

# FINAL BILL REPORT

## ESSB 6109

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Synopsis as Enacted

**Brief Description:** Concerning the International Wildland Urban Interface Code.

**Sponsors:** Senate Committee on Ways & Means (originally sponsored by Senators Van De Wege and Rolfes).

**Senate Committee on State Government, Tribal Relations & Elections**

**Senate Committee on Ways & Means**

**House Committee on Local Government**

**House Committee on Appropriations**

**Background:** The State Building Code (Code). The Code establishes minimum performance standards and requirements for construction and construction materials in the state, consistent with accepted standards of engineering, fire, and life safety. The Code comprises a number of model codes and standards, developed and published by international and national organizations, which are adopted by reference in the State Building Code Act (Act). Model codes and standards adopted in the Act include the International Building Code, the International Residential Code, the International Mechanical Code, the International Fire Code, and the Uniform Plumbing Code Standards.

The State Building Code Council (Council) is responsible for adopting, amending, and maintaining, as appropriate, the model codes and standards adopted by reference in the Act. Amendments to the model codes and standards adopted by the Council are codified in the Washington Administrative Code. The Council regularly reviews updated editions of each model code and standard every three years.

The International WUI Code. The International WUI Code is a model code developed and published by the International Code Council, Inc. (ICC). The ICC is a nonprofit organization that develops and publishes model codes for building, construction, and design standards. Updates to the codes are developed and published on a three-year cycle.

The International WUI Code establishes minimum regulations for land use and the built environment in designated WUI areas for the stated purpose of mitigating wildfire hazard. The International WUI Code applies to the construction, alteration, movement, repair, maintenance, and use of any building, structure, or premises within the WUI areas of a jurisdiction. WUI area is defined in the WUI Code as the geographical areas where

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structures and other human development meets or intermingles with wildland or vegetative fuels.

Although the International WUI Code is not currently one of the model codes comprising the Code, the Council adopted the International WUI Code with amendments in 2010 as an optional code that local jurisdictions may adopt and enforce.

Department of Natural Resources (DNR). DNR has the direct charge and responsibility over all matters pertaining to forest fire services in the state. The forest fire-related duties of DNR include enforcing all forest fire-related laws, investigating the cause of forest fires, and directing fire suppression efforts.

**Summary:** Upon completion of the statewide mapping of WUI areas, the following portions of the 2018 International WUI Code, published by the ICC, are added to the State Building Code:

- 504.2—class A roof covering, except that roofs on additions or an existing structure that has more than 50 percent replaced must meet requirements for new construction;
- 504.5—exterior walls;
- 504.7—appendages and projections, except that unenclosed accessory structures on the first floor must be built with building materials at least two inches nominal depth and the area below the structure to be screened with wire mesh screening; and
- 403.2—driveways, except that turnarounds are required for driveways in excess of 300 feet in length and turnouts are also required for driveways in excess of 500 feet in length and less than 20 feet in width. The county, city, or town will define the requirements for a turnout or turnaround.

All cities, counties, and towns may adopt International WUI code, or any portion thereof.

In adopting and maintaining the International WUI Code, the Code adopted may not result in an International WUI Code that is more than the minimum performance standards and requirements contained in the published model code.

DNR must, to the extent practical within existing resources, establish a program of technical assistance for development of finding of fact and maps establishing WUI areas in accordance with the requirements of the International WUI Code, and develop and administer a grant program for counties, cities, and towns, subject to funding provided for this purpose.

**Votes on Final Passage:**

Senate	34	12
House	50	47

**Effective:** June 7, 2018