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Houston Adopts Uniform Plumbing Code and Uniform Mechanical Code

Houston (Oct. 26, 2023) — The Houston City Council, representing the nation's fourth most populous city, has voted to adopt the 2021 editions of the *Uniform Plumbing Code (UPC®)* and *Uniform Mechanical Code (UMC®)*. This vote follows an extensive review conducted as part of the city's Construction Code Modernization Project, which involved more than 200 community stakeholders representing more than 50 construction and industry associations.

This adoption is an update from the 2015 editions of these codes and will go into effect Jan. 2, 2024. The city of Houston has utilized the Uniform Codes since 1985.

"Our commitment to ensuring the health, safety, and welfare of our residents is unwavering," said Houston Mayor Sylvester Turner. "Advancing from the 2015 to the 2021 base codes reaffirms that commitment and furthers our Resilient Houston plan."

The adoption of the 2021 editions reaffirms Houston's dedication to setting high standards for construction and building maintenance, providing a safer and more sustainable living environment for all.

"We are pleased that the Houston City Council voted in favor of endorsing the continued use of the Uniform Codes, which are the preferred codes of the industry," said Wayne Lord, business manager of Plumbers Local Union 68.

"This decision ensures safety, elevates construction standards, and aligns with the industry's best practices," said Josh Hollub, Plumbing-Heating-Cooling Contractors Association of Texas (PHCC) board member.

There are many significant resilient provisions that communities can enjoy in the *UPC*, such as specifications to address the impact of water temperature on the potential for scalding and *Legionella* growth. The *UPC* also includes holistic provisions for storm piping materials and sizing methodologies, along with domestic water right-sizing through the addition of the Water Demand Calculator™ (WDC) (<https://www.iapmo.org/water-demand-calculator/>).

Other noteworthy updates in the 2021 editions include:

- Alternate Water Sources for Nonpotable Applications
- Nonpotable Rainwater Catchment Systems
- Alternate Plumbing Systems
- Potable Rainwater Catchment Systems
- Sustainable Practices
- Hydronic provisions for radiant heating and cooling
- Geothermal energy systems

"It has been a pleasure to work alongside the local plumbing industry, city staff, and city council as they deliberated this important action," said John Mata, IAPMO Field Services representative.

Introduced in Los Angeles in 1928 and formally published as the *Uniform Plumbing Code* in 1945, the *UPC* is developed to govern the installation and inspection of plumbing systems as a means of promoting the public's health, safety and welfare. Later published by IAPMO in 1967, the *UMC* provides the same governance for mechanical (HVAC, combustion, exhaust, refrigeration) systems. Developed and subsequently republished at the conclusion of each three-year code cycle, the *UPC* and *UMC* are designed to provide consumers with plumbing, heating, and mechanical systems that meet all applicable standards while, at the same time, allowing latitude for innovation and new technologies.