

# Life Safety Code

December 2018

## PART 100 UPDATE FACT SHEET Residential Board and Care Facilities

The Office of the State Fire Marshal (OSFM) provides fire safety inspections of state-licensed facilities using the OSFM-adopted code. These fire safety inspections are provided at the request of other state agencies which issue licenses for certain occupancies. Licensing decisions remain under the authority of the state regulatory agency that the occupancy is licensed by.

**I operate a residential board and care facility. What changes will I see with the OSFM updating the adopted National Fire Protection Association's NFPA 101, Life Safety Code from the 2000 edition to the 2015 edition?**

### Mixed Occupancies

*Existing* mixed occupancies (such as residential board and care inside another building) will have some additional options and flexibility in meeting separation requirements between occupancies as prescribed in the currently adopted NFPA 101, Life Safety Code: 2000 Edition.

### Door Locking

New options for security locking arrangements are permitted for residents that have a clinical need when certain requirements are met.

### Redefining "Story Level"

Many occupancies, including residential board and care facilities, will be permitted to use an alternative definition for "story level" to increase flexibility to comply with the code.

### Fire Sprinkler Requirements

- Under current requirements, all *new* small and large residential board and care facilities are required to be protected with fire sprinklers throughout the entire living space.
- Since the adoption of the current code, fires across the nation in unprotected attic spaces have had serious impacts on life safety for residents. These revised requirements have been triggered by fires occurring due to careless smoking outside of a facility that ignited exterior materials and extended into attic spaces.
- With the adoption of the 2015 edition, both *new* and some *existing* facilities will be incorporating requirements for the extension of required fire sprinkler systems.
  - *New* small and large residential board and care facilities will be required to extend the current fire sprinkler system to protect these attic spaces, unless the facility meets conditions for the use of a heat detection alternative.



STATE FIRE MARSHAL

## Fire Sprinkler Requirements (cont'd)

- *Existing* small and large residential board and care facilities *that already have a fire sprinkler system* will be required to extend the current fire sprinkler system to protect these attic spaces, unless the facility meets conditions for the use of a heat detection alternative.
- In addition to interior fire sprinkler protection, *new* small residential board and care facilities will require fire sprinklers in roofed porches, roofed decks, and roofed balconies.
- Both *new* and *existing* large and small residential board and care facilities with occupants documented as having an “impractical” evacuation capability will require the installation of fire sprinklers. This provides enhanced protection and greatly increases the chance of survival for individuals who are unlikely to be able to evacuate in the event of a fire.

### **I am an owner of a residential board and care facility that includes a fire sprinkler system today. Do I need to extend the system into the attic space?**

Large Facility and Small Facility: Yes, unless the facility meets conditions for the use of a heat detection alternative, current residential board and care facilities that have a fire sprinkler system in place will be required to extend the current fire sprinkler system to protect attic spaces.

### **I am an owner of a residential board and care facility that does not include a fire sprinkler system today. Do I need to get a system so that I can extend it?**

Large Facility and Small Facility: Not based on the attic extension requirement. However, if the occupants of the facility have a documented “impractical” evacuation capability, the facility will require the installation of fire sprinklers.

### **I'm planning to be the owner of a new residential board and care facility. Will I need fire sprinklers?**

- Large Facility: Yes, under the current code a *new* large residential board and care facility will have to be protected throughout with a fire sprinkler system. Under the updated code, that will include attic spaces (unless the facility meets conditions for the use of a heat detection alternative).
- Small Facility: Yes, under the current code, a *new* small residential board and care facility requires fire sprinklers in the interior space. Under the updated code, that will include attic spaces (unless the facility meets conditions for the use of a heat detection alternative). Also under the updated code, *new* small residential board and care facilities will need to provide fire sprinkler coverage for roofed porches, roofed decks, and roofed balconies.
- It is also recommended that those who wish to become involved with residential board and care facilities reach out to the Illinois Department of Human Services or the Illinois Department of Public Health, which license these occupancies, to find out about other important requirements for licensure.

### **Note:**

Those facilities inspected by Illinois Department of Public Health shall reference the NFPA 101, Life Safety Code: 2012 Edition, as currently adopted by the Federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS).