FEMA FACT SHEET

2025 Building Code Adoption Tracking: FEMA Region 3

This fact sheet provides a high-level overview of the status of hazard-resistant building code adoption in each state and territory within a FEMA region. The regional fact sheets show an annual metric of the percent of communities adopting hazard-resistant[1] building codes.

Why Building Codes?

Disaster resilience starts with building codes because they enhance public safety and property protection.

Why Track Codes?

Buildings constructed according to hazard-resistant building codes have shown better performance during disasters. By tracking which areas have strong building codes, SLTTs, FEMA, and other agencies can better determine which communities are more prepared and which might be at higher risk during a disaster.

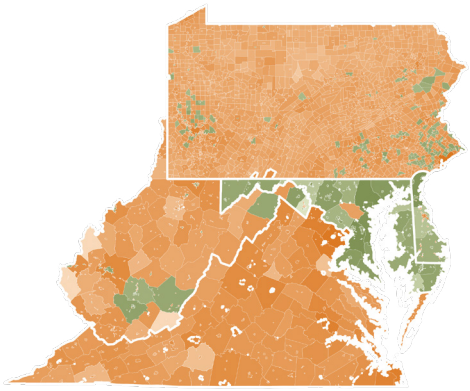

Figure 1. FEMA Region 3

Purpose of Building Code Adoption Tracking

- Use the emerging data to inform FEMA policies and laws in pre-disaster and post-disaster goals
- Federal funding assistance requirements may be correlated to adoption of the latest published building code editions.

FEMA's Role Will Be Continuous

- Proposing building code changes to ensure public safety
- Defending against changes that weaken flood, wind, and seismic provisions.
- Supporting the training of state, local, tribal and territorial officials.

[1] Hazard-resistant codes mean the 2021 or later International Building Code and International Residential Code, without weakening of any resilience provisions related to any of the five tracked hazards for which the jurisdiction is at high risk.

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Figure 2. Building Code Adoption Tracking Process

The following percentages indicate the tracked jurisdictions which have adopted hazard-resistant[2] building codes within each state. The percentages are based upon jurisdictions within each state which are at high risk[3] to one or more hazard types (Region 3's hazards are flood, damaging wind, hurricane wind, and tornado). Notes in *italics* indicate non-weakening notes relating to administrative, enforcement, or other non-design provisions.

MARYLAND

HIGHER RESISTANCE

IBC	State adopts the 2021 International Building Code (IBC) but allows jurisdictions to modify it with wide discretion.
IRC	State adopts the 2021 International Residential Code (IRC) but allows jurisdictions to modify it with wide discretion.

Note: State is not fully resistant because Howard County has weakened flood resilience in the IRC by local amendment.

94.6%

99.4%

**5,844,907 people across 158 jurisdictions are protected.*

DELAWARE

LOWER RESISTANCE

IBC	No statewide building code.
IRC	No statewide residential code.

20.4%

15.0%

**200,867 people across 60 jurisdictions are protected.*

[2] See footnote 1.

[3] High-risk is defined according to national consensus-based standards, the National Flood Insurance Program, and the Building Code Effectiveness Grading Schedule. For a detailed description of the high-risk methodology, visit the FEMA Building Code Adoption Tracking landing page at www.fema.gov/emergency-managers/risk-management/building-science/bcat/.

WEST VIRGINIA

LOWER RESISTANCE

IBC	State adopts an outdated IBC (2018 edition) but does not require jurisdictions to adopt it, in which case it does not apply in those jurisdictions.
IRC	State adopts an outdated IRC (2018 edition) but does not require jurisdictions to adopt it, in which case it does not apply in those jurisdictions.

6.6%

3.1%

**112,605 people across 196 jurisdictions are protected.*

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

LOWER RESISTANCE

IBC	District adopts an outdated IBC (2015 edition), with Appendix G (Flood-Resistant Construction).
IRC	District adopts an outdated IRC (2015 edition).

0.0%

0.0%

**0 people across 1 jurisdiction are protected.*

PENNSYLVANIA

LOWER RESISTANCE

IBC	Commonwealth adopts an outdated IBC (2018 edition). *Note that Pennsylvania removes NFIP-related flood administrative provisions for criteria for granting a variance in a flood hazard area (Sec. 104.10.1).*
IRC	Commonwealth adopts an outdated IRC (2018 edition). Commonwealth weakens flood resistance in R322.2.1 for A zones by removing the +1 foot freeboard requirement and for AO zones by specifying elevation requirements that are one foot lower than the model values. Commonwealth also weakens flood resistance in R322.3.2 by making the +1 foot minimum freeboard requirement depend on the orientation to wave approach.

0.0%

0.0%

**0 people across 2,319 jurisdictions are protected.*

VIRGINIA

LOWER RESISTANCE

IBC	Commonwealth adopts the 2021 IBC.
IRC	Commonwealth adopts the 2021 IRC. Commonwealth weakens wind resilience in R602.12 by extending the size of the building for which the simplified wall bracing method can be used from 60ft to 80ft and the allowed eave-to-ridge height from 15ft to 20ft.

0.0%

0.0%

**0 people across 341 jurisdictions are protected.*