



ICC NEWS RELEASE

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Contact: Steve Dagers
1-888-ICC-SAFE (1-888-422-7233), ext. 4212
SDagers@lccSafe.org

Texas Adopts 2015 IRC Energy Provisions with Amendments Statewide

The code includes energy efficiency guidelines for new homes

With the adoption of the *2015 International Residential Code (IRC)* the state of Texas has updated its minimum statewide energy requirements for homes. The legislation requires all Texas homes to meet the energy efficiency requirements of Chapter 11 in the 2015 IRC that are identical to the *2015 International Energy Conservation Code (IECC)*. The changes, which take effect in September 2016, are the first updates to the Texas statewide code since January 2012. The International Code Council, a U.S.-based membership association, develops the International Codes.

Chapter 11 of the IRC also includes the Energy Rating Index (ERI), a compliance path that allows builders who get a Home Energy Rating System (HERS) to use the rating to achieve compliance with code requirements for energy efficiency. Texas amended the ERI to phase in lower maximum ratings over the next six years. The ERI performance path gives builders another option to comply with the 2015 IECC. The HERS rating is a compliance path for the ERI method and nationally recognized for inspecting and calculating a home's energy performance.

As the state with the largest number of new homes built in 2014, the action of the Texas legislature in adopting the 2015 IRC energy provisions is significant. It sends a strong message to the market place that the 2015 IECC represents a balance between energy efficiency and the builders' ability to meet the code in a cost-effective manner. The legislation was a compromise accepted by homebuilders, building officials and energy-efficiency advocates.

“HB 1736 implements an intelligent and rational energy code policy that will result in significantly better compliance rates and allow for more cost effective implementation as future state energy codes are updated as required under existing law,” said Ned Muñoz, Vice President of Regulatory Affairs and General Counsel to the Texas Association of Builders.

While the legislation raised the maximum ERI/HERS ratings from the requirements of the 2015 IECC, the legislation also requires builders to meet stricter maximum ratings that will be phased in over the next six years. That will lead to more energy-efficient homes as technology and building practices make homes more cost effective.

ICC has been working with the Residential Energy Services Network (RESNET). RESNET developed the HERS rating and offers training and membership options for HERS raters. RESNET also has developed a checklist form that combines the HERS rating with a list of other prescriptive IECC requirements to allow code officials to accept the report of the HERS rater to meet all the code requirements for energy efficiency in new homes. The ERI compliance path helps home buyers evaluate the energy efficiency of new homes in the marketplace.

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