

“I-Codes” and Wildland Urban Interface Update

2021 Updates

2/8/2024

Presentation Outline

- ▶ Learning about the I-Codes
- ▶ Impacts to Snohomish County Code (SCC)
- ▶ Notable I-Code Updates and Themes
- ▶ Delays and Controversy
- ▶ What is WUI?
- ▶ WUI Prescriptive Construction Requirements
- ▶ Approach to Adopting a WUI code
- ▶ Resources and Further Reading
- ▶ Questions?

Learning about the I-Codes

- ▶ On May 24, 2023, the State Building Code Council (SBCC) voted to delay the effective date of the 2021 “I-Codes” with Washington State Amendments until March 15, 2024.
- ▶ What are the I-Codes, and who are the agencies involved?
- ▶ The International Code Council (ICC) and the “I-Codes”
 - ▶ The ICC is a nonprofit organization and source of model construction codes (aka “I-Codes”)
- ▶ State Building Code Council (SBCC)
 - ▶ The SBCC is a state agency created by the legislature to provide independent analysis and objective advice to the legislature and the Governor's Office on state building code issues.
- ▶ Technical Advisory Groups (TAG's)
 - ▶ Technical Advisory Groups shall be composed of at least one voting member of the Council to serve to assist the Council by providing detailed information on state building code changes and other issues.
- ▶ Revised Code of Washington (RCW)
 - ▶ RCW are statutes, passed by the state legislature or by vote of the people.
- Washington Administrative Code (WAC)
 - ▶ WAC are administrative regulations, or rules, adopted by state agencies.

Impacts to Snohomish County Code (SCC)

- ▶ The 2021 I-Codes updates will have big impacts on the following highlighted sections of SCC:
 - ▶ 30.50 Administrative Chapter - marginal impact*
 - ▶ 30.51A Seismic Code
 - ▶ 30.52A Building Code
 - ▶ 30.52B Mechanical Code - marginal impact*
 - ▶ 30.52D Energy Code - marginal impact*
 - ▶ 30.52E Plumbing Code - marginal impact*
 - ▶ 30.52F Residential Code
 - ▶ 30.53A Fire Code
 - ▶ 30.53B Uniform Abatement
 - ▶ 30.53C Uniform Housing
 - ▶ 30.XX WUI Code - NEW*
 - ▶ 30.XX 2021 Igcc Basic International Green Construction Code - NEW*
 - ▶ 30.54A Mobile Home

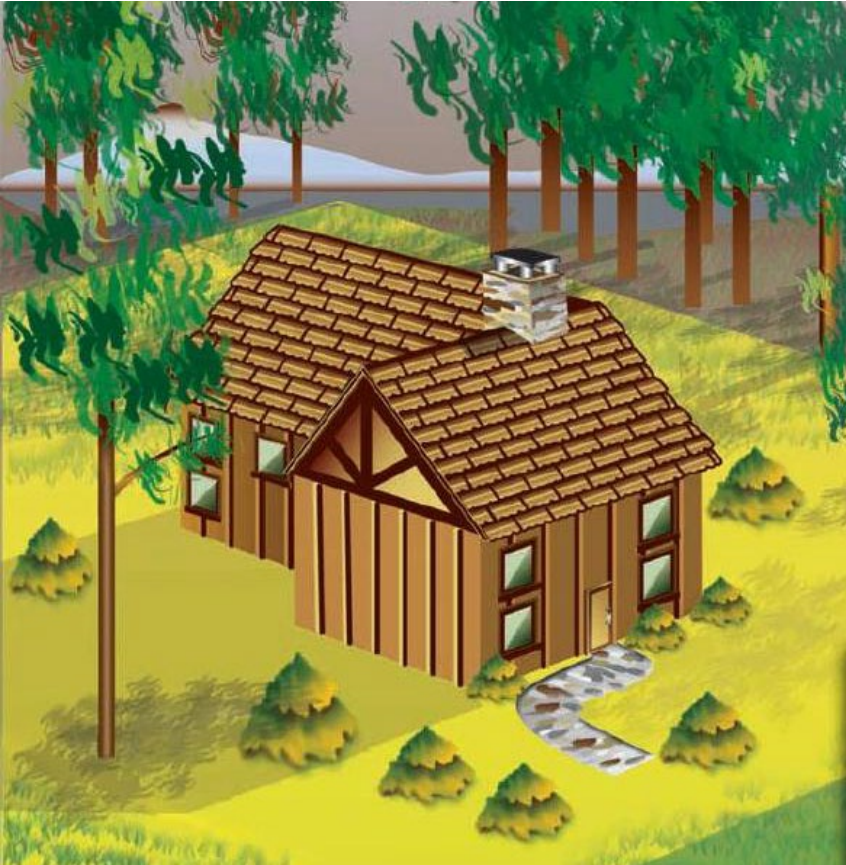
Notable I-Code Updates and Themes

- Cross-Laminated Timber and Mass Timber
 - ▶ Allows mass timber buildings of taller heights (18 stories) and more stories above grade. IBC 602.4
 - ▶ [Washington state to allow mid and high-rise mass-timber buildings \(prnewswire.com\)](https://www.prnewswire.com)
- Open Rooftops (Occupied Roofs)
 - ▶ More and more building owners are using open rooftops to create event or gathering spaces. The 2018 version began to incorporate requirements, with further code clarification occurring in the 2021 version. IBC 503.1.4
 - ▶ [Through the roof: Occupied roofs in the 2018 International Building Code - ICC \(iccsafe.org\)](https://iccsafe.org)
- ▶ Future trends in Alternative Energy and Climate Change
 - ▶ The state requires electric vehicle charging infrastructure within new buildings and accessory structures for most occupancy groups, including dwelling units with private garages. **WS IBC 429 (*WA Specific)**
 - ▶ Renewable energy generation system required for new buildings greater than 10,000 SF in area. **WSEC C411 (*WA Specific)**
 - ▶ Flood hazard documentation is required for lowest floor level in flood hazard areas. IEBC 109.3.10
- ▶ NEW Appendix Adopted* - 2021 International Residential Code (IRC) Appendix AF (Radon). **WS IRC AF104 (*WA Specific)**
- ▶ Mercer Island Summary of Updates to 2021 ICC Codes and SBCC WA Amendments
 - ▶ [2021_significant_changes_within_the_2021_codes_.pdf \(mercerisland.gov\)](https://mercerisland.gov)

Delays and Controversy

- ▶ There have been a series of delays by the SBCC on adopting the 2021 I-Codes from July 1 2023, to October 29, 2023, and now currently to March 15, 2024. Reasons
 - ▶ Energy Code Revisions
 - ▶ The Council also voted to enter CR101 off-cycle rulemaking to revise portions of the 2021 Washington State Energy Code (residential and commercial) that would mitigate similar legal risks for Washington State described in the ruling by the 9th Circuit Court.
 - ▶ Litigation
 - ▶ Federal appeals court has ruled that Berkeley, California, cannot enforce a ban on natural gas piping installation in new buildings, saying a U.S. Energy Policy and Policy Conservation Act (EPCA) preempts the city's regulation.
 - ▶ The SBCC is still litigating a lawsuit from Northwest Regional Council of The National Construction Alliance, et al, on adopted 2021 rules.
 - ▶ The SBCC was also served with an additional Federal Complaint for Declaratory and Injunctive Relief Lawsuit that was filed by Rivera, et al, based on the federal preemption ruling in the Berkley case.
- ▶ SB 6120 - Public Hearing - Concerning the Wildland Urban Interface Code. - Gives local jurisdictions the ability to complete their own maps which gives more flexibility to developers who may not need to conform to WUI regulations, including the cutting down of trees in the defensible space

Delays and Controversy (2): Defensible Space



- ▶ This defensible space reduces the risk that fire will spread from one area to another, or to a structure, and provides firefighters access and a safer area from which to defend a threatened area.
- ▶ Unintended Consequences:
 - ▶ Erosion
 - ▶ Native habitat loss
 - ▶ Unnecessary culling of tree canopy
- ▶ SB 6120 Hearing tomorrow poised to give more flexibility to fire resistive trees and WUI interface mapping designations

What is WUI?

- 2021 International Wildland Urban Interface Code (IWUIC)
- Special requirements for properties located within wildland-urban interface or intermix areas, as defined by WA DNR map. Contains provisions addressing fire spread, accessibility, defensible space, water supply and more for buildings constructed near wildland areas.
- Establishes regulations to safeguard life and property from the intrusion of wildland fire and to prevent structure fires from spreading to wildland fuels.
- Regulates defensible space and provides ignition-resistant construction requirements to protect against fire exposure and resist ignition by embers.
- Provides standards for emergency access, water supply and fire protection.
- Provides requirements for automatic fire suppression and safe storage practices

WUI Prescriptive Construction Requirements

- ▶ **Prescriptive Construction Requirements (if not the more complex alternative methods option)**
- ▶ 501.4 Roofs: Class A rating when tested in accordance with ASTM E108 or UL 790
- ▶ 501.4.1 Roof valleys. Where provided, valley flashings shall be not less than 0.019-inch (0.48 mm) (No. 26 galvanized sheet gage) corrosion-resistant metal
- ▶ 501.5 Exterior walls and projections other than decks: Fire-resistive materials
- ▶ 501.6 Decks and appendages: Fire-resistive materials
- ▶ 501.7 Exterior glazing. Exterior windows, window walls and glazed doors, windows within exterior doors, and skylights shall be tempered glass, multilayered glazed panels, glass block, etc.
- ▶ 501.8 Vents. Attic ventilation openings, foundation or underfloor vents, or other ventilation openings in vertical exterior walls and vents through roofs shall not exceed 144 square inches
- ▶ WABO Summary: [Adobe Photoshop PDF \(memberclicks.net\)](https://www.memberclicks.net)

Approach to Adopting a WUI code

- ▶ Informational and Educational Approach
- ▶ Assistance bulletin
- ▶ WUI webpage
- ▶ County permit checklists
- ▶ Internal checklist
- ▶ County code
- ▶ Compliance worksheets



Snohomish County
Planning and Development
Services

Wildland Urban Interface (WUI)

Assistance Bulletin

#118

September 2023

WWW.SNOCO.ORG Keyword: Assistance Bulletins

Visit us at :
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ONLINE INFORMATION
www.snohomishcountywa.gov/1190

Q: What is the Wildlife Urban Interface Code?

A: Wildland-Urban Interface Codes (WUIC or WUI) reduce wildfire risks to people and property. The code outlines specific guidelines and practices that may affect proposed construction materials on buildings, building placement on sites and landscape maintenance practices, that will help to reduce the risk of wildfires spreading from the wilderness into urban areas. Changes to code have been approved at the state level that may impact construction in Snohomish County. Wildland Urban Interface implementation begins on permit applications accepted after March 14, 2024.

Q: What does this mean to you?

A: It may affect the materials used in construction and the landscaping around your home. Please see the [Does This Apply to your Project](#) section below to determine if it will apply to your projects.

Q: How will my construction change?

A: See the [Prescriptive Construction Requirements Worksheet](#) for more information on how construction may change. There may also be an opportunity to use Sections 502 and 503 as an alternative method to comply. Please see the Alterna-

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Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) Code Updates

Introduction

Wildland-Urban Interface Codes (WUIC or WUI) reduce wildfire risks to people and property. Changes to code have been approved at the state level that may impact applications in Snohomish County that are not vested before March 15, 2024.

You can learn about the WUI code on [this informative StoryMap created by the Washington State Department of Natural Resources](#), which provides background and links to more information.

Background

The Washington State Legislature has adopted the 2021 International Code Council (ICC) codes. The Wildland-Urban Interface Code is part of this code. The effective date for all building codes is March 15, 2024.

The WUI code adds fire protection standards to all structures based on proximity to areas with "vegetative fuels" that can contribute to wildfires *even if permits are not required*. The WUI code specifies ignition-resistant construction requirements for buildings, decks, detached structures and other components to protect against fire ignition from embers.

What's New?

Determining whether a project will have to comply with requirements of the WUI code can be done by consulting the WA Department of Natural Resources Map ([link](#)) or by consulting the Snohomish County PDS Map Portal and navigating to the WUI layer. ([Click here for instructions on how to do this](#)). While complex in administration and application, there are

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CHECKLIST

Snohomish County
Planning and Development Services

- ____ 13. Drainage Report demonstrating compliance with Chapters 30.63A and 30.63B SCC and the Snohomish County Drainage Manual
- ____ 14. Critical Area Study for any development activity, or action requiring a project permit occurring in wetlands, fish & wildlife habitat conservation areas or their buffers (SCC 30.62A.140)
- ____ 15. Geotechnical Report for any development activity or action requiring a project permit proposed within an erosion hazard area, landslide hazard area or its setback, 200 feet of a mine hazard area or its setback, 200 feet of any seismic faults (SCC 30.62B.140)
- ____ 16. Hydrogeologic Report for any activity or use requiring a project permit regulated under chapter 30.62C SCC and proposed within a sole source aquifer, Group A wellhead protection area or critical aquifer recharge area with high or moderate sensitivity (SCC 30.62C.140)
- ____ 17. Vicinity Map
- ____ 18. FAA Notice Criteria Tool results, if greater than 30 feet in height and located within Airport Compatibility Area (SCC 30.32E.060).
- ____ 19. **Wildland-Urban Interface Code:** Beginning on March 15, 2024, Washington's State legislature implements the 2021 building codes, including standards for buildings in the Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI) area. The code standards, linked below, should be reviewed prior to the implementation of any design or construction project in WUI-designated areas. <https://www.sbcc.wa.gov/wildland-urban-interface-code-amendments>. For WUI-applicable developments seeking compliance with the "Alternative Construction Method" landscape requirements, please submit a copy of the site plan showing the fuel modification distance, tree with crown diameter, and the vegetation type/fire resistance.

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Wildland-Urban Interface Location Designation

Check map: <https://data-wadnr.opendata.arcgis.com/apps/wildland-urban-interface-viewing-app/explore>

- ☐ Intermix or Interface..... Comply with below.
- ☐ ~~Wildlands..... Finding of Fact — whole 'nother handout.~~
- ☐ None done!

Access

Access is provided to within 150' of each building by way of a:

- ☐ Fire apparatus Access Road, design is per IFC/~~KCC~~
- ☐ Driveway, confirm ~~KC~~ standards are met.

If access is provided via driveway greater than 300' in length, turnarounds are required. Provided?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No, modifications required.
- ☐ N/a, no driveway greater than 300' in length

If access is provided via driveway greater than 500 in length, and less than 20' in width turnouts are required. Provided?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No, modifications required.
- ☐ N/a, no driveway greater than 500' in length that is less than 20' in width

Access includes gates or other restricted access:

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Adopted:
Effective:

SNOHOMISH COUNTY COUNCIL
Snohomish County, Washington

ORDINANCE NO. 23- _____

RELATING TO THE REGULATION OF CONSTRUCTION; ADOPTING THE 2021 EDITION OF THE INTERNATIONAL WILDLAND-URBAN INTERFACE (WUI) CODE AS REVISED/AMENDED BY THE WASHINGTON STATE BUILDING CODE COUNCIL; ADOPTING LOCAL AMENDMENTS; AND ADDING A NEW CHAPTER 30.53D OF TO THE SNOHOMISH COUNTY CODE.

WHEREAS, the merger of the International Conference of Building Officials with other code writing organizations led to the formation of the International Code Council, which led to the creation of a group of international codes that replaced the Uniform Building Codes in 2003; and

WHEREAS, the State Building Code Act, chapter 19.27 RCW, adopts the International Building, Residential, Mechanical, and Fire Codes, as well as the Uniform Plumbing Code, portions of the International Wildland-Urban Interface Code, and other construction codes with state specific amendments; and

WHEREAS, the international and state building codes are updated comprehensively on a periodic basis for revised construction and performance standards, methods, technology, and products to improve construction safety and provide greater flexibility to meet minimum standards; and

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Submittal Checklist for the Wildlands-Urban Interface (WUI) Code Compliance

Instructions: Fill out the Submittal Checklist below, and then complete either the Prescriptive Worksheet or Alternative Methods Worksheet where appropriate if your project is in a WUI zone.

Please answer the questions below and work through any additional steps or paperwork associated with your answers. To find out if you are in a WUI area: look up the property address on Washington State's Dept. of Natural Resources Wildlife Urban Interface online map at: <https://data-wadnr.opendata.arcgis.com/apps/wildland-urban-interface-viewing-app/explore>.

OR, use the [Snohomish County PDS Map Portal](#) for county-specific WUI designation areas. [Consult these instructions for step-by-step instructions on accessing the WUI layer of the map.](#)

1. Check which situation applies and go to the next step as indicated in bold.

- ☐ The property is partially or wholly in a **green**, red or yellow area. **Move to step 2.**
- ☐ The property is wholly in a **greengrey (urbanized)** area and WUI code does not apply to the project. **No additional action required.**
- ☐ ~~I am not in the WUI. No additional action required.~~
- ☐ I am unsure or disagree with the map designations. **Move to Step 3.**

2. The property is partially or wholly in a **green**, red or yellow area. You will need to comply with WUI code for **projects/applications** vested after March 15, 2024. ~~Which compliance path and site plan requirements will you use?~~ [Please complete either the Prescriptive Worksheets or the Alternative Methods Worksheets.](#)

- ☐ **Prescriptive** (Defensible Space Plan) (Simpler determination process)

Did you complete the Prescriptive Worksheet to show the [WUI Findings of Fact and how ensure](#) you are meeting the Prescriptive ~~Compliance Path~~ Construction and Landscape requirements on

Resources and Further Reading

- ▶ WAC HTML of WA amendments to the 2021 Construction Codes
 - ▶ [Title 51 WAC:](#)
- ▶ Mercer Island's rundown of 2021 ICC changes including WA ICC Amendments:
 - ▶ [2021 significant changes within the 2021 codes .pdf \(mercerisland.gov\)](#)
- ▶ SBCC ICC Codes, Existing Amendments, and 2021 Changes:
 - ▶ [2021 Code Proposals | SBCC \(wa.gov\)](#)
- ▶ 2021 WA ICC Codes on Upcodes
 - ▶ [Washington Building Codes | UpCodes](#)
- ▶ Washington Association of Building Officials Materials
 - ▶ [What in the WUI- A Deep-dive into the New Statewide Code \(on-demand\) - Building Industry Association of Washington \(biaw.com\)](#)
- ▶ WA Association of Building Officials
 - ▶ [Resources \(wabo.org\)](#)

Questions?

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