

A Green Code That Was Worth the Wait

By Greco Integrated Communications

While it seems like every organization is positioning to demonstrate its “green” credentials, the International Code Council® (ICC®) has finalized the first green construction code for commercial buildings that is integrated with the existing International Codes®, making it more easily enforceable, useable and adoptable. The process of developing the International Green Construction Code (IGCC) deliberately utilized diverse experts from government, industry and advocacy organizations to produce a consensus IGCC Public Version 1.0 through a public and participatory series of meetings. The IGCC goes beyond voluntary systems, industry-driven standards, and regulations that are unrelated to existing codes. Instead, the IGCC responds to the need expressed by jurisdictions who struggle with developing their own green code without the experts that have advised them on developing the rest of their codes.

Now there is no need to wait for the leader in codes and related services to publish comprehensive green building codes because IGCC Public Version 1.0 is available on March 15. The International Green Construction Code is the latest in a long list of sustainable design codes and provisions the Code Council has been publishing for years... long before every jumped on the “green” bandwagon.

Unique in the world of codes and standards, the same superior code development and approval process was followed for the IGCC as has been used for decades in the development of the International Codes in all areas of construction.

In addition to creating a new regulatory baseline for jurisdictions, the International Green Construction Code will allow additional customization at the jurisdictional level, and be compatible with voluntary rating systems (e.g., LEED, Green Globes) The IGCC also offers many unique features and benefits in that it:

- Will offer the most comprehensive and effective code for alternative water sources such as graywater, rainwater and reclaimed water. This is important, not just for regions struggling with limited water supplies, but to offset possible water shortages in the future, even in areas where this has never been an issue;
- Encompasses the latest alternative energy technologies such as wind turbines, geothermal heating, solar energy, energy recovery, and management and control systems.
- Is the first and only construction code that establishes code requirements for a minimum level of sustainability in commercial buildings;
- Is based on the same clear, easy-to-use sequence that makes the I-Codes® the most accepted code adoption platform in the U.S. This, combined with the extensive support and level of devotion the Code Council offers its users, is why they’re the leader in codes and related products, and is a key reason for why more and more countries around the world are choosing to adopt ICC Codes over others;
- Offers the flexibility jurisdictions need in order to customize the code based on local factors such as flood areas, greenfield sites, light pollution, and many others;



Jay Peters, Executive Director of the ICC's Plumbing, Mechanical and Fuel Gas Group, indicates that understanding sustainable design and the codes that support it are not a passing phase, but rather instead, part of an evolution that will result in the integration of green construction practices into standard construction practices. "It will soon become second nature to implement greener plumbing, mechanical and other energy- and resource-saving practices," Peters said.

For the same reasons why ICC codes are adopted in more jurisdictions than any other, building departments and key building and sustainability stakeholders are applauding ICC's development of this unique tool. Visit iccsafe.org/igcc for more information and to download a free copy of the IGCC.

The International Code Council (ICC) publishes building safety, energy efficiency and fire prevention codes that are used in the construction of residential and commercial buildings. Most U.S. cities, counties and states choose the I-Codes based on their outstanding quality. The ICC's Plumbing, Mechanical and Fuel Gas (PMG) Group is devoted exclusively to providing PMG products and support to jurisdictions and construction industry professionals across the country and around the globe, with one or more PMG codes adopted in 49 states. The more than 200 superior products and related services were developed specifically by and for plumbing and mechanical professionals.

Contact the PMG Group
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