

**INSPECTIONS AND APPEALS DEPARTMENT[481]**

**Notice of Intended Action**

**Proposing rulemaking related to state building code  
and providing an opportunity for public comment**

The Department of Inspections, Appeals, and Licensing hereby proposes to amend Chapter 301, “State Building Code,” Iowa Administrative Code.

*Legal Authority for Rulemaking*

This rulemaking is proposed under the authority provided in Iowa Code sections 103A.7 and 103A.8A.

*State or Federal Law Implemented*

This rulemaking implements, in whole or in part, Iowa Code chapter 103A.

*Purpose and Summary*

Iowa Code section 103A.7(1) provides that the State Building Code Commissioner is empowered and directed to formulate, adopt, and amend or revise State Building Code rules. Pursuant to Iowa Code section 103A.7(2), the rules shall include (among other things) reasonable provisions for the conservation of energy through thermal efficiency standards for buildings that are intended for human occupancy and that are heated or cooled and lighting efficiency standards for buildings intended for human occupancy that are lighted. Additionally, pursuant to Iowa Code section 103A.8A, the State Building Code Commissioner shall adopt as a part of the State Building Code a requirement that new single-family or two-family residential construction shall comply with energy conservation requirements.

The purpose of this proposed rulemaking is to amend the energy conservation provisions of the State Building Code to increase the acceptable air leakage rate when simulated energy performance analysis is utilized. For a number of years, the energy conservation rules of the State Building Code have amended the adopted International Energy Conservation Code (2012 Edition) (IECC (2012)) to increase the acceptable air leakage rate when using physical testing with a blower door from three air changes per hour to four air changes per hour (in Climate Zones 3 through 8, which encompass Iowa). This amendment can currently be found in subrule 301.24(9). Note that the physical testing of air leakage rate with a blower door is a mandatory provision that must be performed on all constructed residences.

To demonstrate compliance, the IECC (2012) provides a general prescriptive route and an alternative performance route or “simulated performance alternative.” As the name suggests, this alternative is a simulated analysis using software that is conducted on proposed residential construction (i.e., before construction is completed). The simulated energy performance analysis has many fields or building components, of which air exchange rate is just one. The acceptable air leakage rate under the IECC (2012) simulated energy performance analysis is three air changes per hour, and it is not currently amended by State rules. It has come to the Department’s attention that this has created confusion within the homebuilder industry and with local enforcement of these provisions, with some in the field believing that the amendment to acceptable air leakage rate for physical testing also applies to the acceptable air leakage rate that is one component of the simulated energy performance analysis. To alleviate this confusion, the Department is proposing to also amend IECC (2012) by State rule to allow for four air changes per hour during the simulated energy performance analysis.

Additionally, this proposed rulemaking would make the simulated energy performance analysis less restrictive, consistent with the directives of Executive Order 10. The Department has received preclearance for this proposed rulemaking from the Administrative Rules Coordinator pursuant to Section IV(A)(i) of Executive Order 10.

*Regulatory Analysis*

A Regulatory Analysis for this rulemaking was published in the Iowa Administrative Bulletin on January 7, 2026. A public hearing was held on the following date(s):

- January 27, 2026

*Fiscal Impact*

This rulemaking has no fiscal impact to the State of Iowa.

*Jobs Impact*

After analysis and review of this rulemaking, no impact on jobs has been found.

*Waivers*

Any person who believes that the application of the discretionary provisions of this rulemaking would result in hardship or injustice to that person may petition the Department for a waiver of the discretionary provisions, if any, pursuant to 481—Chapter 6.

*Public Comment*

Any interested person may submit written or oral comments concerning this proposed rulemaking, which must be received by the Department no later than 4:30 p.m. on April 8, 2026. Comments should be directed to:

Jeremiah Junker  
Department of Inspections, Appeals, and Licensing  
6200 Park Avenue, Suite 100  
Des Moines, Iowa 50321  
Phone: 515.672.4745  
Email: [jeremiah.junker@dia.iowa.gov](mailto:jeremiah.junker@dia.iowa.gov)

*Public Hearing*

Public hearings at which persons may present their views orally or in writing will be held as follows:

April 7, 2026 9:30 to 10 a.m.	6200 Park Avenue, Suite 100 Des Moines, Iowa
April 8, 2026 9:30 to 10 a.m.	6200 Park Avenue, Suite 100 Des Moines, Iowa

Persons who wish to make oral comments at a public hearing may be asked to state their names for the record and to confine their remarks to the subject of this proposed rulemaking.

Any persons who intend to attend a public hearing and have special requirements, such as those related to hearing or mobility impairments, should contact the Department and advise of specific needs.

*Review by Administrative Rules Review Committee*

The Administrative Rules Review Committee, a bipartisan legislative committee which oversees rulemaking by executive branch agencies, may, on its own motion or on written request by any individual or group, review this rulemaking at its [regular monthly meeting](#) or at a special meeting. The Committee’s meetings are open to the public, and interested persons may be heard as provided in Iowa Code section 17A.8(6).

The following rulemaking action is proposed:

ITEM 1. Adopt the following **new** subrule 301.24(12):

**301.24(12)** Delete the first clause of the Standard Reference Design for Building Component “Air exchange rate” in Table R405.5.2(1) and insert in lieu thereof the following new clause: “Air leakage of

5 air changes per hour in Climate Zones 1 and 2, and 4 air changes per hour in Climate Zones 3 through 8 at a pressure of 0.2 inches w.g. (50 Pa).”