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to ensure safe building  
construction while  
supporting a positive  
business climate.*

## ***History of the Oregon Low Rise Residential Dwelling Code***

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Oregon's ***Low Rise Residential Dwelling Code (Low Rise Code)*** was created by passage of Senate Bill 906 (SB 906) in the 2003 Oregon Legislature and was codified in Oregon Revised Statute (ORS) 455.040. This bill created two new boards; the Residential Structures Board and the Mechanical Board. The purview of the Low Rise Code was assigned to the Residential Structures Board.

The statute states in part; *“The Director of the Department of Consumer and Business Services shall adopt, and amend as necessary, a Low-Rise Residential Dwelling Code that contains all requirements, including structural design provisions, related to the construction of residential dwellings three stories or less above grade.”* (et al)

The **2003** OTFDC regulated the construction of single-family dwellings and duplexes and relied on the International Residential Code as its basis. The scope of the Low Rise Code goes beyond the OTFDC by regulating the construction of townhouses and small apartments. A task force was created to include all of the code requirements for low-rise structures into a single code.

The **2005 Oregon Residential Specialty Code (ORSC)** contained the new low-rise provisions, specifically in Appendix N along with the plumbing and electrical provisions.

The move to a single code that did not align with national codes created confusion and significant work for the boards that review these codes. With the adoption of the 2008 ORSC, it was decided to move the respective Low Rise Code requirements into the adopted model codes with which they most closely align. This allows Oregon's published codes to be consistent with the scope of the nationally promulgated codes and assists in the scope of inspector/plan review certifications and certain licensing requirements.

The following table provides an overview of the Low Rise Code provisions and where they are located.

<b>OREGON LOW RISE RESIDENTIAL DWELLING CODE</b>			
<b>Scope</b>	<b>Discipline</b>	<b>Oregon Code</b>	<b>Base Model Code</b>
1&2 Family Dwellings/Townhouses	Structural and Mechanical	Oregon Residential Specialty Code	International Residential Code
Low Rise Apartments	Structural	Oregon Structural Specialty Code – Appendix N	International Building Code
Low Rise Apartments	Mechanical	Oregon Residential Specialty Code	International Residential Code
1&2 Family Dwellings/Townhouses & Low Rise Apartments	Structural Engineering	Oregon Structural Specialty Code	International Building Code
1&2 Family Dwellings/Townhouses & Low Rise Apartments	Plumbing	Oregon Plumbing Specialty Code	Uniform Plumbing Code
1&2 Family Dwellings/Townhouses & Low Rise Apartments	Electrical	Oregon Electrical Specialty Code	National Electric Code

Confusion still exists because the Residential Structures Board (RSB) retained jurisdiction over the code decisions for low-rise buildings. The RSB exercises its purview over buildings that meet the definition of a low-rise structure though those provisions are housed in separate codebooks. For example, plumbing provisions for low-rise building are approved by the RSB even though the requirements are contained in the plumbing code.

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