

BOMA Urges Caution in Green Code Adoption



IT'S NO SECRET THAT THE COMPETITION among state and local governments to be the "greenest" has hit a fever pitch. BOMA has aggressively led the commercial building industry in supporting this effort through voluntary programs aimed at producing more energy-efficient and sustainably operated buildings.

Efforts to consider mandatory green building regulations have been increasingly widespread. The adoption and implementation of green building codes is under consideration by New York City; Dallas; the states of Maryland, Washington and Colorado; and the U.S. Department of Defense. BOMA recently urged state and municipal governments and federal agencies to exercise caution as they weigh their options for enacting green building codes.

Two national model green building codes have been vetted through a full consensus development process—the American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air-Conditioning Engineers (ASHRAE) 189.1 for commercial buildings and the International Code Council

(ICC) 700 for residential occupancies. These model documents have been available for the consideration of federal, state and local governments for more than 18 months. Both were developed as "overlay" codes containing provisions intended to apply to projects specifically designed and constructed to exceed minimum code requirements in such areas as energy efficiency, indoor environmental quality and water usage. They are *not* designed to be substituted for the series of building codes establishing the minimum requirements to be enforced by building and fire officials. BOMA was involved in the initial development of both ASHRAE 189.1 and ICC 700 and continues its involvement in the committees responsible for ongoing updates and revisions to these codes.

The International Green Construction Code (IgCC) is another green building code for commercial buildings under development by ICC. IgCC is a model code also designed as an "overlay" to existing building codes that set the minimum requirements for all commercial

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buildings. The development of the IgCC, however, will not be completed until late 2011, with the first consensus edition of the code scheduled for release in early 2012. Through an agreement brokered in part through BOMA's influence, the IgCC will allow compliance with ASHRAE 189.1 to also satisfy compliance with the IgCC, thereby fostering compatibility between the two codes.

BOMA cautions all governmental

jurisdictions to consider that adoption and implementation of any of these model green building codes should only apply to buildings and projects seeking designation as green or sustainable and should not supersede minimum building regulations already subject to enforcement.

BOMA further cautions against consideration of draft versions of codes that have not been fully vetted through


a consensus process. Neither IgCC Versions 1.0 nor 2.0 have been fully vetted through the ICC governmental consensus process. In fact, more than 1,300 proposals are slated to be considered in the 2011 ICC process, which means that IgCC Version 2.0 will undergo major modifications before publication of the 2012 edition. BOMA strongly discourages other jurisdictions from emulating recent ill-advised actions in Richland, Wash., Keene, N.H. and the State of Rhode Island to implement IgCC Version 2.0.

Ohio Adopts ASHRAE Standard 90.1-2007

The State of Ohio Joint Committee on Agency Rule Review recently approved adoption of the *ANSI/ASHRAE/IES Standard 90.1—Energy Standard for Buildings Except Low-Rise Residential Buildings—2007 Edition* as its new commercial building energy code. The 2007 code, jointly developed by ASHRAE and the Illuminating Engineering Society (IES) and certified by the American National Standards Institute (ANSI), represents an approximately 15-percent decrease in energy usage over buildings meeting the requirements of the 2004 edition of the standard. The new code goes into effect in September 2011.

BOMA International and BOMA/Atlanta Help Develop Best Practices Operations Guide

Representatives from BOMA International and BOMA/Atlanta participated in a study team convened by ASHRAE to assist in the development of a best practices operations guide for energy-smart operation of commercial buildings based on ASHRAE's recently published *Performance Measurement Protocol (PMP)*. Ernie Conrad, P.E., LEED AP, BOMA/New York member and consultant to BOMA International in our participation in ASHRAE standards development, led this effort.

While many buildings claim to be "green," low energy" or "high performance," it is rarely clear on what evidence or data these claims are based. ASHRAE's *Performance Measurement Protocol* provides essential common measurements to provide meaningful and consistent benchmarks for claims of high-performance design and building operation. The guide is scheduled to be published later this year. 



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