



Local Governments Have the Power to Move National Energy Codes Forward

Boosting the efficiency of building energy codes is essential to sound energy policy and to meeting Paris Accord targets. Buildings use over 40% of the energy used in the United States, including 70% of the electricity. Building energy use accounts for over 40% of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions. Improvements to the new and existing building stock are critical to reducing energy use and meeting climate goals.

The majority of cities adopt or enforce the International Energy Conservation Code (IECC) or a state or local code based on it. This code is updated every three years through a formal approval process. While progress was made in efficiency gains in this code between 2006 and 2012, more recently efficiency improvements have stagnated due to political pressure from specific interest groups, leaving many jurisdictions unable to move forward with efficiency gains. Efficiency advocates are teaming up to support local governments. Cities, states, municipal utilities, and local governments can leverage their collective influence to help advance energy codes in support of local climate goals. Participating in this effort is a great way to help local governments make progress toward building energy performance targets and greenhouse gas reduction goals.

The IECC is updated every three years in a year-long process administered by the International Code Council (ICC) that culminates with two weeks of electronic voting by Governmental Member Voting Representatives (GMVRs). GMVRs include local government code officials, building inspectors, fire marshals, sustainability staff, policy staff, public utilities and other qualified officials.

Though there are about **20,000** potential voting members, only about **500** votes are typically cast on energy efficiency initiatives. More pro-efficiency votes could substantially improve the efficiency of the 2021 IECC.

Registering and casting votes in the 2021 IECC code cycle is easier than you think. The total number of votes that each local government can cast depends on (1) city population and (2) the number of Governmental Memberships. A local government can have multiple ICC Governmental Memberships. For example, fire districts, public power agencies, and other agencies can each be a separate Governmental Member if they are a “governmental unit, department or agency engaged in the administration, formulation or enforcement of laws, ordinances, rules or regulations relating to the public health, safety and welfare.” Registering additional departments increases a local government’s voting power.

A local government can only cast its votes if you meet key deadlines:

March 29, 2019

Deadline for joining the ICC or updating your membership

September 23, 2019

Deadline for registering your slate of GMVRs

November 13-27, 2019

Tentative Date for Online Voting to Finalize the 2021 IECC

The first step of the process is to join ICC and determine the number of votes available to you. Below is a summary of the IECC annual dues and number of votes for local governments of different sizes.

| Population | 0-50,000 | 50,000-150,000 | 150,000+ |
|--|----------|----------------|----------|
| Number of Votes per Registered City Department (GMVRs) | 4 | 8 | 12 |
| Annual Dues per Department | \$135 | \$240 | \$370 |

Three critical path steps to get involved in the code update process include (1) joining ICC; (2) registering your individual voters with ICC; and (3) voting on proposed code amendments. Local governments can further participate in the process by providing public comment and/or testifying at hearings as ICC committee's consider code proposals to advance to the voting process.

| Critical Path Participation in the 2021 IECC code cycle | Join or Update ICC Membership, pay dues, designate a primary member | | | Identify and register specific voting members with ICC | Vote; make sure all voting members cast their votes for efficiency | |
|---|---|----------------|--|--|--|---------------|
| Deadline | January 2019 | March 29, 2019 | April 28- May 8, 2019 | September 23, 2019 | October 2019 | November 2019 |
| Opportunities for Additional Influence | Submit specific code amendment proposals | | Participate in Committee Hearings in Albuquerque | | Participate in Public Comment Hearings in Las Vegas | |

Energy efficiency experts and non-profit collaborators like New Buildings Institute (NBI) and the Energy Efficient Codes Council (EECC) are available to help local government sustainability professionals get involved in the code update process. Support may include:

- Technical advice and assistance
- Information on code proposals and efficiency impacts via a voting guide and webinars
- Check-ins and reminders about key engagement and voting opportunities deadlines

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