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ARTICLE

Code Officials, Local and State Governments Embrace IGCC Public Version 1.0

By Laura Taylor



Growing demand for sustainable construction has local and state officials from across the country actively working with the International Code Council to adopt Public Version 1.0 of the International Green Construction Code (IGCC).

Due to the growing demand for sustainable construction, local and state officials from across the country are actively working with the International Code Council to adopt Public Version 1.0 of the *International Green Construction Code* (IGCC). As the public comment period on IGCC Public Version 1.0 came to a close on May 14, 2010, the Code Council reached out to a wide pool of stakeholders and new participants in the code development process who had downloaded the document in an effort to understand their thoughts on the

code.

Since IGCC Public Version 1.0 debuted a few months prior on March 15, hundreds of code officials have reviewed the document. We took this opportunity to talk to people from large and small jurisdictions about some of the early reactions to the code and its impact on jurisdictions and the building industry.

Sylvanus Amevor, a county structural engineer and construction plans reviewer in the Building Development Division in [Prince William County, Virginia](#), outside Washington, D.C., sees the release of IGCC as timely.

"There has been interest from developers on a few projects," said Amevor. "As a code official, I have to stay current on new developments and we have a couple of buildings [where we] could [consider] using the IGCC. Anytime developers inquire about a code, we need to know what's going on and be prepared to assist. Generally, we want to keep ahead of trend."

In Buffalo, Wyoming, a community of 4,300, there has not historically been considerable interest in sustainable building. However, the tide seems to be turning a bit. After an inquiry from a local residential energy auditing business owner, Tom Hulick, Buffalo's building official and Code Council member, decided to download and review the IGCC in order to stay informed. Wyoming adopts codes at the state level, and typically is responsive to code-related issues.

Code Council Chief Executive Officer Rick Weiland said, "The voice of our members is clear. Whether or not they want to stay ahead of a trend, or are encouraged by their

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communities or seek to adopt this when finalized, we're pleased that the IGCC and the issue of sustainable building is part of the national conversation."

The IGCC will serve as an overlay to the existing family of I-Codes, negating the need for the creation of "home grown" codes for different jurisdictions. The code provides a road map that jurisdictions can use to immediately incorporate "green" components into existing or developing building codes. Jurisdictions also can customize the code in order to address their local priorities and conditions with the code's option for jurisdictional requirements and its project electives for building designers. As with all I-Codes, the IGCC will undergo a series of public hearings before it is finalized. The IGCC Public Version 1.0 hearings will be held in Chicago this August.

Following the consideration and integration of comments from this summer's hearings, Public Version 2.0 of the IGCC will be posted for code change submittals beginning November 3, 2010. The deadline for code change proposals is January 3, 2011. The Code Council invites all interested parties to develop and submit code change proposals to help ensure that the first edition of the IGCC is comprehensive and contemporary. Code change proposals will be considered at code development hearings and final action hearings in Dallas and Phoenix, respectively, during 2011, with publication of the 2012 IGCC to follow.

The IGCC initiative was launched with Cooperating Sponsors the American Institute of Architects (AIA) and ASTM International. The IGCC references the ANSI/ASHRAE/USGBC/IES Standard 189.1-2009 for the Design of High-Performance Green Buildings, Except Low-Rise Residential Buildings—developed by the American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air-Conditioning Engineers (ASHRAE), the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC) and the Illuminating Engineering Society (IES)—as an alternative jurisdictional compliance option within the IGCC. For more information on the IGCC, including a timeline of events and a synopsis of the code, visit www.iccsafe.org/igcc.

Laura Taylor is the president of Gaia Group PR, LLC, the communications firm partnered with the ICC in support of the IGCC initiative. Laura has previously held senior positions at Fortune 500 companies and led award-winning global agency teams in support of energy and energy efficiency issues. The Gaia team is focused on building strategic campaigns in the area of sustainability for a broad range of organizations from corporate to association clients.



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