. ~~Habitable attics shall comply with Section R325.6.~~

~~**R325.6 Habitable Attic.** A *habitable attic* shall be considered a story above grade plane.~~

## **SECTION 326**

### **HABITABLE ATTIC**

**R326.1 General.** *Habitable attics* shall comply with Sections R326 through R326.4.

**R326.2 Minimum Dimensions.** A *habitable attic* shall have a minimum floor area in accordance with R304 and a ceiling height in accordance with R305.

**R326.3 Story Above Grade Plane.** A *habitable attic* shall be considered a story above grade plane.

**Exception:** A *habitable attic* shall not be considered a story above grade plane provided that the *habitable attic* meets all the following requirements:

1. The aggregate area of the *habitable attic* shall:
  - 1.1 Not be greater than one-third of the floor area of the story below or,
  - 1.2 Not be greater than one-half of the floor area of the story below where the *habitable attic* is located within a dwelling unit equipped with a fire sprinkler system in accordance with Section P2904 or NFPA 13D.
2. The occupiable space is enclosed by the roof assembly above, knee walls (if applicable) on the sides and the floor-ceiling assembly below.
3. The floor of the *habitable attic* shall not extend beyond the exterior walls of the story below.

**R326.4 Means of egress.** The means of egress for *habitable attics* shall comply with the applicable provisions of Section R311.

## **SECTION ~~R326~~ R327**

### **SWIMMING POOLS, SPAS AND HOT TUBS**

~~R326.1~~ **R327.1 General...**

## **SECTION ~~R327~~ R328**

### **STATIONARY STORAGE BATTERY SYSTEMS**

~~R327.1~~ **R328.1 General...**

~~R327.2~~ **R328.2 Equipment listings...**

~~R327.3~~ **R328.3 Installation...**

~~R327.4~~ **R328.4 Electric installation...**

~~R327.5~~ **R328.5 Ventilation...**

~~R327.6~~ **R328.6 Protection from impact...**

**P2904.1.1 Required sprinkler locations.** Sprinklers shall be installed to protect all areas of a dwelling unit.

**Exceptions:**

1. Uninhabitable attics, crawl spaces and normally unoccupied concealed spaces that do not contain fuel-fired appliances do not require sprinklers. In uninhabitable attics, crawl spaces and normally unoccupied concealed spaces that contain fuel-fired equipment, a sprinkler shall be installed above the equipment; however, sprinklers shall not be required in the remainder of the space.

2. Clothes closets, linen closets and pantries not exceeding 24 square feet (2.2 m<sup>2</sup>) in area, with the smallest dimension not greater than 3 feet (915mm) and having wall and ceiling surfaces of gypsum board.

**Reason for Public Comment:**

We agree with the original proposal and most of the testimony given a the CAH with limiting the size, but still allowing some habitable attics to not be considered a story above grade plane. This public comment finds a balance with the current specifications on habitable attics not being a considered a story and limiting the size of habitable attics to address the life safety concerns indicated by the original proposal.

This public comment creates a new section for habitable attics, maintains and reorganizes the existing specifications for habitable attics, and includes a size limitation on habitable attics. Additionally, this public comment clearly identifies the type of attics where sprinklers are required when installed.

This public comment captures the issues identified by stakeholders that they recommended for developing a public comment and addresses the various testimonies for and against the original proposal.