

Code Reviser’s Statement on RCW 35.21.180

RCW 35.21.180 allows cities to adopt by reference “any printed code or compilation,” rather than listing the entire code in an ordinance, as long as a physical copy is filed “for use and examination by the public, in the office of the city or town clerk of said city, or town prior to adoption thereof.” Given that “printed” has been the word used in this section and its predecessors since 1935, and given that RCW 35.21.530 and its predecessors have referred to municipal codes as requiring a “typewritten or printed copy” since 1957, the most sensible construction is that these state laws expect a physical book version of anything adopted by reference; linking to an electronic version alone would not satisfy these RCW requirements.

A physical book copy of the 2018 International Fire Code will be filed prior to adoption to comply with RCW 35.21.180. However, COVID-19 restrictions on public spaces render it logistically impossible to, while the bill is being considered, make the filed book available “for use and examination by the public.” In the interim, the 2018 International Fire Code may be found at <https://codes.iccsafe.org/content/IFC2018P4>.

The adopted book should be the same printing linked to above; however, initial electronic documents used to create the attachment to this ordinance came from earlier printings supplied to Seattle. Every effort has been made to update the initial file to current language. In the event of a discrepancy in unamended code language, the filed book will control.