



WISCONSIN LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL ACT MEMO

2013 Wisconsin Act 270
[2013 Senate Bill 617]

Commercial Building Code

2013 Wisconsin Act 270 consists of diverse provisions relating to the commercial building code.

Commercial Building Code Council

Act 270 creates a Commercial Building Code Council. It directs the council to review the commercial building code and to make recommendations regarding that code to the Department of Safety and Professional Services (DSPS). It also directs DSPS to consult the council in preparing amendments to the code.

Strict Conformity of Municipal Codes

Act 270 prohibits a municipality (city, village, or town) from adopting and enforcing a commercial building code, unless the municipal code is in strict conformity with the state code. The Act provides exceptions to this prohibition for pre-existing ordinances related to fire detection and suppression requirements and property maintenance codes.

Plan Inspections and Variance Requests

Prior law required that DSPS inspect all plans for proposed construction or modification of commercial buildings and requests for variances from the commercial building code, except that it was required to accept the plan reviews conducted by first class cities and by second class cities that met specified requirements and actions taken by first class cities on requests for variances from the commercial building code. Act 270 requires DSPS to also accept actions on requests for variances from the commercial building code taken by second class cities that meet the specified requirements.

This memo provides a brief description of the Act. For more detailed information, consult the text of the law and related legislative documents at the Legislature's Web site at: <http://www.legis.wisconsin.gov>.

The Act also creates an explicit statement that DSPS may grant requests for variances and establishes that it may grant such a request only if the requested variance will impose an equivalent standard that meets the intent of the commercial building code.

Act 270 requires that plan inspectors be certified by DSPS. This requirement does not apply to certain inspections conducted by fire chiefs or fire inspectors or to inspections of fire detection, prevention, and suppression devices by inspectors certified for that purpose. In conjunction with this, the Act creates a separate certification requirement for inspectors of fire detection, prevention, and suppression devices.

Effective date: The Act took effect on April 18, 2014, except that the provision requiring separate certification for inspectors of fire detection, prevention, and suppression devices takes effect on May 1, 2017.

Prepared by: David L. Lovell, Principal Analyst

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