



INTERNATIONAL GREEN BUILDING CODE FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What will be the scope of the International Green Construction Code (IGCC)?

- It will apply to traditional commercial and high performance buildings
- It will be consistent and coordinated with the ICC family of codes and standards
- It will be applicable to the construction of buildings, structures and systems, including alterations and additions
- It will be designed with the leading rating systems in mind
- It will provide criteria to measure compliance
- Will address residential construction by reference to the ICC 700 National Green Building Standard for Residential Construction

What subject areas will the IGCC cover?

- Energy use efficiency
- Water use efficiency
- Materials and resource use
- Indoor environment quality
- Building impacts on the environment (“greenhouse gas”)
- Site Design
- Sustainable building owner/facility management education
- Existing buildings

What concepts will guide the development of the IGCC?

- Will use the “model code” approach to provide communities/states the ability to modify
- Will address minimum and advanced levels of performance
- Will work as an overlay to the ICC Family of Codes
- Will be written in mandatory language that provides a regulatory framework
- Will provide performance, prescriptive and pre-engineered solutions
- Account for local conditions
- Reflect the AIA 2030 Carbon Neutrality Challenge
- Design with local, state and federal law in mind

What about residential properties?

The ICC co-developed the National Green Building Standard (NGBS), otherwise known as ICC-700, with the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB). While NGBS/ICC-700 provides optional approaches to designing and constructing, it can be used as a tool in developing codes addressing green practices for residential construction.

Who is supporting the ICC in this effort?

The AIA and ASTM-International are the “cooperating sponsors” for this initiative, and as such will have an active role in the development process. Other organizations indicating their support are the U.S. Green Building Council (the purveyor of the LEED rating system) and the Green Buildings Initiative (GBI). Interest in participating on the development committee has been expressed from a variety of government, private sector and non-profit sources including ASHRAE, PCA, AISI, as well as state and local officials.

How does the development process work?

The ICC Board of Directors has created the “Sustainable Building Technology Committee,” which will be composed of individuals from multiple sectors and charged with the drafting process. The Board has received more than 100 applications and is responsible for appointing this comm. The final composition of the SBTC will be announced soon, along with several advisory committees.

The SBTC will conduct open meetings around the U.S. between July and December as it moves forward in creating a draft IGCC. The Committee’s draft will issue in Spring 2010. At that time, the Draft IGCC may be used as a tool for jurisdictions wishing to develop a code based on the ICC process. The Draft

IGCC will be posted for public comment. A week of hearings to review the public comments will be conducted. The first draft will be updated to the final draft based on approved comments. The final draft will be posted for code change submittals followed by code development hearings. The Final Action Hearing vote is restricted to ICC governmental members as they will be charged with enforcing the code. This process tracks the development of the other codes in the I-Codes series. Once a final code is created, it will be revisited every three years along with the other I-Codes, through the two-hearing process outlined above.

What is the difference between the International Green Construction Code and other systems and standards such as LEED, Green Globes, etc.

The IGCC creates a regulatory framework for new and existing commercial and high performance buildings. Rating systems are not written in the form of enforceable codes, acting as optional approaches. It is anticipated that the IGCC will look to existing rating systems and standards as resources in developing the regulatory framework.

Further, to use one example, a rating system awards points based on the inclusion of certain design elements and other features. The assumption is that the combination and concentration of favored elements will result in a positive environmental impact. The IGCC will build on that foundation to ensure that measurable building performance and an adherence to building safety will be featured in the model code language.

The International Codes, or “I-Codes” are developed through a multi-step process that reflects the consensus of building safety and sustainability experts from the public and private sectors. The first step involves an expert committee developing a draft through a series of committee meetings followed by submitting the draft for public comment, after which the revised draft goes through two hearings. At each hearing, the drafts can be amended before a final version is approved. The hearings and committee meetings are open to the public and allow for comments from members and non-members alike. The final version is adopted by the ICC “governmental members” who represent local, state or federal agencies – the very individuals who will be responsible for enforcing the codes.

How will the IGCC differ from a national or federal mandate?

The IGCC will be a “model” code, requiring adoption by a governing jurisdiction before it becomes law. In this way, the model language can, if necessary, be adapted to address local conditions and allows for publicly elected legislative bodies to have the final voice in adoption. Many of the I-Codes are adopted without amendment at the state or local level; amended versions often take into account local weather and hazard conditions, regional approaches to building design and construction, and other factors.

How will the IGCC differ from other International Codes addressing Energy Conservation, Commercial Buildings, High Performance Buildings or from the International Building Code (IBC) itself?

One of the values of the IGCC is that it will be designed to coordinate and integrate with existing I-Codes. The IGCC will most likely present various tiers for jurisdictions to apply to commercial and high performance building stock, but in a manner that incorporates the health and safety features of the other I-Codes.

Why is the ICC promoting its Green Construction Code when other options already exist?

The development of a code occurs when there is a clear need indicated from regulators and others in the building safety industry. In the case of the IGCC, there has been an increasing call for an actual code that is clear and enforceable. We have heard this not only from our members in local and state government, but from stakeholders across the spectrum. This is why the AIA and the ASTM have joined the ICC as “cooperating partners.” Architects want a code book that will guide their design activities just like the other I-Codes. Standards experts want a code that reflects the appropriate attention to consensus, enforceability, science and metrics.

How can people track the progress of the IGCC development?

Regular updates will be posted to the ICC website at www.iccsafe.org.

For general information about the IGCC, visit www.iccsafe.org/IGCC.

For specific information about Committee’s progress and activities, go to

www.iccsafe.org/IGCC/SBTC.html