

# 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 m<sup>2</sup>) 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 m<sup>2</sup>).
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 m<sup>2</sup>).
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  $\frac{3}{8}$  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](#).