



NEWS RELEASE

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Individuals and organizations honored for commitment to building safety and fire prevention

The International Code Council Foundation honored two members of Congress, an international building expert, the Inter-American Development Bank and Home Depot with Silent Defender Awards recognizing exemplary action taken to improve public safety, health and welfare.

Senator Ted Stevens (R-Alaska) received a Silent Defender Award in honor of his focus on how construction, development and progress affect the environment. He helped form the Congressional Natural Hazards Caucus to promote ways to reduce the loss of life and property when disasters strike. He serves as co-chair of the caucus, which provides members of Congress with information and education on preparing for, mitigating against and responding to natural and manmade disasters. Stevens also introduced legislation aimed at improving the tsunami warning system and was instrumental in creating the Denali Commission, which addresses rural housing and built environment needs in the most challenging areas of Alaska. A 37-year member of the U.S. Senate, Stevens serves as President Pro Tempore and is Chair of the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation.

Congresswoman Jo Ann Davis (R-Va.) also received a Silent Defender Award. She has supported key public safety legislation, including the Cigarette Fire Safety Act and the Fire Sprinkler Incentive Act. She also promoted policies in federal land management to ease the potential for catastrophic wildfires and she supported reauthorization of the Assistance to Firefighters Grant program. A member of the U.S. House of Representatives since 2000, Davis is Virginia's first elected female Republican to the House. She serves on several committees and is Chair of the House Intelligence Subcommittee on Terrorism, Human Intelligence, Analysis and Counter-Intelligence.

Dr. Omaima Salah El-Din is the first international recipient of a Silent Defender Award. She was recognized for her lifelong commitment to establish a safe building system in Egypt. As the head of Egypt's Housing and Building Research Center, Dr. Omaima modernized building and engineering systems to better protect lives and property. Under her leadership, Egypt saw effective implementation of building codes, improved structural safety and enhanced economic development.

(More)

A Silent Defender Award also was presented to the **Inter-American Development Bank (IDB)**. While the IDB is known for its support of reconstruction after disasters strike, it also supports development in disaster-prone regions to reduce the risks posed by natural disasters. Activities include the implementation and enforcement of strong building codes to build a cultural of prevention. Founded in 1959, the IDB is the world's oldest and largest regional development institution. Today, the Bank works as a partnership between 47 member countries – about half of which are borrowing members. Members recognize that for many regions of the world, social and economic development cannot move forward if natural disasters are not taken into consideration.

Home Depot received a Silent Defender Award for its volunteer program, Team Depot, which provides shelter for those in need. Team Depot renovated more than 20,000 homes for the elderly and disabled through a program called Rebuilding Together. They partnered with Habitat for Humanity to build more than 160 homes. Home Depot also provides help to residents preparing for and recovering from natural disasters. One of Home Depot's policies during such emergencies is to freeze prices on all disaster commodities. Other Home Depot stores send their products and staff members to those areas in need – resupplying shelves and providing relief for associates affected by storms. The Home Depot and its Foundation donated nearly \$4 million in cash and material to communities affected by hurricanes that pounded Florida. The company also assists disaster relief organizations that educate consumers on preparing for disasters and providing supplies and volunteers in the wake of disasters. Founded in 1979, Home Depot now has more than 2,000 stores in the U.S., Canada and Mexico.

The International Code Council Foundation (ICCF) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to alleviating the devastating effects of natural disasters and other building tragedies by promoting ideas, methods and technologies that encourage the construction of durable, sustainable buildings and homes. The ICCF is a subsidiary of the International Code Council, Inc., an organization that develops the most widely adopted building codes in the nation.

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EDITORS' NOTE: Photos of the award winners are available at www.iccsafe.org/2006silentdefender