

## Access to older versions of Wisconsin administrative codes via the Legislative Reference Bureau's Internet Web site, January 2009

Thanks to Larry Swaziek, a Safety and Buildings Division Program Manager, for figuring this out.

This is not a straight-forward process. The older code PDF documents you can find were not placed online as part of an archive of old codes. The documents are part of the historical record of publishing the Wisconsin Administrative Register.

When administrative codes change, there is an official publishing in the Register, showing new code language going into effect. The Register historical record you can access online shows what went into effect and what was replaced. It does show the complete older code chapter.

You can find some copies of old administrative codes by finding those code versions that were being replaced. In other words, you find a "back door" to older code copies by digging through the history of publication of code changes.

The available code chapter PDF files in some cases go back to 2001. You will have to find the older code copies; there is no index listing what code versions are available. Previous to 2001, a different display of Register contents shows Clearinghouse Rule versions of the codes. The Clearinghouse Rule versions show only code language that was being changed, not the complete older code chapter.

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### Getting Started

1. At the bottom of the Safety and Building Division index of links to current S&B codes is a link to the Legislative Reference Bureau's Web site. On the S&B page, <http://commerce.wi.gov/SB/SB-DivCodesListing.html>, select the link "Administrative Code and Register."

2. On the upper middle of the Legislative Reference Bureau page, "The Wisconsin Administrative Code and Register," <http://www.legis.state.wi.us/rsb/code.htm>, select the link "Go to Code Chapter -- PDF or NXT, Composite Table of Contents."

(Before you select the link, you can select "Finding Administrative Code Histories and Archived Administrative Codes and Rule Orders." There you can read the Legislative Reference Bureau's explanation of the history notes' abbreviations, and also how to use the online history notes to access code language involved in past code changes.)

3. On the page titled "Wisconsin Administrative Code Composite Table of Contents," <http://www.legis.state.wi.us/rsb/code/codtoc.html>, you will choose the code chapter you are interested in.

When choosing the code chapter, if there are two formats offered, PDF or NXT, choose the NXT format. If there are not two formats offered, select the underlined chapter number or title.

For example:

"Ch. 16 Electrical PDF NXT

Ch. 18 Elevators, Escalators, and Lift Devices"

For Ch. 16, choose NXT.

For Ch. 18, choose either of the underlined portions.

On the Ch. 18 page, you are offered two formats, PDF or NXT. You would choose NXT.

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## Example

4. You will need to play the system a bit to get it to give you what you want. The examples show the process of finding several older chapters of Comm 20-25, Uniform Dwelling Code. If you are looking for a different code, the process will be basically the same, but the text you read and react to will vary.

A. On "Wisconsin Administrative Code Composite Table of Contents," <http://www.legis.state.wi.us/rsb/code/codtoc.html>, select either "Ch. 20-25" or "Uniform Dwelling."

B. The page titled "Department of Commerce," <http://www.legis.state.wi.us/rsb/code/comm/comm020.html>, has links to various chapters of the Uniform Dwelling Code. Select the NXT format link for Comm 20.

C. On the Wisconsin Legislature page titled "Chapter Comm 20, Administration and Enforcement, Subchapter 1 - Purpose and Scope," select Comm 20.01 Purpose. (See Image 5.)

D. On the "Comm 20.01, Subchapter 1 - Purpose and Scope" page, (See Image 6.) scroll down to the last text:

"Comm 20.01 - ANNOT.

History: Cr. Register, November, 1979, No. 287, eff. 6-1-80; am. Register, March, 1992, No. 435, eff. 4-1-92; CR 06-071: renum. s. Comm 20.01 to be (1), cr. (2) Register December 2006, No. 612, eff. 4-1-07."

You have just seen how to get to the historical records of an Administrative Register. This note records the publishing in December 2006, Register No. 612, of changes to Comm 20.01. There are two Registers mentioned in the history note: March 1992, and December 2006. A link is offered to the most recent, No. 612, but not to the previous No. 435. That is the pattern in the history notes; only the most recent offers a link. (There is also access to Clearinghouse Rule CR 06-071, which shows the text of the December 2006 adopted rule change.)

Select the link No. 612. (See Image 7.)

E. The next page is titled "Wisconsin Administrative Register No. 612, eff. January 1, 2007." (See Image 8.)

Scroll down the page to "Instructions for inserting new material in the Wisconsin Administrative Code." (See Image 9.)

Below that line is some white space and then a header line:

*"Volume | Code | Pages removed | Pages inserted | Removed chapters | Inserted chapters"*

This header line identifies columns in a table, though you don't see any lines delineating the columns.

The important column for now is the "*Code*" column. Scroll down the page, watching that column, until you see "Commerce - Uniform Dwelling Code." (There are two Commerce entries before the one you are looking for, go past them.)

F. When you get to the horizontal row in which it says "Commerce - Uniform Dwelling Code," you will see six underlined links on the right end. Three sets of two links: Comm 20, Comm 21, Comm 22. These sets are in two columns, which the headers mentioned in E above identify as "Removed chapters" and "Inserted chapters." (See Image 10.)

You are working with a system that is meant to show what was published in the Administrative Register of a certain date. Removed chapters were going out of effect and inserted chapters were going into effect.

The point is these links will take you to PDF of the whole chapter going out of effect or going into effect.

G. If you select the left Comm 20 link (removed chapter) you open a PDF file that shows Comm 20 as it was after the effective date of changes printed in November 2004 Register. You can scroll to the bottom of the first PDF page. You see "Register, November, 2004, No. 587." (See Image 11.)

Close the PDF. You will return to the page displaying the contents of the "Wisconsin Administrative Register No. 612," published December 31, 2006. Back to the three sets of two links.

If you select the right, inserted chapter, Comm 20 link (See Image 12.), you open a PDF file that shows Comm 20 as it was in December 2006. You can tell this by scrolling to the bottom of the first PDF page. You see "Register, December, 2006, No. 612." That date is when this version of Comm 20 was printed in the Register in advance of going into effect January 1, 2007. (See Image 13.)

What you did was find two differently-dated copies of UDC code chapters. You worked back from the history note on a current section of the UDC. You found the Administrative Register historical record of the codes chapters going out of and into effect at the end of December 2006.

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## Another Example

5. If you return to the point you were at in 4C above (See Image 13.), you can go through another example of finding an older version of a code chapter.

A. On the Wisconsin Legislature page titled "Chapter Comm 20, Administration and Enforcement, Subchapter 1 - Purpose and Scope," select Comm 20.11 Suspension or revocation of Wisconsin uniform building permit."  
(See Image 14.)

D. On the "Comm 20.11, Suspension or revocation of Wisconsin uniform building permit." page, find the history note (See Image 15.)

"Comm 20.11 - ANNOT.

History: Cr. Register, November, 1979, No. 287, eff. 6-1-80; CR 00-159: r. (1), renum. (intro.) to be (1), am. (2) Register September 2001, No. 549, eff. 12-1-01."

Select the link No. 549.

You will go to a page titled "Wisconsin Administrative Register No. 549, eff. October 1, 2001." (See Image 16.)

Scroll down the page past "Instructions for inserting new material in the Wisconsin Administrative Code." to

*"Volume | Code | Pages removed | Pages inserted | Removed chapters | Inserted chapters"*

Scroll down the page, watching that "Code" column, until you see the row containing "(Commerce) Uniform Dwelling Chs. Comm 20-25."

You see four underlined links on the right end. Two sets of two links: Comm 20, Comm 21. These sets are in two columns, "Removed chapters" and "Inserted chapters." (See Image 17.)

If you select the left Comm 20 link (removed chapter) you open a PDF file that shows Comm 20 as it was printed in the Register in March 2001. You can tell this by scrolling to the bottom of the first PDF page. You see "Register, March 2001, No. 543." (See Image 18.)

If you select the right Comm 20 link (removed chapter) you open a PDF file that shows Comm 20 as it was printed in the Register dated September 2001. You can tell this by scrolling to the bottom of the first PDF page. You see "Register, September 2001, No. 549." The language in this PDF version of Comm 20 went into effect December 1, 2001.