



## ICC NEWS RELEASE

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### **“Code Officials: Keeping Fire in its Place” is the Theme for Building Safety Month Week 1**

*Code compliance, working smoke and carbon monoxide alarms are key to saving lives*

Smoke and carbon monoxide alarms, fire sprinklers, and passive fire-rated construction such as fire walls and fire doors designed to stop the spread of fire save lives and protect property. Those and other safety measures in fire and building codes published by the [International Code Council](http://www.iccsafe.org) (ICC) and widely used in the built environment throughout the United States provide minimum safeguards for fire prevention and protection. Whether a home or building is constructed of wood, brick, concrete or steel, code compliance is the key to minimizing the damage from fires and saving lives.

Since 1980, [Building Safety Month](http://www.iccsafe.org) has been an annual public safety awareness campaign. The theme for week one of Building Safety Month 2014, May 6-12, sponsored by the [American Wood Council](http://www.awcouncil.org) (AWC), is “Code Officials: Keeping Fire in its Place.”

“Code officials, along with the fire service, architects, engineers, builders and the public, help to develop construction safety codes and standards,” said ICC Board President Stephen D. Jones, CBO. “During Building Safety Month, and throughout the year, many Code Council members schedule community outreach events and school-based programs across the nation to demonstrate the importance of building to code. We honor them for their commitment to public safety.”

“We’re honored to participate in ICC’s Building Safety Month,” said AWC President and CEO Robert Glowinski. “Properly implemented building codes are critical to any building material performing to its highest standard; and properly constructed and code compliant wood structures

have an excellent fire record in North America. We applaud the ICC and the U.S. Fire Administration for their efforts to educate the building community and the public at-large to ensure public safety.”

Smoke alarms have been required in the ICC’s International Codes (I-Codes) for more than 40 years. The I-Codes require working smoke alarms on every level of a home, outside each separate sleeping area in the immediate vicinity of bedrooms and in each bedroom.

Experts agree that consumers should replace smoke alarm batteries and test the alarms every year. Smoke alarms more than 10 years old should be replaced. Three out of five home fire deaths in 2007-2011 resulted from fires in properties without working smoke alarms, according to the National Fire Protection Association report, “Smoke Alarms in U.S. Home Fires.”

ICC is a partner in the U.S. Fire Administration’s “*Fire Is Everyone’s Fight*” campaign. More information about Building Safety Month and fire safety tips are available at [www.iccsafe.org/BSM/2014/pages/week-1.aspx](http://www.iccsafe.org/BSM/2014/pages/week-1.aspx).

Carbon monoxide alarms also are a safety requirement in all homes and townhomes with appliances fueled by natural gas, propane, coal, wood, charcoal, oil or kerosene. Affected appliances include furnaces, ranges, water heaters, clothes dryers, room heaters, portable generators and fireplaces.

The American Wood Council (AWC) is the voice of North American wood products, representing over 75 percent of the industry and employing 350,000 men and women. Made from a renewable resource that absorbs and sequesters carbon, wood products are essential to everyday life. AWC structural design standards are referenced in the I-Codes, ensuring wood structures are built to resist the most onerous wind, seismic and snow loading conditions.

The [International Code Council](#) is a member-focused association. It is dedicated to developing model codes and standards used in the design, build and compliance process to construct safe, sustainable, affordable and resilient structures. Most U.S. communities and many global markets [choose the International Codes](#).

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