

YURT AMENDMENTS

2020 GENERAL SESSION

STATE OF UTAH

Chief Sponsor: Brady Brammer

Senate Sponsor: Daniel Hemmert

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LONG TITLE

General Description:

This bill addresses the regulation of yurts.

Highlighted Provisions:

This bill:

- ▶ exempts remote yurts from the State Construction Code;
- ▶ exempts remote yurts from the State Fire Code with certain requirements;
- ▶ exempts remote yurts from water quality provisions with certain requirements;
- ▶ permits counties by ordinance to make remote yurts subject to certain regulations;

and

- ▶ makes technical amendments.

Money Appropriated in this Bill:

None

Other Special Clauses:

None

Utah Code Sections Affected:

AMENDS:

**15A-1-204**, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2017, Chapter 18

ENACTS:

**15A-5-104**, Utah Code Annotated 1953

**19-5-125**, Utah Code Annotated 1953

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*Be it enacted by the Legislature of the state of Utah:*

30 Section 1. Section **15A-1-204** is amended to read:

31 **15A-1-204. Adoption of State Construction Code -- Amendments by commission**  
32 **-- Approved codes -- Exemptions.**

33 (1) (a) The State Construction Code is the construction codes adopted with any  
34 modifications in accordance with this section that the state and each political subdivision of the  
35 state shall follow.

36 (b) A person shall comply with the applicable provisions of the State Construction  
37 Code when:

38 (i) new construction is involved; and

39 (ii) the owner of an existing building, or the owner's agent, is voluntarily engaged in:

40 (A) the repair, renovation, remodeling, alteration, enlargement, rehabilitation,  
41 conservation, or reconstruction of the building; or

42 (B) changing the character or use of the building in a manner that increases the  
43 occupancy loads, other demands, or safety risks of the building.

44 (c) On and after July 1, 2010, the State Construction Code is the State Construction  
45 Code in effect on July 1, 2010, until in accordance with this section:

46 (i) a new State Construction Code is adopted; or

47 (ii) one or more provisions of the State Construction Code are amended or repealed in  
48 accordance with this section.

49 (d) A provision of the State Construction Code may be applicable:

50 (i) to the entire state; or

51 (ii) within a county, city, or town.

52 (2) (a) The Legislature shall adopt a State Construction Code by enacting legislation  
53 that adopts a nationally recognized construction code with any modifications.

54 (b) Legislation described in Subsection (2)(a) shall state that the legislation takes effect  
55 on the July 1 after the day on which the legislation is enacted, unless otherwise stated in the  
56 legislation.

57 (c) Subject to Subsection (6), a State Construction Code adopted by the Legislature is

58 the State Construction Code until, in accordance with this section, the Legislature adopts a new  
59 State Construction Code by:

- 60 (i) adopting a new State Construction Code in its entirety; or
- 61 (ii) amending or repealing one or more provisions of the State Construction Code.

62 (3) (a) Except as provided in Subsection (3)(b), for each update of a nationally  
63 recognized construction code, the commission shall prepare a report described in Subsection  
64 (4).

65 (b) For the provisions of a nationally recognized construction code that apply only to  
66 detached one- and two-family dwellings and townhouses not more than three stories above  
67 grade plane in height with separate means of egress and their accessory structures, the  
68 commission shall:

- 69 (i) prepare a report described in Subsection (4) in 2021 and, thereafter, for every  
70 second update of the nationally recognized construction code; and
- 71 (ii) not prepare a report described in Subsection (4) in 2018.

72 (4) (a) In accordance with Subsection (3), on or before September 1 of the same year as  
73 the year designated in the title of a nationally recognized construction code, the commission  
74 shall prepare and submit, in accordance with Section 68-3-14, a written report to the Business  
75 and Labor Interim Committee that:

- 76 (i) states whether the commission recommends the Legislature adopt the update with  
77 any modifications; and
- 78 (ii) describes the costs and benefits of each recommended change in the update or in  
79 any modification.

80 (b) After the Business and Labor Interim Committee receives the report described in  
81 Subsection (4)(a), the Business and Labor Interim Committee shall:

- 82 (i) study the recommendations; and
- 83 (ii) if the Business and Labor Interim Committee decides to recommend legislative  
84 action to the Legislature, prepare legislation for consideration by the Legislature in the next  
85 general session.

86 (5) (a) (i) The commission shall, by no later than September 1 of each year in which  
87 the commission is not required to submit a report described in Subsection (4), submit, in  
88 accordance with Section 68-3-14, a written report to the Business and Labor Interim  
89 Committee recommending whether the Legislature should amend or repeal one or more  
90 provisions of the State Construction Code.

91 (ii) As part of a recommendation described in Subsection (5)(a)(i), the commission  
92 shall describe the costs and benefits of each proposed amendment or repeal.

93 (b) The commission may recommend legislative action related to the State  
94 Construction Code:

95 (i) on its own initiative;

96 (ii) upon the recommendation of the division; or

97 (iii) upon the receipt of a request by one of the following that the commission  
98 recommend legislative action related to the State Construction Code:

99 (A) a local regulator;

100 (B) a state regulator;

101 (C) a state agency involved with the construction and design of a building;

102 (D) the Construction Services Commission;

103 (E) the Electrician Licensing Board;

104 (F) the Plumbers Licensing Board; or

105 (G) a recognized construction-related association.

106 (c) If the Business and Labor Interim Committee decides to recommend legislative  
107 action to the Legislature, the Business and Labor Interim Committee shall prepare legislation  
108 for consideration by the Legislature in the next general session.

109 (6) (a) Notwithstanding the provisions of this section, the commission may, in  
110 accordance with Title 63G, Chapter 3, Utah Administrative Rulemaking Act, amend the State  
111 Construction Code if the commission determines that waiting for legislative action in the next  
112 general legislative session would:

113 (i) cause an imminent peril to the public health, safety, or welfare; or

114 (ii) place a person in violation of federal or other state law.  
115 (b) If the commission amends the State Construction Code in accordance with this  
116 Subsection (6), the commission shall file with the division:  
117 (i) the text of the amendment to the State Construction Code; and  
118 (ii) an analysis that includes the specific reasons and justifications for the commission's  
119 findings.  
120 (c) If the State Construction Code is amended under this Subsection (6), the division  
121 shall:  
122 (i) publish the amendment to the State Construction Code in accordance with Section  
123 15A-1-205; and  
124 (ii) prepare and submit, in accordance with Section 68-3-14, a written notice to the  
125 Business and Labor Interim Committee containing the amendment to the State Construction  
126 Code, including a copy of the commission's analysis described in Subsection (6)(b)(ii).  
127 (d) If not formally adopted by the Legislature at the next annual general session, an  
128 amendment to the State Construction Code under this Subsection (6) is repealed on the July 1  
129 immediately following the next annual general session that follows the adoption of the  
130 amendment.  
131 (7) (a) The division, in consultation with the commission, may approve, without  
132 adopting, one or more approved codes, including a specific edition of a construction code, for  
133 use by a compliance agency.  
134 (b) If the code adopted by a compliance agency is an approved code described in  
135 Subsection (7)(a), the compliance agency may:  
136 (i) adopt an ordinance requiring removal, demolition, or repair of a building;  
137 (ii) adopt, by ordinance or rule, a dangerous building code; or  
138 (iii) adopt, by ordinance or rule, a building rehabilitation code.  
139 (8) Except as provided in Subsections (6), (7), (9), and (10), or as expressly provided in  
140 state law, a state executive branch entity or political subdivision of the state may not, after  
141 December 1, 2016, adopt or enforce a rule, ordinance, or requirement that applies to a subject

142 specifically addressed by, and that is more restrictive than, the State Construction Code.

143 (9) A state executive branch entity or political subdivision of the state may:

144 (a) enforce a federal law or regulation;

145 (b) adopt or enforce a rule, ordinance, or requirement if the rule, ordinance, or  
146 requirement applies only to a facility or construction owned or used by a state entity or a  
147 political subdivision of the state; or

148 (c) enforce a rule, ordinance, or requirement:

149 (i) that the state executive branch entity or political subdivision adopted or made  
150 effective before July 1, 2015; and

151 (ii) for which the state executive branch entity or political subdivision can demonstrate,  
152 with substantial evidence, that the rule, ordinance, or requirement is necessary to protect an  
153 individual from a condition likely to cause imminent injury or death.

154 (10) The Department of Health or the Department of Environmental Quality may  
155 enforce a rule or requirement adopted before January 1, 2015.

156 (11) (a) Except as provided in Subsection (11)(b), a structure used solely in  
157 conjunction with agriculture use, and not for human occupancy, or a structure that is no more  
158 than 1,500 square feet and used solely for the type of sales described in Subsection  
159 [59-12-104\(20\)](#), is exempt from the permit requirements of the State Construction Code.

160 (b) (i) Unless exempted by a provision other than Subsection (11)(a), a plumbing,  
161 electrical, and mechanical permit may be required when that work is included in a structure  
162 described in Subsection (11)(a).

163 (ii) Unless located in whole or in part in an agricultural protection area created under  
164 Title 17, Chapter 41, Agriculture, Industrial, or Critical Infrastructure Materials Protection  
165 Areas, a structure described in Subsection (11)(a) is not exempt from a permit requirement if  
166 the structure is located on land that is:

167 (A) within the boundaries of a city or town, and less than five contiguous acres; or

168 (B) within a subdivision for which the county has approved a subdivision plat under  
169 Title 17, Chapter 27a, Part 6, Subdivisions, and less than two contiguous acres.

170 (12) (a) As used in this Subsection (12):

171 (i) "Membrane-covered frame structure" means a nonpressurized building wherein the  
172 structure is composed of a rigid framework to support a tensioned membrane that provides the  
173 weather barrier.

174 (ii) "Remote yurt" means a membrane-covered frame structure that:

175 (A) is no larger than 710 square feet;

176 (B) is not used as a permanent residence;

177 (C) is located in an unincorporated county area that is not zoned for residential,  
178 commercial, industrial, or agricultural use;

179 (D) does not have plumbing or electricity;

180 (E) is set back at least 300 feet from any river, stream, lake, or other body of water; and

181 (F) registers with the local health department.

182 (b) A remote yurt is exempt from the State Construction Code including the permit  
183 requirements of the State Construction Code.

184 (c) Notwithstanding Subsection (12)(b), a county may by ordinance require remote  
185 yurts to comply with the State Construction Code, if the ordinance requires the remote yurts to  
186 comply with all of the following:

187 (i) the State Construction Code;

188 (ii) notwithstanding Section 15A-5-104, the State Fire Code; and

189 (iii) notwithstanding Section 19-5-125, Title 19, Chapter 5, Water Quality Act, rules  
190 made under that chapter, and local health department's jurisdiction over onsite wastewater  
191 disposal.

192 Section 2. Section **15A-5-104** is enacted to read:

193 **15A-5-104. Exemptions from State Fire Code.**

194 (1) As used in this section, "remote yurt" means the same as that term is defined in  
195 Subsection 15A-1-204(12).

196 (2) A remote yurt is exempt from the State Fire Code unless otherwise provided by  
197 ordinance in accordance with Subsection 15A-1-204(12)(c).

198           (3) An owner of a remote yurt shall ensure that a fire extinguisher is in the remote yurt.

199           Section 3. Section **19-5-125** is enacted to read:

200           **19-5-125. Yurt exemption.**

201           (1) As used in this section:

202           (a) "Backcountry waste containment and disposal system" means a pickle pail, rocket  
203 box, tube toilet, John-E partner, or similar container used to collect and carry out waste,  
204 including fecal matter.

205           (b) "Remote yurt" means the same as that term is defined in Subsection  
206 15A-1-204(12).

207           (2) Unless otherwise provided by ordinance in accordance with Subsection  
208 15A-1-204(12)(c), a remote yurt is exempt from this chapter, rules made under this chapter,  
209 and local health department's jurisdiction over onsite wastewater disposal, except that the  
210 owner of a remote yurt shall ensure that an individual using the remote yurt uses a backcountry  
211 waste containment and disposal system and the local health department may enforce the  
212 provisions of this section.