

NFPA®

501A

Standard for
Fire Safety Criteria for
Manufactured Home Installations,
Sites, and Communities

2021



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NFPA® 501A

Standard for

Fire Safety Criteria for Manufactured Home Installations, Sites, and Communities

2021 Edition

This edition of NFPA 501A, *Standard for Fire Safety Criteria for Manufactured Home Installations, Sites, and Communities*, was prepared by the Technical Committee on Manufactured Housing. It was issued by the Standards Council on October 5, 2020, with an effective date of October 25, 2020, and supersedes all previous editions.

This edition of NFPA 501A was approved as an American National Standard on October 25, 2020.

Origin and Development of NFPA 501A

NFPA activity associated with manufactured homes began in 1937, when NFPA organized its first Committee on Trailers and Trailer Courts. The first NFPA standard covering trailer coach camps appeared in 1939, with revisions in 1940, 1952, 1960, and 1964. A completely new edition was adopted in 1971, and that text was revised in 1972, 1973, 1974, 1975, 1977, and 1982.

The American National Standards Institute (ANSI) approved the 1972 NFPA edition on May 8, 1973; the 1973 NFPA edition on December 28, 1973; the 1974 NFPA edition on January 30, 1975; the 1975 NFPA edition on February 27, 1976; and the 1977 NFPA edition on October 18, 1977.

The 1982 edition of *Standard for Firesafety Criteria for Mobile Home Installations, Sites, and Communities* superseded the 1977 edition and was adopted by NFPA at its Annual Meeting held in San Francisco in 1982. The 1982 edition was produced by the newly formed Committee for Firesafety for Mobile Homes (created June 1979), which was charged with the responsibility of developing documents for fire safety criteria for single-family mobile homes, including the installation, sites, and communities, and the maintenance of and improvements for existing mobile homes. Therefore, the 1982 edition excluded all sections of previous editions not considered within the committee scope. Notably excluded were stabilizing and anchoring systems, requirements for piers and footings, and plumbing, including sewage disposal systems. Requirements for park electrical systems were addressed by reference to *NFPA 70, National Electrical Code*. Modifications were also made in sections dealing with fuel supply, air conditioning, and life and fire safety.

Major revisions to the standard were made in the 1987 edition in an attempt to better coordinate the NFPA chapters in a joint publication with the National Conference of States on Building Codes and Standards (NCSBCS), ANSI A225.1/NFPA 501A. Major changes included substituting *manufactured home* for *mobile home* throughout; deleting Chapter 3, Air Conditioning; expanding Chapter 2, Fuel Supply; and combining three appendixes into two.

The standard was reconfirmed in 1992 with a plan to expand the scope of NFPA 501A to cover fire safety requirements for the design, construction, installation, alteration/rehabilitation, maintenance, use, and occupancy of manufactured homes, manufactured home sites, and manufactured home communities, including accessory buildings and structures. This was a major revision of the scope and the entire standard, and the committee targeted a complete revision of NFPA 501A for 1994.

The 1997 edition was a reconfirmation of the 1992 edition of NFPA 501A. The proposed expansion of the scope of the 1992 edition, as noted in the preceding paragraph, was discussed and acted on by the technical committee. The scope of NFPA 501A was not expanded; instead, a new document, NFPA 501, *Standard on Manufactured Housing*, was generated. NFPA 501 represented the reconstituted 1977 edition of NFPA 501B, *Standard for Mobile Homes*, which was the basis for the federal *Manufactured Home Construction and Safety Standards*.



The earlier editions of NFPA 501A were jointly developed and published by NFPA and NCSBCS as A225.1/NFPA 501A. The 1997 edition of NFPA 501A was published as a separate, stand-alone document in agreement with NCSBCS and contained only the fire safety requirements. The non-fire safety requirements were published by NCSBCS as A225.1 (1994 edition).

NFPA assumed responsibility for NCSBCS A225 standard in 2003, which was processed concurrently with the 2003 edition of NFPA 501A.

The 1999 edition was a reconfirmation of the 1997 edition. In June 1998, NFPA was selected by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to update the federal standards (24 CFR 3280) for manufactured homes. As a result of this selection by HUD, the original technical committee for manufactured homes was expanded into six technical committees and a technical correlating committee. The expansion occurred during the Report on Comments phase of the 1999 edition.

The 2000 edition had only a few minor revisions. One revision, in 4.3.5, pertained to updating the water supplies for fire department operations. The other revisions were editorial in nature.

The 2003 edition was reformatted to meet the editorial and format-related requirements of the *Manual of Style for NFPA Technical Committee Documents*. Several definitions were deleted during that revision cycle.

The 2005 edition incorporated new requirements for fire separation distances between manufactured homes.

The 2009 edition of NFPA 501A updated extracted text where appropriate. In addition, revisions were made that clarified requirements and added new ones for water supplies that serve the site, and newly revised criteria were introduced for fire department access roads and paths.

The 2013 edition was revised to include requirements on retroactivity and equivalencies in Chapter 1. Provisions for storm shelters, community buildings, and emergency considerations such as windstorms were added. Several modifications were made to the organization of requirements within the document.

The 2017 edition included the following revisions:

- (1) The last two sentences of 7.1.4 were removed — referencing the guidance document is sufficient without getting into the details of the document itself.
- (2) Because Annex C in previous editions did not address recommendations for residential fire sprinkler systems in a manner similar to what is currently provided for home smoke alarms, language was added to address maintenance and testing of NFPA 13D systems by directing the owner to the practices recommended in NFPA 13D.
- (3) References were appropriately updated.

The 2021 edition includes changes to the following:

- (1) A new requirement in Chapter 6 to inspect, test, and maintain private fire hydrants in accordance with NFPA 25
- (2) A new requirement in Chapter 6 to inspect, test, and maintain fire alarm systems in community buildings in accordance with *NFPA 72*
- (3) An update to the Wildland/Urban Interface/Intermix section of Chapter 6
- (4) Updates to referenced publications and NFPA extracts

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This list represents the membership at the time the Committee was balloted on the final text of this edition. Since that time, changes in the membership may have occurred. A key to classifications is found at the back of the document.

NOTE: Membership on a committee shall not in and of itself constitute an endorsement of the Association or any document developed by the committee on which the member serves.

Committee Scope: This Committee shall have primary responsibility for documents on manufactured homes including the installation, sites and communities, and the maintenance of and improvements for existing manufactured homes.

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NFPA 501A

Standard for

Fire Safety Criteria for Manufactured Home Installations, Sites, and Communities

2021 Edition

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NOTICE: An asterisk (*) following the number or letter designating a paragraph indicates that explanatory material on the paragraph can be found in Annex A.

A reference in brackets [] following a section or paragraph indicates material that has been extracted from another NFPA document. Extracted text may be edited for consistency and style and may include the revision of internal paragraph references and other references as appropriate. Requests for interpretations or revisions of extracted text shall be sent to the technical committee responsible for the source document.

Information on referenced and extracted publications can be found in Chapter 2 and Annex D.

Chapter 1 Administration

1.1 Scope. This standard shall cover fire safety requirements for the installation of manufactured homes and manufactured home sites, including accessory buildings, structures, and communities.

1.2 Purpose. The purpose of this standard is to provide minimum requirements for the installation of manufactured homes and manufactured home sites, including accessory buildings, structures, and communities.

1.3 Application.

1.3.1 The standard shall apply to manufactured homes as described in 1.3.1.1.

1.3.1.1 Manufactured Home. A structure, transportable in one or more sections, that in the traveling mode is 8 body-ft (2.4 m) or more in width or 40 body-ft (12.2 m) or more in length or that on site is 320 ft² (29.7 m²) or more, is built on a permanent chassis, is designed to be used as a dwelling with or

without a permanent foundation, whether or not connected to the utilities, and includes plumbing, heating, air-conditioning, and electrical systems contained therein. Such terms shall include any structure that meets all the requirements of this paragraph except the size requirements and with respect to which the manufacturer voluntarily files a certification required by the regulatory agency. Calculations used to determine the number of square feet (square meters) in a structure are based on the structure’s exterior dimensions, include all expandable rooms, cabinets, and other projections containing interior space, but do not include bay windows. [501:1.2.12]

1.3.2 The standard shall apply to new installations and where it is deemed a requirement by the regulatory agencies for existing installations.

1.3.3 The provisions of this standard shall not apply to recreational vehicles as defined in NFPA 1192 or to park trailers as defined in RVIA/ANSI A119.5, *Park Model RV Standard*.

1.3.4 The provisions of this standard shall not apply to recreational parks and campgrounds as defined in NFPA 1194.

1.4 Retroactivity. The provisions of this standard reflect a consensus of what is necessary to provide an acceptable degree of protection from the hazards addressed in this standard at the time the standard was issued.

1.4.1 Unless otherwise specified, the provisions of this standard shall not apply to facilities, equipment, structures, or installations that existed or were approved for construction or installation prior to the effective date of the standard. Where specified, the provisions of this standard shall be retroactive.

1.4.2 In those cases where the authority having jurisdiction determines that the existing situation presents an imminent danger, the authority having jurisdiction shall be permitted to apply retroactively any portions of this standard.

1.4.3 The retroactive requirements of this standard shall be permitted to be modified if their application clearly would be impractical in the judgment of the authority having jurisdiction and only where it is clearly evident that a reasonable degree of safety is provided.

1.5 Equivalency. Nothing in this standard is intended to prevent the use of systems, methods, or devices of equivalent or superior quality, strength, fire resistance, effectiveness, durability, and safety over those prescribed by this standard.

1.5.1 Technical documentation shall be submitted to the authority having jurisdiction to demonstrate equivalency.

1.5.2 The system, method, or device shall be approved for the intended purpose by the authority having jurisdiction.

1.6 Units and Formulas.

1.6.1 Primary Values. The inch-pound value for a measurement and the SI value given in parentheses shall be acceptable for use as primary units for satisfying the requirements of this document.

1.6.2 SI Units. Metric units of measurement in this document are in accordance with the modernized metric system known as the International System of Units (SI).

Chapter 2 Referenced Publications

2.1 General. The documents or portions thereof listed in this chapter are referenced within this standard and shall be considered part of the requirements of this document.

2.2 NFPA Publications. National Fire Protection Association, 1 Batterymarch Park, Quincy, MA 02169-7471.

NFPA 1, *Fire Code*, 2021 edition.

NFPA 10, *Standard for Portable Fire Extinguishers*, 2018 edition.

NFPA 13, *Standard for the Installation of Sprinkler Systems*, 2019 edition.

NFPA 24, *Standard for the Installation of Private Fire Service Mains and Their Appurtenances*, 2019 edition.

NFPA 25, *Standard for the Inspection, Testing, and Maintenance of Water-Based Fire Protection Systems*, 2020 edition.

NFPA 31, *Standard for the Installation of Oil-Burning Equipment*, 2020 edition.

NFPA 54, *National Fuel Gas Code*, 2021 edition.

NFPA 58, *Liquefied Petroleum Gas Code*, 2020 edition.

NFPA 70®, *National Electrical Code®*, 2020 edition.

NFPA 72®, *National Fire Alarm and Signaling Code®*, 2019 edition.

NFPA 82, *Standard on Incinerators and Waste and Linen Handling Systems and Equipment*, 2019 edition.

NFPA 101®, *Life Safety Code®*, 2021 edition.

NFPA 1142, *Standard on Water Supplies for Suburban and Rural Fire Fighting*, 2017 edition.

NFPA 1144, *Standard for Reducing Structure Ignition Hazards from Wildland Fire*, 2018 edition.

NFPA 1192, *Standard on Recreational Vehicles*, 2021 edition.

NFPA 1194, *Standard for Recreational Vehicle Parks and Campgrounds*, 2021 edition.

NFPA 1221, *Standard for the Installation, Maintenance, and Use of Emergency Services Communications Systems*, 2019 edition.

NFPA 1600®, *Standard on Continuity, Emergency, and Crisis Management*, 2019 edition.

NFPA 5000®, *Building Construction and Safety Code®*, 2021 edition.

2.3 Other Publications.

2.3.1 AASHTO Publications. American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials, 444 N. Capitol Street NW, Suite 249, Washington, DC 20001.

A Policy on Geometric Design of Highways and Streets, 7th edition, 2018.

2.3.2 ASME Publications. American Society of Mechanical Engineers, Two Park Avenue, New York, NY 10016-5990.

ASME *Boiler and Pressure Vessel Code*, 2017.

2.3.3 ASTM Publications. ASTM International, 100 Barr Harbor Drive, P.O. Box C700, West Conshohocken, PA 19428-2959.

ASTM A254/A254M, *Standard Specification for Copper Brazed Steel Tubing*, 2012 (2019).

ASTM B88, *Specification for Seamless Copper Water Tube*, 2016.

ASTM B280, *Specification for Seamless Copper Tubing for Air Conditioning and Refrigeration Field Service*, 2019.

ASTM D2513, *Standard Specification for Polyethylene (PE) Gas Pressure Pipe, Tubing, and Fittings*, 2019.

ASTM D2517, *Reinforced Epoxy Resin Gas Pressure Pipe and Fittings*, 2018.

2.3.4 AWWA Publications. American Water Works Association, 6666 W. Quincy Ave., Denver, CO 80235.

ANSI/AWWA C502, *Dry-Barrel Fire Hydrants*, 2018.

ANSI/AWWA C503, *Wet-Barrel Fire Hydrants*, 2018.

2.3.5 FEMA Publications. Federal Emergency Management Agency, U.S. Department of Homeland Security, 500 C Street, SW, Washington, DC 20472.

FEMA P-320, *Taking Shelter From the Storm: Building a Safe Room For Your Home or Small Business*, 2014.

FEMA P-361, *Design and Construction Guidance for Community Safe Rooms*, 2015.

2.3.6 ICC Publications. International Code Council, 500 New Jersey Avenue, NW, 6th Floor, Washington, DC 20001.

ICC 500, *ICC/NSSA Standard for the Design and Construction of Storm Shelters*, 2014.

▲ **2.3.7 RVIA Publications.** Recreation Vehicle Industry Association, 1896 Preston White Drive, P.O. Box 2999, Reston, VA 20191-2999.

RVIA/ANSI A119.5, *Park Model RV Standard*, 2015.

▲ **2.3.8 UL Publications.** Underwriters Laboratories Inc., 333 Pfingsten Road, Northbrook, IL 60062-2096.

UL 80, *Steel Tanks for Oil Burner Fuels and Other Combustible Liquids*, 2007, revised 2014.

UL 1037, *Antitheft Alarms and Devices*, 2016, revised 2017.

2.3.9 U.S. Government Publications. U.S. Government Publishing Office, 732 North Capitol Street, NW, Washington, DC 20401-0001.

Title 49, Code of Federal Regulations, Part 191, "Transportation of Natural and Other Gas by Pipeline: Annual Reports, Incident Reports, and Safety-Related Condition Reports."

Title 49, Code of Federal Regulations, Part 192, "Transportation of Natural and Other Gas by Pipeline: Minimum Federal Safety Standards."

2.3.10 Other Publications.

Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, 11th edition, Merriam-Webster, Inc., Springfield, MA, 2003.

2.4 References for Extracts in Mandatory Sections.

NFPA 1, *Fire Code*, 2021 edition.

NFPA 501, *Standard on Manufactured Housing*, 2021 edition.

NFPA 1144, *Standard for Reducing Structure Ignition Hazards from Wildland Fire*, 2018 edition.

Chapter 3 Definitions

3.1 General. The definitions contained in this chapter shall apply to the terms used in this standard. Where terms are not defined in this chapter or within another chapter, they shall be