



# THE CODE ADVISOR

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*Professional Assistance in the Building Codes for  
Architects, Engineers & Code Officials*

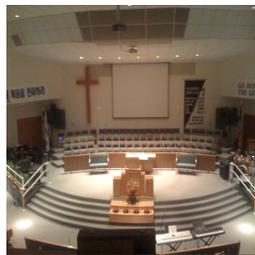
## Question of the Month

From the "Quick Code Answers"  
Telephone Support records.

**Quick Code Answers** is an annual subscription service that provides Phone & On-site technical support for your Building Code questions.

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**Q:** The front of a church assembly area has a raised alter platform accessed with continuous steps, (30 ft) across the entire front and sides of the stage. The public seating is arranged with three aisles, one center and one on each side. There are exit doors on each side and at the rear of the room. The design shows handrails for these steps on each side wall. But **IBC1012.9** seems to require intermediate handrails every 5 feet or at minimum, one additional free-standing rail in the center to match the center aisle. How many intermediate handrails are required?



**A:** A minimum of two handrails are always required for stairways (**2009 IBC1009.12**). The focus of the Intermediate Handrails section (**IBC1012.9**) is egress not ingress. Intermediate Handrails are required to support additional egress width when stairways exceed 60 inches and the entire width of the stairway is needed to support the egress load. This section also references "monumental stairs" which are purposely oversized for architectural effect. Intermediate handrails are to be "located along the most direct path of egress travel". Depending upon the size of the platform, one or two handrails would easily support the egress requirements of the platform. And the most direct path of egress would be down the sides and out the side exits. In this case, intermediate handrails would not be required.

## Client Highlight



### Derry Township

Department of Community Development  
600 Clearwater Rd  
Hershey, PA 17033

## Code Tip

We are all used to seeing the three compartment restaurant sinks with the traps dumping to a floor drain. The assumption would be that this indirect connection is the only correct way to plumb food service sinks. But wording at **2009 IPC, 802.1** confirms that this is not the case. These sinks may be plumbed directly to the DWV system. Indirect is still ok - just not the only option.



Taken from our *Important Changes to the 2009 I-codes Seminar*.

## Current Events

The first action of the 2011 PA legislative session brought significant changes to the Pennsylvania state building code (PA UCC). Act 1 of 2011 was signed by Governor Corbett on April 25<sup>th</sup> with some provisions being retroactive to January 2010 and January 2011. The following is a summary of the areas impacted by the new legislation:

Change of duties for UCC Review and Advisory Council

2009 IRC Sprinkler Requirement for I&2 family dwellings repealed - retroactive 1/1/2011

Special floor protection requirements for un-sprinklered dwellings

Special energy requirements for log homes – retroactive 1/1/2010

2009 IRC Wall Bracing requirements replaced with 2006 Wall bracing provisions

In the year leading up to this legislative event, most of the focus was on mandatory residential sprinklers. And this is a significant issue, no matter which side of the debate you claim. But revamping the duties of the Review and Advisory Council (UCC RAC) wins the prize for broad impact on the state building code.

Opponents of the current system (mandates the latest ICC version) argued that it left the state building code open to outside influence. But proponents believe it is unreasonable to expect the state legislature to rule on the technical details of a complex code. The council was created to address this divide by having a legislatively appointed body review the incoming code version. The council's mandate was to identify code changes that should be omitted. But in the 2009 triennial cycle, this process yielded no recommended omissions.

Thanks to Act 1, the UCC RAC must now recommend each code change for adoption. But only after examining it for safety, financial and technical feasibility impact. Additionally, these new code provisions may not be recommended without a 2/3 vote of the council. With these tight requirements in place, it is very possible that we have seen the last triennial code update. The Act is posted on the PA L&I website on the UCC page under 'UCC Regulations and Statutes'.

This could get confusing in 2013! We may have seen the last code update... but not for accessibility. The UCC has always given broad protection to all accessibility requirements in the IBC and UCC regulations. Wording in this Act specifically requires the adoption of accessibility provisions in each successive code version. So in 2013, Pennsylvania could be enforcing the 2009 IBC and the Accessibility provisions from the 2012 IBC along with the **A117.1-2009**.

## Accessibility Corner



Drinking fountains have many accessibility requirements – spout height, angle of water flow, clear floor space and knee/toe clearance, to name a few. But one accessibility parameter often gets overlooked. When drinking fountains are mounted in hallways or even lobbies, they qualify as a protruding object under **ICC/ANSI A117.1, section 307**. Any object that extends into the circulation path more than 4 inches horizontally, with its leading edge in the 27 to 80 inch (AFF) range must be protected as a walk hazard. The logical solution for a surface mounted drinking fountain is to fill in the area below 27 inches with knee-walls. A better solution is to mount it in an alcove. Both of these treatments must be deep enough to allow a 4 inch maximum extension into the walkway. Remember to position the side walls so as to provide the 36 inch clear floor space width.

*Taken from our updated De-Coding the ADA Code Seminar.*

**Next public session is scheduled for Wednesday, September 14<sup>th</sup> in our training room!** Details available at [www.ApprovedCode.com](http://www.ApprovedCode.com)



## Approved Code Product Highlight



### State Certified Plan-Review Services

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## Recommended Resources

The 2009 IRC has some new requirements for attaching decks to the main structure. Some of these methods are fairly new to most contractors and code officials. For help with this, check out the Deck Guide at [www.awc.org](http://www.awc.org). It has been updated to reflect the 2009 IRC code.



## Introduction:

**Jeff Gardner** joined our staff as Manager of Operations this year. He brings many years of professional management and construction experience to our organization. In his position as Operations Manager, Jeff creates systems to efficiently track and manage projects. He is also the primary contact for many client services, including zoning and BCO administration.

\*Please note our new office number is **717-506-0464**.

## Got Code Questions?



**Do you have a code question that is baffling you?**

Submit your code question to [code\\_question@ApprovedCode.com](mailto:code_question@ApprovedCode.com)

Be sure to include a daytime telephone number in case we need more information.

We will respond to your question by e-mail or phone in a timely manner.

**APPROVED Code Services, Inc.** provides building code support services, training and products to assist design professionals and code officials in the proper application of the building code. Our staff is experienced and fully certified in all areas of the Pennsylvania State Building Code. Information provided in this newsletter is believed to be accurate and appropriate for the situation being presented. All information must be cross checked with a code book for suitability to the application. The local building code official and the appeals board have the final authority for interpreting the code in each jurisdiction.



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