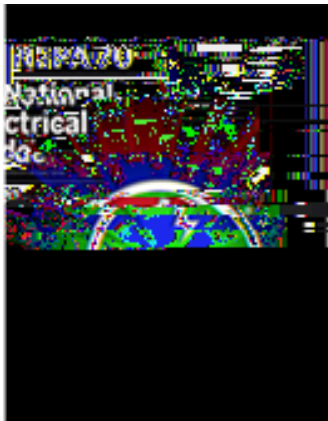




2020

National Electrical Code Suggested Amendments





State and local HBAs should consider these amendments to maintain cost-effective and affordable code provisions when discussing the adoption of the 2020 National Electrical Code. NAHB developed these amendments based on the outcome of the 2020 NFPA Code Development Cycle.

Each amendment is shown in legislative text (underline and ~~striketrough~~) and includes a supporting reason/s explaining why the jurisdiction should consider them. Some of the suggested amendments have additional supporting documents and information on the NAHB website.

[Arc-Fault Circuit Interrupters \(AFCIs\)](#) requirements have not expanded beyond the rooms and areas identified in the 2014 and 2017 NEC. The three suggested amendments to the AFCI provisions included have been retained from the 2017 NEC and are in the 2020 NEC Suggested Amendment package below.

If you have technical questions or would like additional information, please contact:

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This document is also available in “Word” format upon request.

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2020 National Electrical Code

1. GFCI's for 250 -Volt Receptacles

This amendment will require receptacles serving 250-volt appliances to have GFCI protection when located in bathrooms, crawl spaces, basements, laundry areas, or within 6-feet of sinks, bathtubs, am

1. GFCI's for 250 -Volt Receptacles

This change will require receptacles serving 250-volt appliances, such as stoves and clothes dryers, to have GFCI protection when located in bathrooms, crawl spaces, basements, laundry areas or within 6 feet of sinks, bathtubs or showers. This section previously applied to receptacles up to 125 volts only.

Revise as follows:

210.8(A) Dwelling Units.

All 125-volt, single-phase, 15- and 20-ampere ~~through 250-volt~~ receptacles installed in the locations specified in 210.8(A)(1) through (A) (11) and supplied by single-phase branch circuits rated 150 volts or less to ground shall have ground-fault circuit-interrupter protection for personnel.

1. Bathrooms
2. Garages and also accessory buildings that have a floor located at or below grade level not intended as habitable rooms and limited to storage areas, work areas, and areas of similar use
3. Outdoors

Exception to (3): Receptacles that are not readily accessible and are supplied by a branch circuit dedicated to electric snow-melting, deicing, or pipeline and vessel heating equipment shall be permitted to be installed in accordance with 426.28 or 427.22, as applicable.

4. Crawl spaces — at or below grade level
5. Basements

Exception to (5): A receptacle supplying a (1) (2) (3) (4) (5) (6) (7) (8) (9) (10) (11) (12) (13) (14) (15) (16) (17) (18) (19) (20) (21) (22) (23) (24) (25) (26) (27) (28) (29) (30) (31) (32) (33) (34) (35) (36) (37) (38) (39) (40) (41) (42) (43) (44) (45) (46) (47) (48) (49) (50) (51) (52) (53) (54) (55) (56) (57) (58) (59) (60) (61) (62) (63) (64) (65) (66) (67) (68) (69) (70) (71) (72) (73) (74) (75) (76) (77) (78) (79) (80) (81) (82) (83) (84) (85) (86) (87) (88) (89) (90) (91) (92) (93) (94) (95) (96) (97) (98) (99) (100) (101) (102) (103) (104) (105) (106) (107) (108) (109) (110) (111) (112) (113) (114) (115) (116) (117) (118) (119) (120) (121) (122) (123) (124) (125) (126) (127) (128) (129) (130) (131) (132) (133) (134) (135) (136) (137) (138) (139) (140) (141) (142) (143) (144) (145) (146) (147) (148) (149) (150) (151) (152) (153) (154) (155) (156) (157) (158) (159) (160) (161) (162) (163) (164) (165) (166) (167) (168) (169) (170) (171) (172) (173) (174) (175) (176) (177) 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2. GFCI's for Basement Receptacles

3. GFCI for Outdoor Outlets

This new section requires outdoor outlets up to 150 volts to ground and 50 amperes to have GFCI protection. It is meant to specifically apply to circuits serving A/C condenser units.

Revise as follows:

~~210.8(F) Outdoor Outlets.~~

~~All outdoor outlets for dwellings, other than those covered in 210.8(A)(3), Exception to (3), that are supplied by single-~~

4. Surge Protection

This new section requires all services supplying dwelling units to be provided with a surge- protective device.

Revise as follows:

~~230.67 Surge Protection.~~

~~230.67(A) Surge Protective Device.~~

~~All services supplying dwelling units shall be provided with a surge protective device (SPD).~~

~~230.67(B) Location.~~

~~The SPD shall be an integral part of the service equipment or shall be located immediately adjacent to the service equipment.~~

5. Emergency Disconnects

This new section requires one- and two-family dwelling units to have a labelled disconnecting means installed in a readily accessible outdoor location.

Revise as follows

6. Receptacles Near Bathtub and Shower Spaces

This change prohibits all receptacles from within 3 feet of any bathtub or shower stall unless the bathroom dimensions are too small to provide that clearance.

Revise as follows:

406.9(C) Bathtub and Shower Space.

Receptacles shall not be installed within ~~a zone measured 900 mm (3 ft) horizontally and 2.5 m (8 ft) vertically from the top of the bathtub rim or shower stall threshold. The identified zone is all encompassing and shall include the space or~~ directly over ~~the a~~ bathtub or shower stall. (t)-1.1 (h) 0.001 Tw-13.1 (t)-1.3Tw 35.94 0 m b tid.bc 0

7. Arc-Fault Circuit Interrupters (AFCI)

This amendment removes the requirement for AFCI devices for residential dwelling units, including one- and two-family homes, while leaving it in place for hotels, motels and dormitories. The requirement for AFCIs applies predominantly to new homes, although the strongest association with electrical distribution fires was observed in dwellings over 40 years old. The data did not show that AFCIs were necessary when they were first introduced into the electrical code.

permitted to install a listed outlet branch-circuit type AFCI at the first outlet to provide protection for the remaining portion of the branch circuit.

6. Where a listed metal or nonmetallic conduit or tubing or Type MC cable is encased in not less than 50 mm (2 in.) of concrete for the portion of the branch circuit between the branch-circuit overcurrent device and the first outlet, it shall be permitted to install a listed outlet branch-circuit type AFCI at the first outlet to provide protection for the remaining portion of the branch circuit.

Exception: Where an individual branch circuit to a fire alarm system installed in accordance with 760.41(B) or 760.121(B) is installed in RMC, IMC, EMT, or steel-sheathed cable, Type AC or Type MC, meeting the requirements of 250.118, with metal outlet and junction boxes, AFCI protection shall be permitted to be omitted.

(B) Dormitory Units. All 120 -volt, single-phase, 15- and 20-ampere branch circuits supplying outlets and devices installed in dormitory unit bedrooms, living rooms, hallways, closets, bathrooms, and similar rooms shall be protected by any of the means described in 210.12(A)(1) through (6).

(C) Guest Rooms and Guest Suites. All 120-volt, single-phase, 15- and 20-ampere branch circuits supplying outlets and devices installed in guest rooms and guest suites of hotels and motels shall be protected by any of the means described in 210.12(A)(1) through (6).

(D) Branch Circuit Extensions or Modifications — ~~Dwelling Units and~~ Dormitory Units. In any of the areas specified in 210.12(A) ~~or~~ (B), where branch-circuit wiring is modified, replaced, or extended, the branch circuit shall be protected by one of the following:

1. A listed combination-type AFCI located at the origin of the branch circuit
2. A listed outlet branch-circuit-type AFCI located at the first receptacle outlet of the existing branch circuit

Exception: AFCI protection shall not be required where the extension of the existing conductors is not more than 1.8 m (6 ft) and does not include any additional outlets or devices.

Reason:

This amendment retains the provisions of the 2017 NEC. AFCIs were first introduced in the 1999 edition of the National Electrical Code (NEC) with an effective date of Jan. 1, 2002. Code Making Panel 2, which had responsibility over branch circuits where AFCIs are addressed, largely based its approval of the code change on several U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) reports.

The June 2015 issue of the U.S. Fire Administration's Topical Fire Report Series reported "A strong relationship between housing age and the rate of electrical fires has been observed, with housing over 40 years old having the strongest association with electrical distribution fires [emphasis added]." The median age of one- and two-family housing in the U.S. is 40 years. The share of housing units built before 1970 is 39%, and those built before 1950 is 18%. According to a study conducted by the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, dwellings built before 1965 may still have fuses instead of circuit breakers, and those built before 1945 may still have knob and tube wiring.

These older homes were also wired with a very limited number of receptacle outlets, resulting in extensive use of extension cords or improper alterations and additions to the original electrical system, both recognized fire hazards. In addition, they are more likely to have outdated appliances, space heaters or other characteristics that might lead to a greater risk of a fire starting. Newer homes have fire blocking, hardwired smoke alarms and egress windows installed to today's codes, all of which increase the chances of surviving a fire. Even as homes built to today's residential code get older, they will continue to provide protection for families through their improved safety.

While questions regarding construction code requirements intended to increase the safety of homes cannot, as the court noted, be resolved solely on the basis of the text of the statute, the court is not required to

8. Arc-Fault Circuit Interrupter (AFCI) Receptacle Replacement

This amendment removes the requirement for AFCI devices to be installed in residential dwelling units, including one- and two-family homes, when a receptacle is replaced, but does not remove it for dormitories.

Revise as follows:

406.4(D)(4) Arc- Fault Circuit- Interrupter Protection. Where a receptacle outlet is located in any areas specified in 210.12~~(A)-or~~ (B), a replacement receptacle at this outlet shall be one of the following:

1. A listed outlet branch-circuit type arc-fault circuit-interrupter receptacle
2. A receptacle protected by a listed outlet branch-circuit type arc-fault circuit-interrupter type receptacle
3. A receptacle protected by a listed combination type arc-fault circuit-interrupter type circuit breaker

Exception No. 1: Arc-fault circuit-interrupter protection shall not be required where all of the following apply:

1. The replacement complies with 406.4(D)(2)(b).
2. It is impracticable to provide an equipment grounding conductor as provided by 250.130(C).
3. A listed combination type arc-fault circuit-interrupter circuit breaker is not commercially available.
- 4.

9. Tamper -Resistant Receptacles

This amendment removes the requirement for tamper-resistant receptacles in one- and two- family homes.

Revise as follows:

406.12 Tamper -Resistant Receptacles. All 15- and 20-ampere, 125- and 250-volt nonlocking-type receptacles in the areas specified in 406.12(1) through (7) shall be listed tamper-resistant receptacles.

~~(1) Dwelling units in all areas specified in 210.52 and 550.13.~~

~~(2)~~ (1) Guest rooms and guest suites of hotels and motels.

~~(3)~~ (2) Child care facilities.

~~(4)~~ (3) Preschools and elementary education facilities.

~~(5)~~ (4) Business offices, corridors, waiting rooms and the like in clinics, medical and dental offices, and outpatient facilities.

~~(6)~~ (5) Subset of assembly occupancies described in 518.2 to include places of waiting transportation, gymnasiums, skating rinks, and auditoriums.

~~(7)~~ (6) Dormitories

Exception to (1), (2), (3), (4), (5), and (6), ~~and (7)~~: Receptacles in the following locations shall not be required to be tamper resistant:

(1) Receptacles located in the following locations shall not be required to be tamper resistant:

covers available in stores today are large enough not to constitute a choking hazard. It's fair to say CPSC would not advocate their use if there were safety concerns.

Another concern that was shared by many on the technical review committee was the amount of force that must be applied to insert plugs into the tamper-resistant device and how it will affect the elderly community. The devices are designed in a way that the springs will not open unless the prongs are properly aligned with the shutters and are receiving equal amounts of pressure. Many on the panel voiced concern that there was a