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**SENATE BILL 6279**

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**State of Washington**

**69th Legislature**

**2026 Regular Session**

**By** Senators Lovelett and Nobles

Read first time 01/22/26. Referred to Committee on Local Government.

1 AN ACT Relating to implementing the International Wildland Urban  
2 Interface Code; amending RCW 19.27.560 and 43.30.580; and reenacting  
3 and amending RCW 19.27.031.

4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

5 **Sec. 1.** RCW 19.27.031 and 2024 c 170 s 1 and 2024 c 133 s 1 are  
6 each reenacted and amended to read as follows:

7 (1) Except as otherwise provided in this chapter, there shall be  
8 in effect in all counties and cities the state building code which  
9 shall consist of the following model codes which are hereby adopted  
10 by reference:

11 (a)(i) The International Building Code, published by the  
12 International Code Council, Inc.;

13 (ii) The International Residential Code, published by the  
14 International Code Council, Inc.;

15 (b) The International Mechanical Code, published by the  
16 International Code Council, Inc., except that the standards for  
17 liquefied petroleum gas installations shall be NFPA 58 (Storage and  
18 Handling of Liquefied Petroleum Gases) and ANSI Z223.1/NFPA 54  
19 (National Fuel Gas Code);

20 (c) The International Fire Code, published by the International  
21 Code Council, Inc., including those standards of the National Fire

1 Protection Association specifically referenced in the International  
2 Fire Code: PROVIDED, That, notwithstanding any wording in this code,  
3 participants in religious ceremonies shall not be precluded from  
4 carrying handheld candles;

5 (d) (~~Only those portions of the~~) The International Wildland  
6 Urban Interface Code, published by the International Code Council  
7 Inc., as specifically referenced in RCW 19.27.560(1) (~~, or the model~~  
8 ~~International Wildland Urban Interface Code specifically referenced~~  
9 ~~in RCW 19.27.560(2)~~);

10 (e) The Uniform Plumbing Code and Uniform Plumbing Code  
11 Standards, published by the International Association of Plumbing and  
12 Mechanical Officials: PROVIDED, That any provisions of such code  
13 affecting sewers or fuel gas piping are not adopted;

14 (f) The rules adopted by the council establishing standards for  
15 making buildings and facilities accessible to and usable by  
16 individuals with disabilities or elderly persons as provided in RCW  
17 70.92.100 through 70.92.160; and

18 (g) The state's climate zones for building purposes are  
19 designated in RCW 19.27A.020(~~(+3)~~) (4) and may not be changed  
20 through the adoption of a model code or rule.

21 (2) In case of conflict among the codes enumerated in subsection  
22 (1) of this section, the first named code shall govern over those  
23 following.

24 (3)(a) The model codes enumerated in this section shall be  
25 adopted or amended by the council as provided in RCW 19.27.074 and  
26 19.27.032 through 19.27.034 in a three-year state building code  
27 adoption cycle. The state building code adoption cycle follows the  
28 adoption cycle of the model codes. Substantive changes to the state  
29 building code may only be adopted within the three-year cycle except  
30 as provided in RCW 19.27.032.

31 (b) The council shall review the most recent editions of each of  
32 the model codes enumerated in subsection (1) of this section and take  
33 action on adoption no later than 30 months after the date of  
34 publication of each such code. The "date of publication" is the date  
35 of publication printed in each model code. If only a month and year  
36 are shown, the date of publication for such code shall be the last  
37 day of the month shown.

38 (4) The council may initiate and implement an interim code  
39 adoption cycle for all Washington state building codes if a majority  
40 of its voting membership determines one is needed to correct errors

1 and omissions, or eliminate obsolete, conflicting, redundant, or  
2 unnecessary regulations as provided in RCW 19.27.032 through  
3 19.27.034.

4 (5) Petitions for emergency statewide amendments to the building  
5 code may be submitted, considered, and adopted at any time in  
6 accordance with RCW 34.05.350 and 19.27.032 through 19.27.034.

7 (6) Off-cycle amendments to any of the Washington state building  
8 codes may be initiated and implemented at any time if directed by the  
9 legislature.

10 (7) The council shall solicit input from first responders to  
11 ensure that firefighter safety issues are addressed during the code  
12 adoption process.

13 (8) The council may issue opinions relating to the codes at the  
14 request of a local official charged with the duty to enforce the  
15 enumerated codes.

16 **Sec. 2.** RCW 19.27.560 and 2024 c 133 s 3 are each amended to  
17 read as follows:

18 (1) ~~((In addition to the provisions of RCW 19.27.031, the state  
19 building code shall, upon))~~ Upon the completion of a statewide  
20 wildfire hazard map and a base-level wildfire risk map for each  
21 county of the state, per RCW 43.30.580, ~~((consist of chapter 1 and  
22 the following technical provisions of))~~ the state building code  
23 council shall, by November 1, 2029, adopt by rule the International  
24 Wildland Urban Interface Code, published by the International Code  
25 Council, Inc., ~~((which are hereby adopted by reference:~~

26 ~~(a) The following parts of class 1 ignition-resistant  
27 construction:~~

28 ~~(i)(A) Roof covering - Roofs shall have a roof assembly that  
29 complies with class A rating when testing in accordance with American  
30 society for testing materials E 108 or underwriters laboratories 790.  
31 For roof coverings where the profile allows a space between the roof  
32 covering and roof decking, the space at the eave ends shall be fire  
33 stopped to preclude entry of flames or embers, or have one layer of  
34 seventy-two pound mineral-surfaced, nonperforated camp sheet  
35 complying with American society for testing materials D 3909  
36 installed over the combustible decking.~~

37 ~~(B) The roof covering on buildings or structures in existence  
38 prior to the adoption of the wildland urban interface code under this  
39 section that are replaced or have fifty percent or more replaced in a~~

1 ~~twelve month period shall be replaced with a roof covering required~~  
2 ~~for new construction based on the type of ignition-resistant~~  
3 ~~construction specified in accordance with the International Wildland~~  
4 ~~Urban Interface Code.~~

5 ~~(C) The roof covering on any addition to a building or structure~~  
6 ~~shall be replaced with a roof covering required for new construction~~  
7 ~~based on the type of ignition-resistant construction specified in~~  
8 ~~accordance with the International Wildland Urban Interface Code.~~

9 ~~(ii) Exterior walls - Exterior walls of buildings or structures~~  
10 ~~shall be constructed with one of the following methods:~~

11 ~~(A) Materials approved for not less than one hour fire-resistance~~  
12 ~~rated construction on the exterior side;~~

13 ~~(B) Approved noncombustible materials;~~

14 ~~(C) Heavy timber or log wall construction;~~

15 ~~(D) Fire retardant-treated wood on the exterior side. The fire~~  
16 ~~retardant-treated wood shall be labeled for exterior use and meet the~~  
17 ~~requirements of the International Building Code; or~~

18 ~~(E) Ignition-resistant materials on the exterior side.~~

19 ~~Such materials shall extend from the top of the foundation to the~~  
20 ~~underside of the roof sheathing.~~

21 ~~(iii) (A) Appendages and projections - Unenclosed accessory~~  
22 ~~structures attached to buildings with habitable spaces and~~  
23 ~~projections, such as decks, shall not be less than one hour fire-~~  
24 ~~resistance rated construction, heavy timber construction, or~~  
25 ~~constructed of one of the following:~~

26 ~~(I) Approved noncombustible materials;~~

27 ~~(II) Fire retardant-treated wood identified for exterior use and~~  
28 ~~meeting the requirements of the International Building Code; or~~

29 ~~(III) Ignition-resistant building materials in accordance with~~  
30 ~~the International Wildland Urban Interface Code.~~

31 ~~(B) Subsection (1) (a) (iii) (A) of this section does not apply to~~  
32 ~~an unenclosed accessory structure attached to buildings with~~  
33 ~~habitable spaces and projections, such as decks, attached to the~~  
34 ~~first floor of a building if the structure is built with building~~  
35 ~~materials at least two inches nominal depth and the area below the~~  
36 ~~unenclosed accessory structure is screened with wire mesh screening~~  
37 ~~to prevent embers from coming in from underneath.~~

38 ~~(b) Driveways - Driveways shall be provided where any portion of~~  
39 ~~an exterior wall of the first story of the building is located more~~  
40 ~~than one hundred fifty feet from a fire apparatus access road.~~

1 ~~Driveways in excess of three hundred feet in length shall be provided~~  
2 ~~with turnarounds and driveways in excess of five hundred feet in~~  
3 ~~length and less than twenty feet in width shall be provided with~~  
4 ~~turnouts and turnarounds. The county, city, or town will define the~~  
5 ~~requirements for a turnout or turnaround as required in this~~  
6 ~~subsection)) or portions thereof adopted pursuant to RCW 19.27.031,~~  
7 ~~shall be implemented. The state building code council shall~~  
8 ~~collaborate with other relevant state agencies and entities,~~  
9 ~~including the department of natural resources and regional fire~~  
10 ~~defense boards pursuant to RCW 43.43.962, and local governments,~~  
11 ~~including, but not limited to, building officials and urban forestry~~  
12 ~~specialists to consider up-to-date wildfire science and create~~  
13 ~~regionally appropriate building codes. Prior to final approval of the~~  
14 ~~statewide maps developed pursuant to RCW 43.30.580, the department of~~  
15 ~~natural resources shall coordinate with the regional fire defense~~  
16 ~~boards established in RCW 43.43.963 for a review of the proposed~~  
17 ~~statewide maps.~~

18 (2) ~~((All))~~ Until 90 days after the completion of an optional  
19 code pursuant to subsection (4) of this section, all counties,  
20 cities, and towns may adopt the International Wildland Urban  
21 Interface Code, published by the International Code Council, Inc., in  
22 whole or any portion thereof.

23 (3) ~~((In adopting and maintaining the code enumerated in~~  
24 ~~subsection (1) of this section, any amendment to the code as adopted~~  
25 ~~under subsection (1) of this section may not result in an~~  
26 ~~International Wildland Urban Interface Code that is more than the~~  
27 ~~minimum performance standards and requirements contained in~~  
28 ~~subsection (1) of this section.~~

29 ~~(4))~~ All counties, cities, and towns may complete their own  
30 wildfire hazard and base-level wildfire risk map for use in applying  
31 the code enumerated in subsections (1) and (2) of this section.  
32 Counties, cities, and towns may continue to use locally adopted  
33 wildfire risk maps until completion of a statewide wildfire hazard  
34 map and base-level wildfire risk map for each county of the state per  
35 RCW 43.30.580. Six months after the statewide wildfire hazard map and  
36 base-level wildfire risk map is complete, any map adopted by  
37 counties, cities, and towns must utilize the same or substantially  
38 similar criteria as the map required by subsection (1) of this  
39 section.

1        ~~((5))~~ (4) The state building code council may adopt by rule  
2 technical provisions of the International Wildland Urban Interface  
3 Code as an optional code to be used by cities and counties that have  
4 completed wildfire hazard maps and base-level wildfire risk maps  
5 pursuant to subsection (3) of this section for implementation. Upon  
6 the completion of a statewide wildfire hazard map and a base-level  
7 wildfire risk map for each county as required in RCW 43.30.580, the  
8 adoption of an optional code as provided in this subsection (4) shall  
9 no longer apply.

10        (5) All counties, cities, and towns issuing commercial and  
11 residential building permits for parcels in areas identified as high  
12 hazard and very high hazard on the map required by subsection (1) of  
13 this section or adopted according to subsection ~~((4))~~ (3) of this  
14 section shall apply the code enumerated in subsections (1) or (2) of  
15 this section.

16        (6) When developing defensible space requirements under the  
17 International Wildland Urban Interface Code, the state building code  
18 council must coordinate with the department of ecology, the  
19 department of fish and wildlife, the department of commerce, and  
20 local governments to ensure that such defensible space requirements  
21 align with the requirements of the growth management act, shoreline  
22 master programs, and other applicable environmental regulations  
23 adopted by the state.

24        (7) All counties and cities, with the approval of the local fire  
25 marshal, may adopt local amendments to the International Wildland  
26 Urban Interface Code as needed to meet local conditions or  
27 constraints. Amendments affecting single-family or multifamily  
28 residential buildings shall not be effective unless the amendment is  
29 approved by the building code council pursuant to RCW  
30 19.27.074(1)(b).

31        **Sec. 3.** RCW 43.30.580 and 2024 c 133 s 4 are each amended to  
32 read as follows:

33        (1) The department shall, to the extent practical within existing  
34 resources, establish a program of technical assistance to counties,  
35 cities, and towns for the development of findings of fact and maps  
36 establishing the wildland urban interface areas of jurisdictions in  
37 accordance with the requirements of the International Wildland Urban  
38 Interface Code as adopted by reference in RCW 19.27.560.

1           (2) The department shall develop and administer a grant program,  
2 subject to funding provided for this purpose, to provide direct  
3 financial assistance to counties, cities, and towns for the  
4 development of findings of fact and maps establishing wildland urban  
5 interface areas. Applications for grant funds must be submitted by  
6 counties, cities, and towns in accordance with regulations adopted by  
7 the department. The department is authorized to make and administer  
8 grants on the basis of applications, within appropriations authorized  
9 by the legislature, to any county, city, or town for the purpose of  
10 developing findings of fact and maps establishing wildland urban  
11 interface areas.

12           (3) The department shall establish and maintain a statewide  
13 wildfire hazard map and a base-level wildfire risk map for each  
14 county of the state based upon criteria established in coordination  
15 with the state fire marshal office. Prior to final approval of the  
16 statewide wildfire hazard map and base-level wildfire risk map, the  
17 department of natural resources shall coordinate with the regional  
18 fire defense boards established in RCW 43.43.963 to review and  
19 receive input on the proposed statewide maps. The hazard map shall be  
20 made available on the department's website and shall designate areas  
21 as low, moderate, high, and very high wildfire hazard. The risk map  
22 shall be made available on the department's website and designate  
23 vulnerable resources or assets based on their exposure and  
24 susceptibility to a wildfire hazard. The department shall establish a  
25 method by which local governments may update the wildfire hazard map  
26 and wildfire risk map based on local assessments and approved by the  
27 jurisdiction's fire marshal. The department shall make publicly  
28 available the criteria and analysis utilized in assessing the  
29 wildfire hazard and risk.

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