What is the Code?
The National Electrical Code® (NEC) codifies the minimum requirements for safe electrical installations in a single, standardized source. While the NEC is not itself a U.S. law, the NEC is commonly mandated by state or local law. Local jurisdictions and code enforcement boards inspect for compliance with the minimum standards, as set forth in the code.

What is the revision process?
The NEC is revised by the National Fire Protection Association’s Committee on the National Electrical Code, which consists of 19 code-making panels and a technical correlating committee. Revision occurs every three years to ensure that the code takes into account the latest in technology and safety. Following the release of a new edition, the development process continues; soliciting proposals for amendment. Anyone, including the public, may submit proposals but they should demonstrate evidence that clearly indicates a need for the revision. Panels then review all proposed revisions and comments and, through voting consensus, establish the rules that then make up the next version of the NEC.

Cycle

Data and Statistics provide the fuel to drive innovation and policy.
- Demonstrates need for new technology and education on codes and policies
- Evaluates the effectiveness of existing codes and safety technologies
- Provides cost analysis of implementing new technologies and economic impact in local communities

Codes incorporate new technology, data, and feedback on existing Code to establish new electrical safety minimums.
- Mandate the use of recent technological advancements
- New proposals considered
- Comments on existing and proposed Codes reviewed

In light of new data and trends about electrical safety, new and improved technology will emerge to address deficiencies.
- New: Mitigates hazards within scopes/application not previously addressed
- Improved: R & D enhances existing technology to increase protections

Codes

COMPLIANCE / ENFORCEMENT

Once codes are adopted, compliance and enforcement ensures that the minimum standard in electrical safety is being applied.
- Permits
- Inspections
- Training of trade industry
- Penalties for noncompliance
- Potential civil and criminal liability

Is it necessary to update the Code every three years?
As the unbiased authority on electrical safety, the Electrical Safety Foundation International (ESFI) is a staunch supporter of the National Electrical Code® and its current three-year revision cycle. The process is accountable to the public, both in soliciting public participation in the development process and the resulting protections provided by the Code. ESFI strongly encourages states and jurisdictions to adopt the most recent NEC edition to protect its residents with the latest advancements in electrical safety. The NEC saves lives and its importance should not be minimized; it is the agreed upon minimum standard for safety, as determined by experts, and should be promptly adopted in full.