

(2021/2020 Code Adoption Web Links)

NJAC 5:23-3.15, Plumbing Subcode

- NSPC/2021 – <https://epubs.iapmo.org/NSPC/2021/>

NJAC 5:23-3.16, Electrical Subcode

- NEC/2020 (NFPA 70) – <https://www.nfpa.org/Codes-and-Standards/All-Codes-and-Standards/Codes-and-Standards>
 - (Scroll to NFPA 70 – you will need to set up a Login/Password)

NJAC 5:23-3.18, Energy Subcode

- IECC/2021 – <https://codes.iccsafe.org/content/IECC2021P2>
- ASHRAE 90.1-2019 - <https://www.ashrae.org/technical-resources/standards-and-guidelines/read-only-versions-of-ashrae-standards>
 - (Scroll to “Standard 90.1-2019”)

NJAC 5:23-3.20, Mechanical Subcode

- IMC/2021 - <https://codes.iccsafe.org/content/IMC2021P2>

NJAC 5:23-3.21 – One- and Two-Family Dwelling Subcode

- IRC/2021 - <https://codes.iccsafe.org/content/IRC2021P2>
- ISPSC/2021 - <https://codes.iccsafe.org/content/ISPSC2021P2>

NJAC 5:23, Fuel Gas Subcode

- IFGC/2021 - <https://codes.iccsafe.org/content/IFGC2021P2>

Source: Rob Austin

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Grace Period for 2021/2020 Model Codes

As you were made aware above, the 2021 I-Codes, along with the 2021 National Standard Plumbing Code (NSPC) and 2020 National Electrical Code (NEC), were adopted in September 2022. With these adoptions come a six-month grace period for the previous model codes. This means starting the specified adoption date, applicants may submit a complete permit application, including all prior approvals, to be reviewed under the code in force immediately preceding the subcode revision. Provided that the application is complete, the construction official and applicable subcode officials should perform the plan review and issue construction permit(s) based on the code in force immediately prior to the operative date of the subcode revision. That being said, the 2021 I-Codes and the 2020 NEC were adopted September 6 and the 2021 NSPC was adopted September 19 placing the last day for application submission, separately, on March 5, 2023, for the I-Codes/NEC and March 18, 2023, for the NSPC.

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Please direct any comments or suggestions to the NJDCA, Division of Codes and Standards, Attention: Code Development Unit, PO Box 802, Trenton, NJ 08625-0802 or codeassist@dca.nj.gov.

(Grace Period for 2021/2020 Model Codes)

Therefore, if a complete permit application was submitted on or between the dates of September 6, 2022, and March 5, 2023, the project would be permitted to be reviewed under the old codes (2018/2017). However, during the time period of March 6, 2023, to March 18, 2023, if a permit applicant would desire the 2018 NSPC, they may do so but would have to apply under the 2021 I-Codes and 2020 NEC. This essentially makes March 5, 2023, the last day for a complete permit application submission but wanted to acknowledge this slight nuance. In either case, the application should explicitly state which codes were used for the design. In the event the code edition is not explicitly stated, officials should ask what edition was used for the design of the project.

For completeness, the application would include items mentioned at N.J.A.C. 5:23-2.15, Construction permits—application, <https://www.nj.gov/dca/divisions/codes/codreg/ucc.html>. Section 2.15(a) is an absolute. However, Section 2.15(b) states, “In addition [to (a) above], the following information shall be required on any application for a construction permit when such information is available, but not later than the commencement of work.” Therefore, items listed in 2.15(b), such as the name of a sprinkler contractor to be used, would not be required at this time.

Note: Prototype plan releases based on the 2018 I-Codes, etc. remain valid until the end of the grace period. Therefore, March 5, 2023, would be the last day to apply for a permit with the released prototype.

Source: Rob Austin
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Energy Subcode Updates for the 2021 Codes

Another model code adoption, another energy code. In this case, the International Energy Conservation Code/2021 (IECC/2021) and the ASHRAE 90.1-2019 (ASHRAE/2019), adopted September 6, 2022, at N.J.A.C. 5:23-3.18, the Energy Subcode. And why two codes you may ask? Because low-rise residential buildings (i.e., IECC-R – residential portion of the IECC) typically operate completely different than all other. So, let's define the codes per building type:

Low-rise residential buildings are defined as one- and two-family dwellings or multiple-family buildings three stories or less in height. Compliance must be in accordance the Energy Subcode and the IECC-R, which parallels Chapter 11 of the International Residential Code (IRC-N). For purposes of this article, IECC-R references will be made.

Commercial buildings are defined as all buildings other than low-rise residential buildings. Compliance must be in accordance with the Energy Subcode and ASHRAE Standard 90.1; do not use the commercial portion of the International Energy Conservation Code (IECC-C) as it is deleted per N.J.A.C. 5:23-3.18.

The very basic notion of the energy subcode is, if thou heats it (or cools it), thou that insulate it! There are some caveats to that in the ASHRAE/2019 (read: electrical) but for this article, we will focus on the residential side. And remember, this is for new construction and additions, but rehabilitation projects start with N.J.A.C. 5:23-6 and apply energy subcode provisions per scope.

I mentioned two codes (well, three as you can see from above). The Energy Subcode separates the State into two climates zones too, per county, and are as below. Note that Mercer is no longer Zone 5A, it's 4A... climate change?

Zone 4A – Atlantic, Burlington, Camden, Cape May, Cumberland, Essex, Gloucester, Hudson, Mercer, Middlesex, Monmouth, Ocean, Salem and Union;

Zone 5A – Bergen, Hunterdon, Morris, Passaic, Somerset, Sussex and Warren.

The big changes for the 2021 IECC-R are some increased R-values in the thermal envelope (ceiling insulation), air barrier testing (required along with checklist), duct testing (regardless of where located) and an additional energy efficiency package (choice of five packages).