



Washington State Building Code Council

Improving the built environment by promoting health, safety and welfare

1500 Jefferson Street SE • P.O. Box 41449 • Olympia, Washington 98504
(360) 407-9277 • e-mail sbcc@des.wa.gov • www.sbcc.wa.gov

STATE BUILDING CODE OPINION 24-26

CODE: 2021 International Residential Code

SECTION: R302.2.6

QUESTION 1: State Building Code Opinion No. 21-08 (attached below) states that in the 2018 IRC, Section R302.2.6 Structural independence (for townhouses), should not have been adopted and an expedited rule would be passed to correct this. Section R302.2.6 appears in the 2021 Washington State Residential Code. Was the intention to restore R302.2.6 in the 2021 Washington Residential Code?

ANSWER: No. Council Opinion 21-08 was voted on May 21, 2021. Research on the expedited rule indicated in this opinion shows that the expedited rule was never filed. No proposals were received to include this section in the 2021 International Residential Code.

The council understands there exists confusion over the inclusion of section 302.2.6 as part of the 2021 International Residential Code. This topic will be addressed as part of the 2024 Code amendment and adoption cycle. A proposal to address this section in the 2024 code adoption is on file, public comment is welcomed.

SUPERSEDES: None

REQUESTED BY: City of Bellevue



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STATE BUILDING CODE OPINION NO. 21-08

CODE: 2018 International Residential Code

SECTION: IRC R302.2.6 Townhouses

BACKGROUND: Two definitions were changed to provide a distinction between a group of townhouses (i.e. "Townhouse") versus a single townhouse (i.e. "Townhouse Unit). Looking at the original proposal, Section R302.2.6 was intended to be amended to incorporate the new defined term (townhouse unit), but there was another proposal (Option 2), to delete the requirement for structural independence entirely. According to the minutes of the November 8, 2019 Council meeting, a motion was made to accept Option 2, which struck Section R302.2.6.

QUESTION 1: Is structural independence (R302.2.6) of townhouse units, separated by double walls (R302.2.1) no longer required in the Washington State Residential Code? This appears to be the intent of the IRC using Section R302.2.6 and the definition of "Townhouse" in the model code?

ANSWER: Yes, structural independence of townhouse units, separated by double walls, is no longer required in the Washington State Residential Code. According to the vote at the November 8, 2019, Council meeting, Section R302.2.6 should read as follows:

R302.2.6 Structural independence. This section is not adopted.

This will be corrected by expedited rulemaking.

SUPERSEDES: None

REQUESTED BY: Thurston County