

2023 Oregon Residential Specialty Code Amendments

Summary: This amendment includes construction provisions to address sleeping lofts and their associated means of egress through a new Section R332, as directed by Oregon Revised Statutes.

The following amendments are adopted as part of the 2023 Oregon Residential Specialty Code (ORSC).

The changes are denoted as follows:

Blue/underline = Added code language
~~Red/strikethrough~~ = Deleted code language

Chapter 1—Scope and Administration

Section R101.2.1 Application. *(The last sentence of the section is deleted.)*

~~In accordance with ORS 455.616, dwellings 400 square feet (37.16 m²) in area or less shall comply with the Small Home Specialty Code.~~

Chapter 2—Definitions

Section R202

~~**SMALL HOME SPECIALTY CODE.** For the purposes of this code, *Small Home Specialty Code* shall mean the specialty code adopted under Section 2(2), Chapter 401, Oregon Laws 2019.~~

~~Oregon Laws 2019, chapter 401, section 2(2) is not part of this code but is reprinted here for the reader's convenience:~~

~~(2) Notwithstanding ORS 455.020 and 455.030, the 2018 International Residential Code, including but not limited to Appendix Q of that code, is adopted as a Small Home Specialty Code applicable to the construction of a small home.~~

SLEEPING LOFT. A space designated for sleeping on an intermediate level or levels between the floor and ceiling of a story, open on one or more sides to the room or compartment in which the space is located, and in accordance with Section R332.

Chapter 3—Building Planning

Section R332—Sleeping Lofts

R332.1 Sleeping lofts. Where provided in *dwelling units* or *sleeping units*, *sleeping lofts* shall comply with this code as modified by Sections R332.1.1 through R332.5. *Sleeping lofts* constructed in compliance with this section shall be considered a portion of the *story* below. Such *sleeping lofts* shall not contribute to the number of stories as regulated by this code.

Exceptions: Lofts complying with any of the following conditions shall not be considered *sleeping lofts* and need not comply with Section R332:

1. The loft has a depth of less than 3 feet (914 mm).
2. The loft has a floor area of less than 35 square feet (3.3 m²).
3. The loft is not provided with a permanent means of egress.

R332.1.1 Automatic sprinkler system. *Sleeping lofts* and rooms or compartments to which they open to and are located in shall be provided with an automatic sprinkler system in accordance with NFPA 13D.

R332.2 Sleeping loft limitations. *Sleeping lofts* shall comply with the following conditions:

1. The *sleeping loft floor area* shall be less than 70 square feet (6.5 m²).
2. The *sleeping loft ceiling height* shall not exceed 7 feet (2134 mm) for more than one-half of the *sleeping loft floor area*.

R332.3 Sleeping loft ceiling height. The clear height below the *sleeping loft floor construction* shall not be less than 7 feet (2134 mm). The ceiling height above the finished floor of the *sleeping loft* shall not be less than 3 feet (914 mm). Spaces adjacent to the *sleeping loft* with a sloped ceiling measuring less than 3 feet (914 mm) from the finished floor to the finished ceiling shall not contribute to the *sleeping loft floor area*.

R332.4 Sleeping loft area. The aggregate area of all *sleeping lofts* and *mezzanines* within a room or compartment shall comply with Section R325.3.

Exception: The area of a single *sleeping loft* located within a *dwelling unit* or *sleeping unit* equipped with an automatic sprinkler system in accordance with NFPA 13D shall not be greater than two-thirds of the area of the room or compartment in which it is located, provided that no other *sleeping lofts* or *mezzanines* are open to the room or compartment in which the *sleeping loft* is located.

R332.5 Permanent egress for sleeping lofts. A permanent means of egress shall be provided for *sleeping lofts*. The means of egress shall comply with Section R311 as modified by Sections R332.5.1 through R332.5.3.

R332.5.1 Ceiling height at sleeping loft means of egress. A ceiling height of not less than 3 feet (914 mm) shall be provided for the entire width of the means of egress from the *sleeping loft*.

R332.5.2 Stairways. *Stairways* providing egress from *sleeping lofts* shall be permitted to comply with Sections R332.5.2.1 through R332.5.2.3.

R332.5.2.1 Width. *Stairways* providing egress from a *sleeping loft* shall not be less than 17 inches (432 mm) in clear width at or above the *handrail*. The width below the *handrail* shall be not less than 20 inches (610 mm).

R332.5.2.2 Treads and risers. Risers for stairs providing egress from a *sleeping loft* shall be not less than 7 inches (178 mm) and not more than 12 inches (305 mm) in height. Tread depth and riser height shall be calculated in accordance with one of the following formulas:

1. The tread depth shall be 20 inches (508 mm) minus four-thirds of the riser height.
2. The riser height shall be 15 inches (381 mm) minus three-fourths of the tread depth.

R332.5.2.3 Landings. Landings at *stairways* providing egress from *sleeping lofts* shall comply with Section R311.7.6, except that the depth of landings in the direction of travel shall be not less than 24 inches (610 mm).

R332.5.3 Ladders. Ladders used as a means of egress from *sleeping lofts* shall comply with Sections R332.5.3.1 and R332.5.3.2.

R332.5.3.1 Size and capacity. Ladders providing egress from *sleeping lofts* shall have a rung width of not less than 12 inches (305 mm), and 10-inch (254 mm) to 14-inch (356 mm) spacing between rungs. Ladders shall be capable of supporting a 300-pound (136 kg) load on any rung. Rung spacing shall be uniform within ³/₈ inch (9.5 mm).

R332.5.3.2 Incline. Ladders shall be inclined at 70 to 80 degrees from horizontal.

R332.5.4 Alternating tread devices. Alternating tread devices used as a means of egress from *sleeping lofts* shall comply with Section R311.7.11.

Appendix AQ—Tiny houses

Appendix AQ of the 2021 International Residential Code is not adopted by the State of Oregon, Building Codes Division, as part of this code. ~~For detached one-family dwellings not more than 400 square feet in size, Oregon Revised Statute (ORS) Chapter 455 requires application of the Small Home Specialty Code.~~

~~See ORS 455 and Enrolled House Bill 2423 from Oregon's Legislative Assembly 2019 Regular Session.~~

For questions about the 2023 ORSC, visit the division website to [contact a building code specialist](#).