

LEGISLATURE OF NEBRASKA  
ONE HUNDRED SIXTH LEGISLATURE  
FIRST SESSION

**LEGISLATIVE BILL 130**

Introduced by DeBoer, 10; Hansen, M., 26; Wayne, 13.

Read first time January 10, 2019

Committee: Urban Affairs

1 A BILL FOR AN ACT relating to building construction standards; to amend  
2 sections 71-6403, 71-6404, 71-6406, 76-3501, 76-3502, 76-3503,  
3 76-3504, and 76-3505, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska; to  
4 change provisions relating to the state building code; to provide  
5 radon resistant new construction standards; to provide, change, and  
6 eliminate definitions; to restate intent; to eliminate a task force;  
7 to harmonize provisions; and to repeal the original sections.  
8 Be it enacted by the people of the State of Nebraska,

1 Section 1. Section 71-6403, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, is  
2 amended to read:

3 71-6403 (1) There is hereby created the state building code. The  
4 Legislature hereby adopts by reference:

5 (a) The International Building Code (IBC), chapter 13 of the 2009  
6 edition, and all but such chapter of the 2012 edition, published by the  
7 International Code Council, except that (i) section 305.2.3 applies to a  
8 facility having twelve or fewer children and (ii) section 310.5.1 applies  
9 to a care facility for twelve or fewer persons;

10 (b) The International Residential Code (IRC), chapter 11 of the 2009  
11 edition, and all but such chapter of the 2012 edition except section  
12 R313, published by the International Code Council; and

13 (c) The International Existing Building Code, 2012 edition,  
14 published by the International Code Council.

15 (2) The codes adopted by reference in subsection (1) of this section  
16 and the minimum standards for radon resistant new construction adopted  
17 under section 76-3504 shall constitute the state building code except as  
18 amended pursuant to the Building Construction Act or as otherwise  
19 authorized by state law.

20 Sec. 2. Section 71-6404, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, is  
21 amended to read:

22 71-6404 (1) For purposes of the Building Construction Act:

23 (a) Component ~~component~~ means a portion of the state building code  
24 created adopted by reference pursuant to section 71-6403; and ~~-~~

25 (b) Radon resistant new construction has the same meaning as in  
26 section 76-3503.

27 (2) The state building code shall be the building and construction  
28 standard within the state and shall be applicable:

29 (a) To all buildings and structures owned by the state or any state  
30 agency; and

31 (b) In each county, city, or village which elects to adopt the state

1 building code or any component or combination of components of the state  
2 building code.

3 Sec. 3. Section 71-6406, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, is  
4 amended to read:

5 71-6406 (1) Any county, city, or village may enact, administer, or  
6 enforce a local building or construction code if or as long as such  
7 county, city, or village:

8 (a) Adopts the state building code; or

9 (b) Adopts a building or construction code that conforms generally  
10 with the state building code.

11 (2) A local building or construction code shall be deemed to conform  
12 generally with the state building code if it:

13 (a) Adopts a special or differing building standard by amending,  
14 modifying, or deleting any portion of the state building code in order to  
15 reduce unnecessary costs of construction, increase safety, durability, or  
16 efficiency, establish best building or construction practices within the  
17 county, city, or village, or address special local conditions within the  
18 county, city, or village;

19 (b) Adopts any supplement, new edition, appendix, or component or  
20 combination of components of the state building code;

21 (c) Adopts section 305 of the 2012 edition of the International  
22 Building Code without the exceptions described in subdivision (1)(a) of  
23 section 71-6403, chapter 13 of the 2012 edition of the International  
24 Building Code, chapter 11 of the 2012 edition of the International  
25 Residential Code, or section R313 of the 2012 edition of the  
26 International Residential Code;

27 (d) Adopts a plumbing code, an electrical code, a fire prevention  
28 code, or any other standard code as authorized under section 14-419,  
29 15-905, 18-132, or 23-172; ~~or~~

30 (e) Adopts a lighting and thermal efficiency ordinance, resolution,  
31 code, or standard as authorized under section 81-1618; or ~~or~~

1           (f) Adopts minimum standards for radon resistant new construction  
2 which exceed the minimum standards adopted under section 76-3504.

3           (3) A local building or construction code ~~which includes a prior~~  
4 ~~edition of any component or combination of components of the state~~  
5 ~~building code~~ shall not be deemed to conform generally with the state  
6 building code if it: -

7           (a) Includes a prior edition of any component or combination of  
8 components of the state building code; or

9           (b) Does not include minimum standards for radon resistant new  
10 construction that meet or exceed the minimum standards adopted under  
11 section 76-3504.

12           (4) A county, city, or village shall not adopt or enforce a local  
13 building or construction code other than as provided by this section.

14           (5) A county, city, or village which adopts or enforces a local  
15 building or construction code under this section shall regularly update  
16 its code. For purposes of this section, a code shall be deemed to be  
17 regularly updated if the most recently enacted state building code or a  
18 code that conforms generally with the state building code is adopted by  
19 the county, city, or village within two years after an update to the  
20 state building code.

21           (6) A county, city, or village may adopt amendments for the proper  
22 administration and enforcement of its local building or construction code  
23 including organization of enforcement, qualifications of staff members,  
24 examination of plans, inspections, appeals, permits, and fees. Any  
25 amendment adopted pursuant to this section shall be published separately  
26 from the local building or construction code.

27           (7) A county, city, or village which adopts one or more standard  
28 codes as part of its local building or construction code under this  
29 section shall keep at least one copy of each adopted code, or portion  
30 thereof, for use and examination by the public in the office of the clerk  
31 of the county, city, or village prior to the adoption of the code and as

1 long as such code is in effect.

2 (8) Notwithstanding the provisions of the Building Construction Act,  
3 a public building of any political subdivision shall be built in  
4 accordance with the applicable local building or construction code. Fees,  
5 if any, for services which monitor a builder's application of codes shall  
6 be negotiable between the political subdivisions involved, but such fees  
7 shall not exceed the actual expenses incurred by the county, city, or  
8 village doing the monitoring.

9 Sec. 4. Section 76-3501, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, is  
10 amended to read:

11 76-3501 Sections 76-3501 to 76-3505 and section 9 of this act shall  
12 be known and may be cited as the Radon Resistant New Construction Act.

13 Sec. 5. Section 76-3502, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, is  
14 amended to read:

15 76-3502 The Legislature finds that:

16 (1) Radon is a radioactive element that is part of the radioactive  
17 decay chain of naturally occurring uranium in soil;

18 (2) Radon is the leading cause of lung cancer among nonsmokers and  
19 is the number one risk in homes according to the Harvard Center for Risk  
20 Analysis at the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health;

21 (3) The World Health Organization Handbook on Indoor Radon includes  
22 key messages which state:

23 (a) "There is no known threshold concentration below which radon  
24 exposure presents no risk."; and

25 (b) "The majority of radon-induced lung cancers are caused by low  
26 and moderate radon concentrations rather than by high radon  
27 concentrations, because in general less people are exposed to high indoor  
28 radon concentrations.";

29 (4) The Surgeon General of the United States urged Americans to test  
30 their homes to find out how much radon they might be breathing;

31 (5) The United States Environmental Protection Agency estimates that

1 more than twenty thousand Americans die of radon-related lung cancer each  
2 year;~~and~~

3 (6) The United States Environmental Protection Agency has identified  
4 radon levels in Nebraska as the third highest in the United States  
5 because of the high concentration of uranium in the soil; and -

6 (7) In 2018, the Radon Resistant New Construction Task Force  
7 recommended minimum standards for radon resistant new construction to the  
8 Governor, the Health and Human Services Committee of the Legislature, and  
9 the Urban Affairs Committee of the Legislature.

10 Sec. 6. Section 76-3503, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, is  
11 amended to read:

12 76-3503 For purposes of the Radon Resistant New Construction Act:

13 (1) Active radon mitigation system means a family of radon  
14 mitigation systems involving mechanically driven soil depressurization,  
15 including subslab depressurization, drain tile depressurization, block  
16 wall depressurization, and submembrane depressurization. Active radon  
17 mitigation system is also known as active soil depressurization;

18 ~~(2) Building code means an ordinance, resolution, or law that~~  
19 ~~establishes standards applicable to new construction;~~

20 (2) ~~(3)~~ Building contractor means any individual, corporation,  
21 partnership, limited liability company, or other business entity that  
22 engages in new construction;

23 ~~(4) Department means the Department of Health and Human Services;~~

24 (3) ~~(5)~~ New construction means any original construction of a  
25 single-family home or a multifamily dwelling, including apartments, group  
26 homes, condominiums, and townhouses, or any original construction of a  
27 building used for commercial, industrial, educational, or medical  
28 purposes. New construction does not include additions to existing  
29 structures or remodeling of existing structures;

30 (4) ~~(6)~~ Passive radon mitigation system new construction pipe means  
31 a pipe installed in new construction that relies solely on the convective

1 flow of air upward for soil gas depressurization and may consist of  
2 multiple pipes routed through conditioned space from below the foundation  
3 to above the roof; ~~and~~

4 (5) ~~(7)~~ Radon mitigation specialist means an individual who is  
5 licensed by the department as a radon mitigation specialist in accordance  
6 with the Radiation Control Act; and -

7 (6) Radon resistant new construction means construction that  
8 utilizes design elements and construction techniques that passively  
9 resist radon entry and prepare a building for an active postconstruction  
10 mitigation system.

11 Sec. 7. Section 76-3504, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, is  
12 amended to read:

13 76-3504 Except as provided in section 76-3505, new construction  
14 built after the effective date of this act in the State of Nebraska that  
15 is intended to be regularly occupied by people shall be built using radon  
16 resistant new construction. Such construction shall meet the following  
17 minimum standards:

18 (1) Sumps:

19 (a) A sump pit open to soil or serving as the termination point for  
20 subslab or exterior drain tile loops shall be covered with a gasketed or  
21 otherwise sealed lid;

22 (b) A sump used as the suction point in a subslab depressurization  
23 system shall have a lid designed to accommodate the vent pipe; and

24 (c) A sump used as a floor drain shall have a lid equipped with a  
25 trapped inlet;

26 (2) A passive subslab depressurization system shall be installed  
27 during construction in basement or slab-on-grade buildings, including the  
28 following components:

29 (a) Vent pipe:

30 (i)(A) A minimum three-inch diameter acrylonitrile butadiene styrene  
31 (ABS), polyvinyl chloride (PVC), or equivalent gas-tight pipe shall be

1 embedded vertically into the subslab permeable material before the slab  
2 is cast. A "T" fitting or equivalent method shall be used to ensure that  
3 the pipe opening remains within the subslab permeable material; or

4 (B) A minimum three-inch diameter ABS, PVC, or equivalent gas-tight  
5 pipe shall be inserted directly into an interior perimeter drain tile  
6 loop or through a sealed sump cover where the sump is exposed to the  
7 subslab or connected to it through a drainage system;

8 (ii) The pipe shall be extended up through the building floors and  
9 terminate at least twelve inches above the surface of the roof in a  
10 location at least ten feet away from any window or other opening into the  
11 conditioned spaces of the building that is less than two feet below the  
12 exhaust point and ten feet from any window or other opening in adjoining  
13 or adjacent buildings; and

14 (iii) In buildings where interior footings or other barriers  
15 separate the subslab gas-permeable material, each area shall be fitted  
16 with an individual vent pipe. Vent pipes shall connect to a single vent  
17 that terminates above the roof or each individual vent pipe shall  
18 terminate separately above the roof. All exposed and visible interior  
19 radon vent pipes shall be identified with at least one label on each  
20 floor and in accessible attics. Such label shall read: Radon Reduction  
21 System; and

22 (3) Power source. In order to provide for future installation of an  
23 active radon mitigation system, an electrical circuit terminated in an  
24 approved box shall be installed during construction in the attic or other  
25 anticipated location of vent pipe fans.

26 ~~(1) The Radon Resistant New Construction Task Force is created. The~~  
27 ~~task force shall consist of the chief medical officer of the Division of~~  
28 ~~Public Health of the Department of Health and Human Services as~~  
29 ~~designated in section 81-3115 or his or her designee, who shall serve as~~  
30 ~~the chairperson of the task force, and the following additional members~~  
31 ~~to be appointed by the Governor:~~



1       ~~(a) Three representatives of home builders' associations in~~  
2 ~~Nebraska, each from a different congressional district;~~

3       ~~(b) A representative of a home inspectors' association in Nebraska;~~

4       ~~(c) Two representatives of commercial construction associations, one~~  
5 ~~of whom must have experience related to large-scale projects and one of~~  
6 ~~whom must have experience related to medium-scale to small-scale~~  
7 ~~projects;~~

8       ~~(d) A representative of a Nebraska realtors' organization;~~

9       ~~(e) A representative of a respiratory disease organization;~~

10       ~~(f) A representative of a cancer research and prevention~~  
11 ~~organization;~~

12       ~~(g) A representative of the League of Nebraska Municipalities;~~

13       ~~(h) Three community public health representatives, each from a~~  
14 ~~different congressional district;~~

15       ~~(i) A professional engineer as defined in section 81-3422;~~

16       ~~(j) An architect as defined in section 81-3404; and~~

17       ~~(k) A representative with expertise in residential or commercial~~  
18 ~~building codes.~~

19       ~~(2) The task force shall meet at the call of the chairperson. The~~  
20 ~~appointed members of the task force shall serve without compensation but~~  
21 ~~shall be reimbursed for their actual and necessary expenses as provided~~  
22 ~~in sections 81-1174 to 81-1177. The department shall provide staff and~~  
23 ~~support for the operation of the task force.~~

24       ~~(3) The task force shall develop minimum standards for radon~~  
25 ~~resistant new construction and shall recommend such minimum standards to~~  
26 ~~the Governor, to the Health and Human Services Committee of the~~  
27 ~~Legislature, and to the Urban Affairs Committee of the Legislature. In~~  
28 ~~developing such minimum standards, the task force shall:~~

29       ~~(a) Design the minimum standards so that they may be enforced by a~~  
30 ~~county, city, or village as part of its local building code;~~

31       ~~(b) Consider Appendix F of the International Residential Code for~~

1 ~~One and Two-Family Dwellings, 2012 edition, published by the~~  
2 ~~International Code Council; and~~

3 ~~(c) Consider including the following provisions in such minimum~~  
4 ~~standards:~~

5 ~~(i) A requirement that the installation of an active radon~~  
6 ~~mitigation system only be performed by a building contractor or his or~~  
7 ~~her subcontractors or by a radon mitigation specialist;~~

8 ~~(ii) A requirement that the installation of radon resistant new~~  
9 ~~construction only be performed by a building contractor or his or her~~  
10 ~~subcontractors or by a radon mitigation specialist; and~~

11 ~~(iii) A requirement that only a building contractor or his or her~~  
12 ~~subcontractors or a radon mitigation specialist be allowed to install a~~  
13 ~~radon vent fan or upgrade a passive new construction pipe to an active~~  
14 ~~radon mitigation system.~~

15 ~~(4) The task force shall provide its recommendations by April 15,~~  
16 ~~2018. The task force and this section terminate on May 1, 2018.~~

17 Sec. 8. Section 76-3505, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, is  
18 amended to read:

19 76-3505 New construction after the effective date of this act shall  
20 not be required to use radon resistant new construction if (1) the  
21 construction project utilizes the design of an engineer or architect  
22 registered under the Engineers and Architects Registration Act or (2)  
23 other than for any residential dwelling unit, a local building official  
24 makes a determination, after a review of relevant guidelines for the  
25 intended use of the structure and property conditions, that radon  
26 resistant new construction is not necessary. It is the intent of the  
27 Legislature that the recommendations provided by the Radon Resistant New  
28 Construction Task Force under section 76-3504 be used by the Legislature  
29 during the 2019 legislative session to establish, in statute, minimum  
30 standards for radon resistant new construction.

31 Sec. 9. A building contractor or a subcontractor of a building

1 contractor may convert a passive radon mitigation system to an active  
2 radon mitigation system in accordance with rules and regulations adopted  
3 and promulgated by the Department of Health and Human Services under the  
4 Radiation Control Act for radon mitigation, but the contractor or  
5 subcontractor is not required to be a radon mitigation specialist to  
6 convert such system. A radon mitigation specialist shall conduct any  
7 postinstallation testing of such system.

8       Sec. 10.   Original sections 71-6403, 71-6404, 71-6406, 76-3501,  
9 76-3502, 76-3503, 76-3504, and 76-3505, Reissue Revised Statutes of  
10 Nebraska, are repealed.