



ICC NEWS RELEASE

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“Code Officials: Helping Homeowners Weather the Storm” is the Theme for Building Safety Month Week 2

Preparing your family and protecting your home are critical aspects of mitigating natural disasters

Making sure your family is prepared to weather natural disasters is important. Your actions can ensure that no matter what Mother Nature brings, you, your family and your community will be resilient, according to the International Code Council (ICC).

The following tips will help prepare your family for an emergency:

- Develop a family disaster plan and make copies of important documents such as insurance policies, the deed to your home, other personal papers, important phone numbers and a home inventory; store important papers in a safety deposit box or a fireproof, water-tight container offsite.
- Review your evacuation route and emergency shelter locations with your family.
- Know your options for sheltering in place are appropriate when conditions require that you seek protection in your home, place of employment, or other location when a disaster strikes.
- Create a checklist of important things to do before, during and after a disaster.

Since 1980, Building Safety Month has been an annual public safety awareness campaign. The theme for week two of Building Safety Month 2014, May 12-18, sponsored by the [Portland Cement Association](#), is “Code Officials: Helping Homeowners Weather the Storm.” More information about Building Safety Month and preparing your home for disasters is available at www.buildingsafetymonth.org.

“The power of natural disasters can be overwhelming,” said International Code Council Board President Stephen D. Jones, CBO. “While you can't necessarily stop natural disasters from happening, there are steps you can take to increase your home's chance of survival, even in the face of the worst Mother Nature can dish out. The best line of defense is a home constructed to code. Also be sure to review your disaster plan regularly. If you make changes that affect the plan, update it immediately.”

“The impact of natural disasters is often not limited to individual buildings but can involve entire neighborhoods or communities and can have devastating regional and national implications,” said Steve Szoke, Senior Director of Codes and Standards for the Portland Cement Association. “Assessing potential disaster risks and consequences is important for community planning and building code adoption, even when the improvements are made one building at a time through new construction or re-construction should a disaster occur.”

Published by ICC, the *International Codes* and supporting standards such as ICC 500 Standard for the Design and Construction of Storm Shelters and ICC 600 Standard for Residential Construction in High-Wind Regions provide disaster-resistant safeguards for the built environment. Several online resources are available to help your family and home withstand disasters such as earthquakes, floods, hurricanes, tornados and wildfires including: www.ready.gov, www.fema.gov, www.safestronghome.com, www.shakeout.org, www.flash.org, www.highwindsaferooms.com and www.iccsafe.org/public_safety.

The public can advocate on behalf of communities adopting the latest editions of the International Codes to ensure survival after a disaster. Information from standards and other guides go hand-in-hand with local building codes.

The Portland Cement Association is a powerful and vocal advocate for enhanced resiliency, sustainability, jobs creation, economic growth, infrastructure investment, and overall innovation and excellence in construction throughout the United States.

The [International Code Council](http://www.iccsafe.org) 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](http://www.iccsafe.org).

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