



## State of Oklahoma Uniform Building Code Commission

### MINIMUM STATE REQUIREMENTS FOR STORM SHELTERS

The Oklahoma Uniform Building Code Commission (OUBCC) was created in 2009 to adopt standardized state minimum building codes; however, does not have any enforcement or inspection authority.

#### **Residential Storm Shelters (for one- and two-family dwellings and townhomes)**

Storm shelters are not mandated to be built in any residence unless the jurisdiction in which the residence is being built so requires it. However, if a storm shelter is built, the OUBCC has adopted and modified the International Residential Code®, 2009 edition (IRC® 2009) to mandate storm shelters must be built to the ICC/NSSA 500 Standard, FEMA 320 Guideline or other equivalent engineered system. The IRC® 2009 as modified in the OUBCC rules is shown below:

##### **"748:20-5-6. IRC 2009 Chapter 3 Building Plans**

Chapter 3 is adopted with modifications as follows:

(6) Section R323.1 General. This section has been modified to provide for more than one standard to be utilized to build a storm shelter. This section has been modified to read: This section applies to the construction of storm shelters when constructed as separate detached buildings or when constructed as safe rooms within buildings for the purpose of providing safe refuge from storms that produce high winds, such as tornados and hurricanes. In addition to other applicable requirements in this code, storm shelters shall be constructed in accordance with one of the following: ICC/NSSA 500 or FEMA 320 or other equivalent engineered system."

#### **Commercial Storm Shelters (for all structures other than one- and two-family dwellings and townhomes)**

Storm shelters are not mandated to be built in any commercial structure, unless the jurisdiction in which the structure is being built requires it. However, if a storm shelter is built, the OUBCC has adopted the International Building Code®, 2009 edition (IBC® 2009) to mandate storm shelters must be built to the ICC/NSSA 500 Standard, FEMA 320 Guideline, FEMA 361 Guideline, or other equivalent approved engineered system. The IBC® 2009 as modified in the OUBCC rules is shown below:

##### **"748:20-1-9 IBC® Chapter 4 Special Detailed Requirements Based on Use and Occupancy**

Chapter 4 of the IBC® 2009 is adopted with the following modifications:

(1) Section 423.1 General has been revised to provide for alternative design and engineered methods without relying on jurisdictional interpretation. The section has been modified to read: Section 423.1 General. In addition to other applicable requirements in this code, storm shelters

shall be constructed in accordance with ICC-500, FEMA 320, FEMA 361 or other equivalent approved engineered system.

(2) Section 423.2 Definitions has been revised to modify the definition of a Storm Shelter to remove the specific reference to ICC-500 and to allow for alternative design and engineered methods listed in Section 423.1. This section has been modified to read: STORM SHELTER. A building, structure, or portion(s) thereof, constructed in accordance with the standards listed in Section 423.1 and designated for use during a severe wind storm event, such as a hurricane or tornado."

### **Guidelines and Standards:**

The FEMA 320 download can be found at: <http://www.fema.gov/library/viewRecord.do?id=1536>

THE FEMA 361 download can be found at: <http://www.fema.gov/media-library/assets/documents/3140?id=1657>

The ICC/NSSA 500 can be ordered directly through the International Code Council at their website: [www.iccsafe.org](http://www.iccsafe.org), or through a local book store.

The 2009 editions of the International Residential Code® and the International Building Code® as originally published without OUBCC modifications can be viewed at the following link: <http://publicecodes.cyberregs.com/icod/IC-P-2009-000019.htm>

This information is summary in nature, for specifics; please refer to the actual codes and standards.