2026 Fourth Quarter News Bulletin

Quarterly Edition of "DID YOU KNOW?"

Understanding Alabama's Adopted Codes and Manufacturer Requirements

CURRENTLY ENFORCED CODES IN ALABAMA

The Alabama Board of Heating, Air-Conditioning and Refrigeration Contractors will adopt and begin enforcement of the following codes as of January 1, 2027: **2024 IRC, 2024 IMC, 2024 IFGC, 2024 IPC, 2023 NEC and 2024 IECC as amended by the Alabama Residential Energy Board.** Contractors should remain familiar with both Alabama adopted codes and Manufacturer Installation Instructions.

GFCI REQUIREMENT FOR HVAC EQUIPMENT

As of September 1, 2026, the NEC'S temporary exception allowing outdoor heat pumps and condensers to skip GFCI protection has expired. Since the 2020 National Electrical Code, Section 210.8(F) has required GFCI protection for outdoor outlets on dwelling-unit circuits. The codes define an "outlet" broadly, so it covers hard-ward-wired equipment such as an outdoor condenser or heat pump, not just wall receptacles. Important to check with your equipment manufacturer to determine whether an approved GFCI HF (High Frequency) breaker or class C special-purpose GFCI is best suited for your installation to ensure code compliance.

CODE COMPLIANCE REQUIRES MORE THAN THE CODE BOOK

While the I-Codes establish minimum standards, they often reference manufacturer installation requirements for specific equipment details. Investigators continue to identify installations that do not comply with manufacturer requirements. These deficiencies can affect code compliance, equipment performance, energy efficiency, equipment life expectancy, occupant safety and system reliability. Following manufacturer instructions is both a code requirement and essential for safe, reliable, efficient operation.

TRAINING TIP

Make Installation Instructions Part of Your Team Meetings, Review manufacturer instructions using an around-the-room participation approach. Have each team member read and discuss a section of the instructions. This encourages engagement, improves understanding, promotes consistency, creates opportunities for questions, and reinforces proper installation practices before technicians arrive on the job site.

UPCOMING 4th Quarter Board Meeting

November 18, 2026, Board Office, 100 N Union Street, Suite 986, Montgomery, Alabama at 11:00 AM.

SPRING TRAINING

March 10, 2027: Northeast Alabama Community College, Workforce Development Room #166, Rainsville, AL, 8:00 AM to 12:00 PM (4 Hours CE).

March 16, 2027: Alabama Power Training Center, Jasper, AL, 9:00 AM to 1:00 PM (4 Hours CE). Additional classes will be added as we move forward,

Tim Jordan
Program Administrator for Contractor Education/Institutional Compliance

Know the Adopted Code • Follow Manufacturer Instructions • Protect the Consumer and yourself!