



## ***NEWS RELEASE***

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### **Louisiana will build back stronger and safer with new building codes**

While Hurricane Katrina devastated much of Louisiana, the state is poised to rebuild stronger and safer than ever using the International Codes (I-Codes) developed by the International Code Council.

In a special session, the state legislature approved adoption of the International Building, Residential, Existing Building, Mechanical and Fuel Gas Codes for use in Louisiana. The bill applies to buildings rebuilt in the wake of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. It also will be required for all buildings built or rebuilt statewide starting in 2007. Under the legislation, the 11 parishes hit hardest by the hurricanes have up to 90 days to begin implementing and enforcing the wind and flood provisions of the International Building and Residential Codes. The code requires homes and businesses built along the Gulf Coast to withstand winds of 130 to 150 miles per hour. The bill also establishes a 19-member council to oversee enforcement of the codes by local governments.

“The massive effort to rebuild Louisiana will be long and difficult. However, with the International Codes in place to help guide reconstruction, homes and businesses will be safer, stronger and more resistant to future natural disasters,” said Sara Yerkes, International Code Council Senior Vice President of Government Relations. “As we have witnessed, in addition to the loss of life, there are many repercussions when natural disasters damage homes and businesses. Hurricane damage disrupts private industry and government services, puts people out of work, reduces disposable income and diminishes the tax base. By adopting and enforcing I-Codes, the state is helping to protect lives and property while limiting the far-reaching effects of hurricanes and other natural disasters.”

Many states, including hurricane-prone states, enforce the I-Codes or state codes based on the I-Codes (such as the Florida Building Code), for residential and commercial buildings. I-Codes contain the latest technologies for building construction. They take into account valuable lessons learned over the years. I-Codes provide state-of-the-art requirements for hurricane resistance, based on wind speed data collected from previous hurricanes. In wind borne debris regions, I-Codes address window, garage and door protection, such as shutters and impact-resistant windows, to protect against flying debris. I-

(More)

Codes also provide wind load criteria for the design of hurricane resistant roof tie-downs and exterior cladding.

“Though there may be a slightly higher initial cost, homes and commercial buildings constructed under the I-Codes are less likely to be destroyed during a natural disaster, greatly reducing costs to the property owner. The added level of protection for your home, your belongings, and, most importantly, your family will pay off in the long run,” said Yerkes. “Properly constructed buildings and homes are more resistant to general deterioration as well.”

The International Code Council, a membership association dedicated to building safety and fire prevention, develops the codes used to construct residential and commercial buildings, including homes and schools. Most U.S. cities, counties and states that adopt codes choose the International Codes developed by the International Code Council.

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