

HB 2554 Uniform Statewide Building Code; emergency communication equipment.

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Summary as introduced:

Statewide Building Code; emergency communication equipment.

Requires all new commercial, industrial, institutional, and multifamily buildings to be constructed or equipped so that emergency public safety personnel may send and receive emergency communications from within them. Currently, the Board of Housing and Community Development is directed to promulgate regulations as part of the Statewide Building Code to require that commercial, industrial, and multifamily structures be so designed or equipped.

Full text:

01/09/07 House: Prefiled and ordered printed; offered 01/10/07 070215527
([impact statement](#))

Status:

01/09/07 House: Prefiled and ordered printed; offered 01/10/07 070215527
01/09/07 House: Referred to Committee on General Laws
01/15/07 House: Assigned GL sub: #1 Housing (Suit)
01/30/07 House: Passed by in General Laws with letter
01/30/07 House: Letter sent to Housing Study Commission

2007 SESSION

INTRODUCED

070215527

HOUSE BILL NO. 2554

Offered January 10, 2007

Prefiled January 9, 2007

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A BILL to amend and reenact § 36-99.6:2 of the Code of Virginia, relating to the installation of emergency communications equipment.

Patrons—Ebbin, Brink, Dance and Eisenberg

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Referred to Committee on General Laws

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That § 36-99.6:2 of the Code of Virginia is amended and reenacted as follows:

§ 36-99.6:2. Installation of in-building emergency communication equipment for emergency public safety personnel.

The Board of Housing and Community Development shall promulgate regulations as part of the Building Code requiring such ~~determined by the Board~~ All new commercial, industrial, institutional, and multifamily buildings as shall be (i) designed and constructed so that emergency public safety personnel may send and receive emergency communications from within those structures or (ii) equipped with emergency communications equipment so that emergency public safety personnel may send and receive emergency communications from within those structures.

For the purposes of this section:

"Emergency communications equipment" includes, but is not limited to, two-way radio communications, signal boosters, bi-directional amplifiers, radiating cable systems or internal multiple antenna, or any combination of the foregoing.

"Emergency public safety personnel" includes firefighters, emergency medical services personnel, law-enforcement officers, and other emergency public safety personnel routinely called upon to provide emergency assistance to members of the public in a wide variety of emergency situations, including, but not limited to, fires, medical emergencies, violent crimes, and terrorist attacks.

INTRODUCED

HB2554

Proposed Change:

IF] SECTION 902 DEFINITIONS

Emergency Communication Equipment - Emergency communication equipment, includes, but is not limited to, two-way radio communications, signal booster, bi-directional amplifiers, radiating cable systems or internal multiple antenna, or a combination of the foregoing.

Emergency Public Safety Personnel - Emergency public safety personnel includes firefighters, emergency medical personnel, law-enforcement officers and other emergency public safety personnel routinely called upon to provide emergency assistance to members of the public in a wide variety of emergency situations, including, but not limited to, fires, medical emergencies, violent crimes and terrorist attacks.

IF] SECTION 912 IN-BUILDING EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS COVERAGE

912.1 General. In-building emergency communication equipment to allow emergency public safety personnel to send and receive emergency communications shall be provided in new buildings and structures in accordance with this section.

EXCEPTIONS:

1. Buildings of Use Groups A-5, I-4, within dwelling units of R-2, R-3, R-4, R-5, and U.
2. Buildings of Type IV and V construction without basements.
3. Above grade single story buildings of less than 20,000 square feet.
4. Buildings or leased spaces occupied by federal, state, or local governments, or the contractors thereof, with security requirements where the building official has approved an alternative method to provide emergency communication equipment for emergency public safety personnel.
5. Where the owner provides technological documentation from a qualified individual that the structure or portion thereof **does not impede emergency communication signals.**

912.2 Where required. For localities utilizing public safety wireless communications, new buildings and structures shall be equipped throughout with dedicated infrastructure to accommodate and perpetuate continuous emergency communication

912.2.1 Installation. Radiating cable systems, such as coaxial cable or equivalent shall be installed in dedicated conduits, raceways, plenums, attics, **or roofs**, compatible for these specific installations as well as other applicable provisions of this code.

912.2.2 Operations. The locality will assume all responsibilities for the installation and maintenance of additional emergency communication equipment. To allow the locality access to and the ability to operate such equipment, sufficient space within the building shall be provided.

912.2.3 Inspection. In accordance with Section 113.3, all installations shall be inspected prior to concealment.

912.3 Other required installations. In addition to the requirements of Section 912.1, in-building emergency communications shall also be required in certain special use occupancies as indicated in Table 912.3.1.

**TABLE 912.3.1
ADDITIONAL EMERGENCY COMMUNICATION SYSTEMS**

<u>SECTION</u>	<u>SUBJECT</u>
<u>402.13.1</u>	<u>Covered malls</u>
<u>403.8.1</u>	<u>High-rise buildings</u>
<u>406.3.10.1</u>	<u>Motor vehicle related occupancies</u>
<u>507.9</u>	<u>Unlimited area buildings</u>
<u>IFC</u>	<u>Emergency communication equipment requirements as set forth in Section 511 of the <i>International Fire Code</i></u>

912.4 Acceptance Test. Upon completion of installation, after providing reasonable notice to the owner or their representative, **emergency public safety personnel** shall have the right during normal business hours, or other mutually agreed upon time, to enter onto the property to conduct field tests to verify that the required level of radio coverage is present at no cost to the owner. Any noted deficiencies shall be provided in an inspection report to the owner to the owner or the owner's representative.

Applicable sections referenced in Table 912.1.1, found in the *International Building Code*, in accordance with Section 101.2 of the *Virginia Uniform Statewide Building Code*.

Section 402.13.1. Covered mall buildings shall be provided with in-building coverage for emergency communications in accordance with Section 912.

Section 403.1 exception 6. Within dwelling units in Group R-2 in accordance with Section 310.1.

Section 403.8.1. High-rise buildings shall be provided with in-building coverage for emergency communications in accordance with Section 912.

Section 406.3.10.1. Motor vehicle related occupancies shall be provided with in-building coverage for emergency communications in accordance with Section 912.

Section 507.9: Unlimited area buildings shall be provided with in-building coverage for emergency communications in accordance with Section 912.

Applicable sections referenced in Table 912.1.1, found in the *International Fire Code*.

SECTION 511 MAINTENANCE OF IN-BUILDING EMERGENCY COMMUNICATION

511.1 General. In-building emergency communication equipment shall be maintained in accordance with the USBC and the provisions of this section.

511.2 Additional In-Building Emergency Communications Installations. If it is determined by the locality that increased amplification of their emergency communication system is needed, the building owner shall allow the locality access as well as provide appropriate space within the building to install and maintain necessary additional communication equipment by the locality. If the building owner denies the locality access and /or appropriate space, the building owner shall be responsible for the installation and maintenance of these additional systems.

511.3 Field Tests. After providing reasonable notice to the owner or their representative, the fire official, police chief, and/or their agents shall have the right during normal business hours, or other mutually agreed upon time, to enter onto the property to conduct field tests to verify that the required level of radio coverage is present at no cost to the owner.

Supporting Statement:

In 2002, on behalf of my locality, I made a proposal to require the pre-wiring of buildings to supplement and enhance the locality's emergency communication system. Other localities were experiencing similar issues and several joined in the effort to codify the issue. In 2003, General Assembly Joint Bill 588 required the State Fire Marshall's office (Fire Programs) to study the necessity for appropriate code provisions. A task group representing all affected parties, such as Building and Fire Officials, Building Owners, Contractors, and Radio Systems Technical Advisors meet to discuss this issue and determined there was a need for this to be referenced in the Uniform Statewide Building Code. Based on the outcome of that study as well as the language in House Bill 2529 2003, several versions of this code provision were developed and presented to the Board of Housing. However, there were numerous undetermined construction and cost factors involved and no consensus could be reached among the code, construction and building owners communities and consequently no codes were adopted. But the concern for and by the emergency public safety personnel is still prevalent, prompting the introduction of House Bill 2554 2007. Accordingly, the interested parties have come back to the table and as the In-Building Communications Work Group, have arrived at this compromise as a first step to addressing this issue. The installation and maintenance costs and responsibilities of the building owner have been greatly reduced as they now need only provide basic and generic infrastructure, capable of enhancing any supplemental emergency communication equipment, which will be provided and maintained by the locality.