



# Bermuda Building Code 2014 FAQs

## Why does Bermuda need new building codes?

The existing codes are out of date (1998 and 1996) and they do not reflect advancements in the building and materials industry.

## What codes are we currently following?

The Bermuda Building Code presently adopts BOCA (Building Officials and Code Administrators) 1996 as our commercial code. The Residential Code dates from 1998.

## Will the new codes be substantially different from those which we currently use and what are some of the highlights of the new codes?

There are a few key areas that are substantially different than the existing codes. The highlights of these changes are:

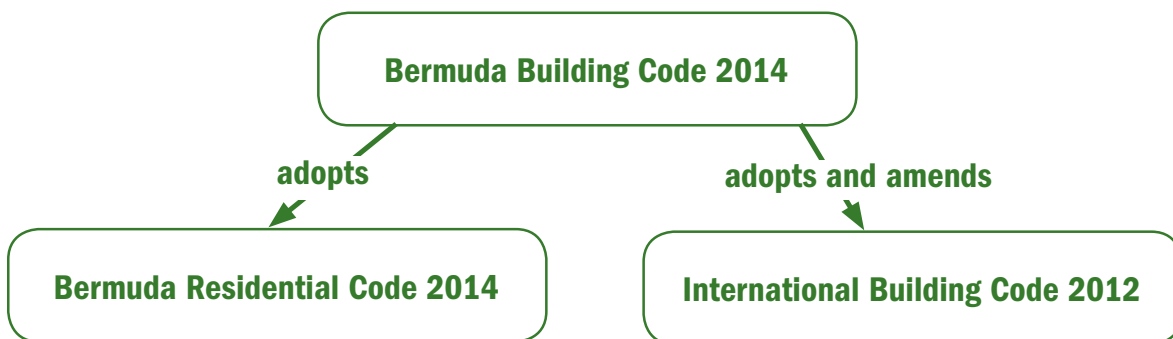
- Energy efficiency
- Accessibility for the physically challenged
- The new Commercial Code will now adopt the IBC (International Building Code 2012) which supersedes the BOCA code

## Who will the new codes affect?

The new codes will affect all new building permit applications, including residential and commercial developments. Everyone from the architectural and design community and the general public will have to ensure their applications conform to the new codes. To be fair, though, most new commercial buildings already adopt energy efficient practices and work with the relevant Government departments with respect to accessibility.

## What is the difference between the Commercial Building Code and the Residential Building Code?

The residential code covers all residential development up to two storeys in height. The commercial code is applicable for all other types of development including residential development greater than two storeys in height. The Bermuda Building Code 2014 and the International Building Code 2012 have to be read in tandem.



## Where can I find the proposed new codes to review?

All documents are available for viewing at the Department of Planning, Dame Lois Browne-Evans building, 58 Court Street, 5th floor between 8:30 am and 5:00 pm. All documents are also available on the Department of Planning website [www.planning.gov.bm](http://www.planning.gov.bm).

### **Who came up with these new codes?**

**Commercial Code:** The existing commercial code was reviewed by a consultant team selected through an RFP process. This highly skilled team of local professionals produced the draft Commercial Code by adapting the IBC 2012 code, where needed, with Bermuda-specific provisions.

**Residential Code:** The existing residential code was reviewed by a volunteer steering committee which comprised of Bermudian design, architectural and engineering professionals. The draft Residential Code is the product of this review.

### **How can I give feedback on the proposed new building codes?**

You may provide feedback via the Public Consultation Form on the Department of Planning website [www.planning.gov.bm](http://www.planning.gov.bm). You can also email Gordon Ness at [gkness@gov.bm](mailto:gkness@gov.bm). You can also visit the Department of Planning and make a submission in person at the Dame Lois Browne-Evans building, 58 Court Street, 5th floor between 8:30 am and 5:00 pm.

### **How long is the public consultation period?**

We will be receiving comments for a minimum one month period. All comments should be received no later than Wednesday, 30 July.

### **Why are we having a public consultation period for this...why not just go ahead and implement them?**

While the legislation does not require a public consultation period, in the spirit of accountability, transparency and openness the Department would like to provide all members of the public the opportunity to comment on both of the new codes.

### **When will the new codes come into effect?**

The legislation requires a three month notice period in advance of the adoption of the new code. It is expected that the official notice will be advertised in September 2014 with the operative date being in November 2014.

### **I am interested in carrying out a renovation on my house...how will these new codes affect me?**

If you currently have an approved building permit you are not affected by the new codes. Revisions to approved building permits will be subject to the codes in place for the ORIGINAL approval. Any applications received prior to the adoption date (November 2014) will not be affected by the new codes. Revisions to these building permit applications will be subject to the codes in place for the ORIGINAL approval. All new applications and any subsequent revisions received after the adoption date (November 2014) will be subject to the new codes.

### **Where can I go for more information?**

Please visit the Department of Planning, Dame Lois Browne-Evans building, 58 Court Street, 5th floor between 8:30 am and 5:00 pm for more information. All documents are also available on the Department of Planning website [www.planning.gov.bm](http://www.planning.gov.bm). Meetings with individual land owners or groups can also be arranged by emailing Gordon Ness [gkness@gov.bm](mailto:gkness@gov.bm). You may call 297-7756 for more information.