



THE CITY OF
Wilmington
Delaware

Interpretation of Wilmington Delaware Code	Reference Code Section(s): International Building Code 2012 Chapter 34 Section 3408.3
Subject of Bulletin:	Stairway Riser Heights and Tread Depths in Existing Buildings
Issued By: Commissioner James Rhodes, Department of Licenses and Inspections	Issue Date: August 9, 2016

Issue:

What are the minimum stair riser heights and tread depths for stairways in existing buildings?

Relevant Code Provisions:

International Building Code 2012

Chapter 34: Change of Occupancy Section 3408.3

<http://codes.iccsafe.org/app/book/content/PDF/2012%20International%20Codes/IBC/Chapter%2034-Existing%20Buildings%20and%20Structures.pdf>

Section 3408.3 Stairways: An existing *stairway* shall not be required to comply with the requirements of Section 1009 where the existing space and construction does not allow a reduction in pitch or slope.

Exception – existing stairway shall not have to comply with Section 1009.7.2 Chapter 10

Chapter 10: Section 1009.7.2: Riser height and tread depth

<http://codes.iccsafe.org/app/book/content/PDF/2012%20International%20Codes/IBC/Chapter%2010-Means%20of%20Egress.pdf>

Section 1009.7.2: Riser height and tread depth. Stair riser heights shall be 7 inches (178 mm) maximum and 4 inches (102 mm) minimum. The riser height shall be measured vertically between the *nosings* of adjacent treads. Rectangular tread depths shall be 11 inches (279 mm) minimum measured horizontally between the vertical plans of the foremost project of adjacent treads and at a right angle to the tread's *nosing*. *Winder* treads shall have a minimum tread depth of 11 inches (279 mm) between the vertical planes of the foremost projection of adjacent treads at the intersections with the walkline and a minimum tread depth of 10 inches (254 mm) within the clear width of the *stair*.

Policy:

An existing stairway is not required to meet minimum height or tread depth if the existing space does not allow a reduction in pitch or slope.