

Multi-state report shows builders “doing a very good job” meeting energy code requirements.

A preliminary report from the first phase of a three-year Department of Energy (DOE) study on *International Energy Conservation Code* (IECC) compliance showed positive results after an early analysis of data from six of the participating states. The three-phase DOE grant project is aimed at improving energy code compliance by allowing the participating grantees to test various methods to boost energy code compliance rates.

In a presentation released in December 2015, DOE listed three “preliminary” conclusions after analyzing data collected from new homes in 6 states:

1. Builders and building officials are doing a very good job meeting adopted codes.
2. On average, homes are using less energy than would be expected based solely on the prescriptive code in five of the six states analyzed.
3. There is still significant savings potential from individual code requirements that do not comply.

This is encouraging news, and indicates that both builders and code officials are taking seriously their obligation to build homes that meet the adopted energy codes in their respective states. The good news is tempered somewhat by the fact that several of the states were still using the 2009 IECC as the basis for their state energy code, which means that the requirements being met are considerably less energy efficient than the requirements of the 2012 and 2015 IECC. In addition, there are new, builder friendly compliance paths in the 2015 IECC that will allow builders to use rating system scores, simpler performance paths, and flexible compliance options to meet the 2015 IECC requirements.

The DOE study has three parts. The first stage, reported on in December, was to measure baseline energy code compliance. The second stage, now being implemented in several of the states, will put in place a variety of training and educational programs aimed at both homebuilders and code officials. The final stage will measure improvements in compliance, against the baseline compliance rates. The delta between initial compliance and post-training compliance rate will validate programs that could be implemented and funded by government or private sector entities interested in boosting energy efficiency and reducing home energy use.

More information is available at the DOE website by clicking here:

<https://www.energycodes.gov/compliance/residential-energy-code-field-study>.