

## 2026 Oregon Residential Specialty Code Adoption

### Opportunity for public input

A rulemaking hearing is scheduled to receive public testimony regarding the proposed rules adopting the 2026 Oregon Residential Specialty Code (ORSC).

**Hearing date:** Aug. 18, 2026

**Time:** 10 a.m.

**Location:** This will be a hybrid meeting, open to the public both in-person and virtually.

**In-person hearing**

BCD Conference Room A  
1535 Edgewater St. NW  
Salem, Oregon 97304

**Virtual connection and online streaming**

View the live meeting or access the connection information for the Zoom meeting at:

[Oregon.gov/bcd/Pages/bcd-video.aspx](https://oregon.gov/bcd/Pages/bcd-video.aspx)

### Comments and testimony

The division accepts written and oral testimony from the public. Written comments/testimony may be submitted by email to [RulesCoordinator.bcd@dcbs.oregon.gov](mailto:RulesCoordinator.bcd@dcbs.oregon.gov) no later than **Aug. 21, 2026, at 5 p.m.**

If you wish to provide oral comments/testimony at the hearing, you may do so in person or virtually. Email the rules coordinator to sign up in advance. Please include your name, email address, and organization, and whether you will be attending in-person or virtually.

### Purpose of the rules

These proposed rules adopt the 2026 Oregon Residential Specialty Code (ORSC). The 2026 ORSC is based on the 2024 edition of the International Residential Code for One- and Two-Family Dwellings (IRC), with Oregon specific amendments.

### Citation

Amends OAR 918-480-0005; OAR 918-480-0010

The anticipated effective date is Oct. 1, 2026.

### History

The Residential and Manufactured Structures Board selected a technical code review committee to review the board-selected base model code, public proposals, Oregon amendments, and existing alternate methods. The ORSC technical review committee completed an analysis of the 2024 International Residential Code changes, existing Oregon amendments, and statewide alternate method rulings. The committee met multiple times to review potential code changes, finalizing its recommendations to the board. On Jan. 7, 2026, and Feb. 18, 2026, the Residential and Manufactured Structures Board approved the committee's recommendations for the 2026 ORSC and recommended that the code be sent to public hearing.

Get more information about the code adoption process for the 2026 ORSC:

<https://www.oregon.gov/bcd/codes-stand/Pages/orsc-adoption.aspx>

### Contact

If you have questions or need further information, please contact Tony Rocco, Structural Program Chief and Housing & Building Safety Manager, [anthony.j.rocco@dcbs.oregon.gov](mailto:anthony.j.rocco@dcbs.oregon.gov).



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## NOTICE OF PROPOSED RULEMAKING

INCLUDING STATEMENT OF NEED & FISCAL IMPACT

CHAPTER 918

**DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER AND BUSINESS SERVICES**

**BUILDING CODES DIVISION**

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**FILED: 07/27/2026 12:38 PM**

ARCHIVES DIVISION SECRETARY OF STATE

FILING CAPTION: Adoption of the 2026 Oregon Residential Specialty Code.

LAST DAY AND TIME TO OFFER COMMENT TO AGENCY: 08/21/2026 5:00 PM

*The Agency requests public comment on whether other options should be considered for achieving the rule's substantive goals while reducing negative economic impact of the rule on business.*

### CONTACT:

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1535 Edgewater St. NW  
Salem, OR 97304

### Filed By:

Laura Burns  
Rules Coordinator

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### HEARING(S)

*Auxiliary aids for persons with disabilities are available upon advance request. Notify the contact listed above.*

DATE: 08/18/2026

TIME: 10:00 AM - 10:30 AM

OFFICER: Staff

### IN-PERSON HEARING DETAILS

ADDRESS: Building Codes Division, 1535 Edgewater St. NW, Salem, OR 97304

### SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS:

This will be a hybrid meeting, open to the public both in-person and virtually. The hearing will also be live-streamed at <https://www.oregon.gov/bcd/Pages/bcd-video.aspx>. Virtual connection information will be available on the streaming webpage: <https://www.oregon.gov/bcd/Pages/bcd-video.aspx> on the day of the hearing.

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### NEED FOR THE RULE(S):

Oregon Revised Statutes (ORS) 455.610 requires the division to adopt, and amend as necessary, a low-rise code that contains all the requirements, including structural design provisions, related to the construction of residential dwellings

three stories or less above grade with an exterior door for each unit. Furthermore, ORS 455.020 and 455.110 require the division to adopt a uniform state building code that conforms to model building codes generally accepted and in use to govern the construction, reconstruction, alteration and repair of buildings and other structures and the installation and use of mechanical, heating and ventilating devices and equipment in buildings and other structures.

The 2023 Oregon Residential Specialty Code was based on the 2021 edition of the International Residential Code, with Oregon amendments. These proposed rules are needed to update the current residential code by adopting the 2024 International Residential Code with additional Oregon amendments. This code will be adopted as the 2026 Oregon Residential Specialty Code.

The division has been attempting to harmonize the provisions of Chapter 1 of the International Residential Code with the specific legal framework in Oregon. The changes to Chapter 1 are necessary to foster predictable application and clarify the scope of delegable authority for local municipalities. Additional flexibility is given to local regulation to allow municipalities to meet their individual community needs.

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#### DOCUMENTS RELIED UPON, AND WHERE THEY ARE AVAILABLE:

Draft rules, code proposals, board meeting recordings and documents, code review committee documents and recommendation matrix are available from the division's rules coordinator located at 1535 Edgewater Street NW, Salem, OR 97304 and are posted on the division's Web site at: <http://www.oregon.gov/bcd/laws-rules/Pages/proposed-rules.aspx>.

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#### STATEMENT IDENTIFYING HOW ADOPTION OF RULE(S) WILL AFFECT RACIAL EQUITY IN THIS STATE:

The division does not believe that these proposed rules will have an impact on racial equity in the state. The division invites feedback from the public on any impacts to racial equity from these rules.

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#### FISCAL AND ECONOMIC IMPACT:

The division has determined that the proposed code may have some fiscal and economic impact on state agencies, units of local government, small businesses, and members of the public from the purchase of the 2026 edition of the Oregon Residential Specialty Code book and training associated with new code provisions. The cost of the codebook is estimated to be approximately \$157. The division certifies approximately 1,000 residential inspectors and plans examiners that use this code. The overall impact of this cost cannot be determined at this time because the code will be available online at no cost, and it is unknown how many copies of the codebook will be voluntarily purchased by local government and members of the public. There may also be costs associated with training on this new code. It is difficult for the division to quantify the costs associated with this training for a particular individual or local government, but we believe it would be minimal consisting of class registration fees and travel costs. Currently, and for the past ten-plus years, the division has provided statewide code update training at no cost to all certified individuals. Completion of the update training is required for certified local government employees to maintain their certifications associated with the particular code being updated.

The Residential and Manufactured Structures Board considered the fiscal impact of each substantive code change proposal, and determined that building owners, developers, contractors and the general public will be impacted by the proposed rules because of the cost increases associated with the proposed code provisions. Several changes were identified as cost savings and may reduce the overall cost increases identified below. A specific and accurate overall cost estimate cannot be quantified at this time because it is dependent on the specifics of a particular building, design variables, construction methods, building type, site location, site conditions, and election of materials.

The Residential and Manufactured Structures Board made the specific finding that the added cost is necessary for the health and safety of the occupants and the public, or necessary to conserve scarce resources.

This code adoption also includes adoption of Chapter 1, which includes administrative provisions, clarifies legal authorities, identifies scopes of work which are exempt from regulatory permitting, and lays out operation of the code.

The changes within Chapter 1 are anticipated to have a minimal impact with a balance of cost increases and decreases, but the exact impact may depend on the current operations of a local building department.

The remaining chapters include a mixture and balance of cost increases and cost decreases, particularly regarding climatic and geographic design data; irregular building conditions; and prescriptive concrete footing sizing tables. Chapter 11 includes increases in energy efficiency, in alignment with Executive Order 20-04, and ongoing Legislative requirements from previously enacted bills (HB 3409, 2023 Session). The package of provisions approved by the board followed rigorous cost/benefit analyses which were considered by an independent technical code review committee on behalf of the board; prior to the board's robust review. There was a minimal fiscal impact from these changes.

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#### COST OF COMPLIANCE:

*(1) Identify any state agencies, units of local government, and members of the public likely to be economically affected by the rule(s). (2) Effect on Small Businesses: (a) Estimate the number and type of small businesses subject to the rule(s); (b) Describe the expected reporting, recordkeeping and administrative activities and cost required to comply with the rule(s); (c) Estimate the cost of professional services, equipment supplies, labor and increased administration required to comply with the rule(s).*

##### 1. Impact on state agencies, units of local government and the public (ORS 183.335(2)(b)(E)):

The division has determined that these proposed rules will have some fiscal impact to the division, local building departments, licensees, and small businesses for training costs and the purchase costs of new code books. Code books are expected to cost approximately \$157. The division will offer low cost training for local government, but local governments may still see an impact in staff time. The division is unable to determine the exact fiscal impact at this time because it is dependent upon specific factors related to a building's design, use, materials, etc. However, we expect training costs to be similar to training costs in past years, and overall, the impact on state agencies, units of local government and the public, should be minimal.

##### 2. Cost of compliance effect on small business (ORS 183.336):

a. Estimate the number of small businesses and types of business and industries with small businesses subject to the rule: Small businesses that are subject to these rules include residential and commercial contractors, designers, engineers, architects, and others associated with the construction industry. There are approximately 56,000 licensed active construction businesses in the state of Oregon. Construction businesses are primarily small and medium sized businesses. Additionally, there are approximately 135 municipalities administering and enforcing building inspection programs in Oregon and there are approximately 1,000 certified residential structural and mechanical inspectors and plans examiners. The division is unable to determine the exact fiscal impact at this time because it is dependent upon specific factors related to a building's design, use, materials, etc. However, we believe that the fiscal and economic impact outlined above may assist a small business in identifying costs of compliance for their specific project.

b. Projected reporting, recordkeeping and other administrative activities required for compliance, including costs of professional services:

The proposed rules do not impose any additional reporting, recordkeeping, or other administrative activities in order to comply.

c. Equipment, supplies, labor and increased administration required for compliance:

There may be a minimal additional cost associated with new equipment or design parameters. Actual cost cannot be determined at this time due to variables in types of construction, equipment, building type, etc.

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#### DESCRIBE HOW SMALL BUSINESSES WERE INVOLVED IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THESE RULE(S):

Small businesses were represented on the 2026 Oregon Residential Specialty Code Technical Code Review Committee and the Residential and Manufactured Structures Board; both of which reviewed the appropriate provisions of these proposed rules.

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#### WAS AN ADMINISTRATIVE RULE ADVISORY COMMITTEE CONSULTED? NO IF NOT, WHY NOT?

The ORSC was reviewed comprehensively by a code review committee and taken to the Residential and Manufactured Structures Board, which was used in place of a rulemaking advisory committee. Both the code review committee and the Residential and Manufactured Structures Board represent small businesses, industry, and other interested parties in the adoption of these rules.

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#### HOUSING IMPACT STATEMENT:

Oregon Revised Statute 455.610 requires the division, with the approval of the board, to adopt, and amend as necessary, a low-rise residential dwelling code “that contains all the requirements, including structural design provisions, related to the construction of residential dwellings three stories or fewer above grade.” The low-rise code is known as the Oregon Residential Specialty Code (ORSC) and is comprised of structural, mechanical, plumbing, electrical, and low-rise apartment provisions.

Furthermore, ORS 455.020 and 455.110 require the division to adopt a uniform state building code that conforms to model building codes generally accepted and in use to govern the construction, reconstruction, alteration and repair of buildings and other structures and the installation and use of mechanical, heating and ventilating devices and equipment in buildings and other structures.

The division has been attempting to harmonize the provisions of Chapter 1 of the International Residential Code with the specific legal framework in Oregon. The changes to Chapter 1 are necessary to foster predictable application and clarify the scope of delegable authority for local municipalities. Additional flexibility is given to local regulation to allow municipalities to meet their individual community needs.

These proposed rules are needed to update the current residential code by adopting the 2024 International Residential Code with additional Oregon amendments. This code will be adopted as the 2026 Oregon Residential Specialty Code.

Materials and labor costs increase or savings: Structural changes: Major changes included; updates made regarding climatic and geographic design criteria by updating referenced data to new model standards. These changes may impact the cost of construction slightly in certain geographic areas of our state. The most impacted areas, however, are mountainous and undesirable for housing development. Updated irregular building standards created new paths for determining when a nonprescriptive design is required for drastically sloping sites, helping ensure that the underfloor bracing is addressed in the design. For certain sloping sites this update may increase the cost of construction depending on the design options selected by the customer, and depending on other variable choices the customer may make, while leading to no cost increase for other design options and configurations. The prescriptive footings sizing methodology was updated to reflect the newer, more modern model methodology which will result in a negligible cost saving for a large number of common footing/foundation sizes and types. This update also provides more design flexibility and addresses more design options and scenarios.

Energy and mechanical changes: Major changes included; the two major changes are the requirement for a second additional energy efficiency measure and for a first-stage heat pump when split-system cooling is furnished. Small homes (1,500SF or under) are exempt from the second additional efficiency measure, so costs are not increased for that revision. Most homes 1,200 SF and smaller already install a heat pump and costs would not increase; for the few 1,200 SF and smaller homes that do not already select a heat pump, those homes are expected to see an increase of \$800 to \$1,300. The energy savings to the consumer are expected to offset the increased first cost.

Estimated administrative construction or other costs increase or savings: The administrative changes made in the 2026 ORSC may have some impact on local building department operations which may in turn have downstream impacts on department fees but those impacts cannot be tied to a direct impact on the construction of a particular building. There is not additional administrative costs being imposed on the actual construction of a home.

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#### RULES PROPOSED:

918-480-0005, 918-480-0010

AMEND: 918-480-0005

RULE SUMMARY: Adopts the 2026 Oregon Residential Specialty Code, effective October 1, 2026, and identifies the base model code.

CHANGES TO RULE:

918-480-0005

Adopted Oregon Residential Specialty Code ¶¶

(1) The Low-Rise Residential Dwelling Code, identified in ORS 455.610, will be known as the Oregon Residential Specialty Code.¶¶

(2)-(a) The Oregon Residential Specialty Code is adopted pursuant to OAR chapter 918, division 8;¶¶

(b) Additional energy provisions are adopted pursuant to OAR chapter 918, division 460, section 500.¶¶

(3) Effective October 1, 2023~~6~~, the 2023~~6~~ Oregon Residential Specialty Code consists of the following:¶¶

(a) The 2024~~4~~ edition of the International Residential Code for One- and Two-Family Dwellings as published by the International Code Council, Inc., Chapters 1 through 24 and Chapter 44, Appendices BE, BF, H, K, R, S, UBG, BI, BJ, BK, BL, and WBM and as further amended by the ~~D~~division. Chapters 25 through 43, and Appendices AA, AB, AC, D, G, I, J, L, MBA, BB, BC, BD, BH, BN, BO, CA, CB, CC, CD, CE, CF, CG, CH, NA, NB, NC, ND, NE, NE, Θ, P, Q, T, VNG, NH, NI, NJ, NK, and XNL are not adopted as part of the 2023~~6~~ Oregon Residential Specialty Code.¶¶

(b) The low-rise plumbing provisions of the Oregon Residential Specialty Code are adopted in the 2023~~6~~ Oregon Plumbing Specialty Code.¶¶

(c) The low-rise electrical provisions of the Oregon Residential Specialty Code are adopted in the 2023~~6~~ Oregon Electrical Specialty Code.¶¶

(d) Low-rise apartment construction provisions of the Oregon Residential Specialty Code are adopted in the 2022~~5~~ Oregon Structural Specialty Code and the 2022~~5~~ Oregon Mechanical Specialty Code.¶¶

(4) Applicability of code changes to pending applications. Code requirements in effect at the time a plan review or permit application is filed controls the construction under the application unless the applicant agrees to be controlled by subsequent changes.¶¶

(5) For the purposes of implementing a phase-in period for the 2023~~6~~ Oregon Residential Specialty Code:¶¶

(a) Chapter 1 of the 2023~~6~~ Oregon Residential Specialty Code is effective October 1, 2023~~6~~ with no phase-in period; and¶¶

(b) The 2024~~4~~ Oregon Residential Specialty Code, with the exception of Chapter 1, is adopted for a period of six months beginning October 1, 2023~~6~~ and ending March 31, 2024~~7~~.¶¶

(6) During the six-month phase-in period established in section (5), subsection (b) of this rule, all building departments in the state are required to accept plans for low-rise residential dwellings designed to either the 2023~~6~~ Oregon Residential Specialty Code or to the 2024~~4~~ Oregon Residential Specialty Code.¶¶

[Publications: Publications referenced are available for review at the division. See division website for information on purchasing publications.]

Statutory/Other Authority: ORS 455.020, ORS 455.030, ORS 455.110, ORS 455.380, ORS 455.525

Statutes/Other Implemented: ORS 455.610

AMEND: 918-480-0010

RULE SUMMARY: Removes previous language amending the 2023 Oregon Residential Specialty Code.

CHANGES TO RULE:

918-480-0010

Amendments to the Oregon Residential Specialty Code ¶

~~(1) The Oregon Residential Specialty Code is amended pursuant to OAR chapter 918, division 8. Amendments adopted during the code-cycle for inclusion into the Oregon Residential Specialty Code are placed in this rule, showing the section reference and a descriptive caption.¶~~

~~(2) Effective October 1, 2024, the 2023 Oregon Residential Specialty Code Section R310.1 is amended for emergency escape and rescue openings that do not open to a public way.¶~~

~~(3) Effective April 1, 2025, the 2023 Oregon Residential Specialty Code Section R302.3 is amended to include attached stacked two-family dwellings with increased fire separation at the vertical demising walls between each stacked two-family dwelling.¶~~

~~(4) Effective August 5, 2025, the 2023 Oregon Residential Specialty Code Section R327 is amended for additional wildfire hazard mitigation provisions that are available for local adoption.¶~~

~~(5) Effective January 1, 2026, the 2023 Oregon Residential Specialty Code Section R332 is amended to add construction provisions to address sleeping lofts and ladders used to access and egress from sleeping lofts.¶~~

[Publications: Publications referenced are available for review at the division. See division website for information on where to purchase publications.]

Statutory/Other Authority: ORS 455.020, ORS 455.110, ORS 455.610

Statutes/Other Implemented: ORS 455.610