

# The International Residential Code (IRC) and Tiny House Living

Did you know there is an International Residential Code that develops legal model regulations for small and large communities around the globe to utilize? This code helps to modernize the design and construction of local residential codes for one and two family dwellings and townhouses, for those who wish to adopt it.

This can be a useful tool for you and your local authorities to guide more environmentally sustainable building projects in your community. The code helps to ensure safety while promoting new innovative technologies. The code is revised every 3 years with the most current updates in 2018, including Appendix Q with important changes to support Tiny Home living in 400 sq. ft. or less, such as:

- **Stairways & Ladders** - flexible codes for size, capacity, headroom, treads, risers and to allow ladders
- **Handrails and Guards** - flexible codes for handrails and guards
- **Ceiling Height** - allows for either 6'4" (bathrooms, kitchens) or 6'8" (habitual spaces, hallways) heights
- **Loft Size** - lofts can be less than the 6'8" height requirement, with a minimum 35 sq. ft. floor area that has at least 3' height, flexible codes on landing platform requirements
- **Emergency Escapes** - flexible codes to utilize skylights or roof windows if appropriate size to satisfy emergency escape requirements (e.g., egress roof access windows that are not more than 44" off the loft floor)
- **Other Considerations** - energy efficiency and ventilation codes
- **Direct Link** - check out this link and share it with your local authority to see what rules can potentially be adopted in your community:  
<https://codes.iccsafe.org/content/IRC2018/appendix-q-tiny-houses>

