

## **ICC Adopts 30% Improvements to Efficiency Code**

On Oct. 30, local, state and federal government officials of the International Code Council (ICC) adopted improvements to the 2012 International Energy Conservation Code (IECC) that will achieve a 30 percent increase in energy savings as compared to the 2006 code. This historic increase will impact the nation's largest single energy user—homes and commercial buildings—which consume nearly half our energy.

The new code builds on proposals from the U.S. Department of Energy and the Energy Efficient Codes Coalition's 30% Solution 2012, whose state and national supporters include the Alliance to Save Energy, Edison Electric Institute, the National Low Income Housing Coalition, Environment America, Sierra Club, ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability, Global Green USA, the American Chemistry Council, and the National Association of State Energy Officials (NASEO). Some of the impacts to the residential and commercial sectors are below:

### **Residential**

- Air infiltration tests to ensure building envelope efficiency
- Duct testing to a tighter duct leakage standard
- More stringent insulation and glazing efficiency requirements
- Options to avoid wasting heated water (e.g., shortening and insulating pipes)
- A streamlined IECC and International Residential Code compliance process

### **Commercial**

- A commissioning requirement for HVAC systems
- Increased efficiency for windows, doors, and skylights
- Automatic daylighting controls in some buildings
- Skylight and daylighting controls for spaces over 10,000 ft<sup>2</sup> in certain building types
- Efficiency improvements for cooling towers
- Increased minimum efficiency requirements for certain HVAC equipment
- Increased HVAC piping insulation provisions

### ***NASEO Codes Education***

Over the past year, NASEO increased its building codes education efforts to provide education and outreach to states on building codes. In addition to several webinars and workshops, NASEO assisted states in working towards meeting the building code provisions of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. NASEO also facilitates regular meetings of officials from the ICC, state and local organizations, and code experts involved in building code issues in Washington, D.C. The meetings bring together officials from ICC and other codes/standards making bodies, national organizations involved in code support activities for state and local governments, regional energy efficiency organizations, and other stakeholders interested in code adoption, implementation and compliance issues.

A study conducted by the DOE suggests the new code will allow an average homebuyer to pocket \$511 in net annual energy after paying additional mortgage costs of the efficiency improvements. The potential annual savings if all states were to adopt the 2012 code and achieve full compliance could do the following:

- Save the United States more than 3.5 quadrillion Btu of annual source energy consumption by 2030;
- Save U.S. consumers and businesses about \$40 billion (real 2008 dollars) in annual energy costs by 2030; and
- Avoid about 200 million metric tons of annual carbon dioxide emissions by 2030; this is equivalent to the current emissions from 18 million American homes.

These estimates assume savings from all buildings covered by code, including new construction, major renovations and additions among single-family and multifamily homes, as well as commercial buildings. Forty-seven states and the District of Columbia base their building codes upon these national model standards.