

ICC Government Relations

February 2026

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Comments requested by February 20: SBA issues guidance on federal pre-emption of building permits

To accelerate post-disaster rebuilding, the Trump Administration has taken limited steps to preempt state and local building permitting requirements. On January 27, the President signed an Executive Order (EO) titled "[Addressing State and Local Failures to Rebuild Los Angeles After Wildfire Disasters](#)." The EO directs the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the Small Business Administration (SBA) to consider revising regulations to preempt or replace state and local permitting requirements when those processes are found to have unduly delayed the use of federal disaster-relief funds for rebuilding homes, businesses, or houses of worship.

In response, on January 28, the SBA issued an [interim final rule](#) authorizing federal preemption of state and local permitting requirements for projects approved on or after January 1, 2025, that are funded through its Disaster Loan Program (DLP).

Under the rule, builders and contractors may self-certify that repairs or reconstruction comply with applicable building codes, safety requirements, and other substantive standards, while continuing to comply with all state and local requirements, except for permitting or approval processes the rule permits them to bypass. The SBA has published additional guidance, including self-certification forms, on its [website](#) for DLP recipients and participating builders.

It is important to note that this action applies only to SBA's Disaster Loan Program. The interim final rule does not establish nationwide federal preemption of state or local permitting requirements.

ICC's Government Relations team is coordinating with our fellow Standard Development Organizations to respond to the interim final rule and to educate key decision-makers in the Administration and Congress on the risks to federal preemption of local building departments. We are also in close contact with FEMA officials and will update ICC's membership should the Agency issue similar guidance for programs under its jurisdiction.

Please feel free to contact ICC's **Deputy Senior Vice President for Federal Relations** **Aaron Levy** (alevy@iccsafe.org), with a cc to **Lisa Berger** (lberger@iccsafe.org) if you have any questions. In addition, we would welcome any substantive comments from ICC's membership to include in our formal response to the SBA interim final rule. If you wish to submit comments for consideration, please send them to Aaron and Lisa by Friday, February 20.

UPDATE YOUR CALENDAR

2026 Public Comment Hearings – Group A & B

April 19–28, 2026

The Connecticut Convention Center, Hartford CT

2026 ICC Annual Conference and Expo

October 18 – 21, 2026

Gaylord Opryland Resort Nashville, TN

Experiences and advice sought to honor Women in Construction Week

#WomeninConstructionWeek is an annual event that takes place from March 1-7 and is dedicated to spotlighting the contributions of women in the construction industry. For the 2026 event, the Code Council is gathering experiences and advice from industry professionals for a future Building Safety Journal article. Submissions will be accepted through Feb. 20. What are your experiences as a professional woman in the industry, and what advice would you share to prepare other women to become successful? Have you noticed any emerging trends for women in the construction industry? You can also submit photos on the submission portal.

[Submit your information here →](#)

Nominations accepted until March 15 for the Code Council's annual awards

Each year the International Code Council (ICC) provides an opportunity for individuals to recognize their colleagues and peers for the important work they do by highlighting their achievements in leadership, innovation and community service. The 2026 ICC Awards Program, which includes honorary membership, is now open and accepting nominations through **March 15**. We encourage you to [fill out a nomination form](#) for one or more of the awards. Please note that Chapters that submit Part 2A of their Annual Report are eligible to be considered for Chapter of the Year and Chapter Merit awards. If you know someone whose hard work and dedication should be celebrated, [visit our website](#), and nominate them for an ICC award today.

[Read more here →](#)

CALL FOR COMMITTEES: Volunteers sought for three key committees

Reminder, the [application deadline is April 1](#) for the 2027-2029 Cycle Committees, including the Code Development Committees (CDCs), Code Interpretation Committees (CICs) and Code Correlation Committee (CCC). The International Code Council (ICC) invites dedicated volunteers to apply for committee positions in the 2027–2029 Code Development Cycle. By serving on these committees, you will help shape the 2030 International Codes (I-Codes), advancing building safety through model codes used by your communities and others globally. Your involvement directly influences the safety and well-being of approximately 2 billion people worldwide, ensuring that our communities benefit from up-to-date, effective building codes.

[Read more here →](#)

Public comments sought on 2030 International Energy Conservation Code

The International Code Council Board of Directors has established a new framework for developing the 2030 International Energy Conservation Code® (IECC®) that moves its content into two documents, the IECC and IECC Expanded. This split ensures that ICC continues to develop energy codes that meet the varied needs of jurisdictions in the U.S. and around the globe. The intent of the IECC is to establish minimum requirements for the energy-efficient design and construction of buildings, focused on initial construction costs and the operational energy performance of the building. The intent of the IECC Expanded (IECCX) is to provide additive requirements that provide market-driven, enforceable requirements that achieve a reasonable level of energy efficiency that is safe, technologically feasible, and life cycle cost effective, considering economic feasibility, including potential costs and savings for consumers and building owners, and return on investment.

[Read more here →](#)



Information available for Public Comment Hearing in Hartford, Connecticut

The International Code Council has released the schedule for the 2026 Public Comment Hearing Schedule (PCH), which includes both Group A and Group B of the International Codes® (I-

Codes®). The PCH will begin on April 19 at 1 p.m. Eastern and will be held exclusively in-person, with a view-only online stream available for remote observers. Here are highlights of the [schedule](#):

- Committee Schedules: Subject to progress and may be adjusted as required
- Registration: [Complete via ICC Leadership Week + Hearings web page](#)

The official hearing agenda will be published by March 4, and will be accessible from the [Code Development Committee page](#). All interested parties are encouraged to consult the full schedule and agenda as posted by ICC for

the most accurate and current information. The PCH will proceed with the next scheduled set of code changes upon completion of the preceding set. For details and updates, see the [ICC's official Committee Action Hearing resources](#).
[Read more here →](#)

2024 IECC and IEBC adoptions to modernize NYC's regulatory framework

New York City has adopted the 2025 NYC Energy Conservation Code based on the 2024 International Energy Conservation Code® (IECC®) and the NYC Existing Building Code based on the International Existing Building Code® (IEBC®). These decisions are a testament to the City's commitment to maintaining the highest standards in building safety and sustainability. "New York City is making history with the adoptions of the 2025 NYC Energy Conservation Code and the NYC Existing Building Code," said Dottie Mazzarella, Vice President, ICC Government Relations. "These adoptions will modernize the City's building regulatory framework and strengthen protection for its residents. It has been an honor to contribute to advancing public safety for the people of this great City." The main objective of the NYC Existing Building Code is to preserve and reuse existing buildings by offering flexible compliance options. This approach will ultimately result in safer buildings.

[Read more here →](#)

Code Council CEO John Belcik shares vision for ICC and the path ahead

January marked John Belcik's first year as CEO of the International Code Council (ICC). After a productive year working alongside ICC members, partners, the Board of Directors and staff, the Building Safety Journal spoke with Belcik about what's next.

QUESTION: How do you see ICC's role in the building safety industry evolving over the next few years?

BELCIK: ICC will continue to lead in building safety, and that core mission won't change. Driving our mission in 2026 and beyond will be a focus on resiliency, affordability and of course, safety. Building codes and solutions need to bolster all three.

[Read more here →](#)

Members approve amendments to ICC Bylaws, Certificate of Incorporation

The International Code Council (ICC) is pleased to announce that Amendment 2025-1 to the ICC Bylaws and Certificate of Incorporation passed with overwhelming support. This Amendment, which can be accessed by clicking [here](#), grants the ICC Board of Directors the ability to remove a director "for cause" in extreme and rare situations. Amendment 2025-1 is the result of a year's worth of hard work by the Bylaws Committee and Board of Directors, which unanimously recommended approval. At the 2025 Annual Business Meeting, it was approved by ICC members present and voting. It was then circulated via electronic ballot to all voting members for ratification and obtained 97% voter approval. President Mike Boso certified these ratification ballot results on January 12, and the updated Bylaws, accessible [here](#), became effective on January 22, 2026.

[Read more here →](#)

The power of mentor/mentee relationships offer rewarding experiences

When Marty Moseley, Director of Code Enforcement for the Town of Ithaca, NY and Brent Cross, Village Engineer for the Village of Cayuga Heights, NY first began working together, neither was quite sure what a mentorship would look like. Over time, however, the pair grew into a model example of a truly successful mentor–mentee partnership. Cross learned that being an "expert" isn't required to be a great mentor, and sharing his experience and knowledge with a young professional like Moseley to help him succeed and advance in his career has been a rewarding experience. As a mentee, Moseley considers himself lucky to be able to rely on someone like Cross with greater experience in the field when needed.

[Read more here →](#)

After the Strike: Code-based inspections outlined for residential safety

Let's set the stage: A summer thunderstorm rolls through, and lightning strikes a residence, arcing through framing, grounding to metal systems and possibly traveling along gas piping and bonded equipment. The occupants are safe, but the property isn't – electrical equipment trips, a faint odor of gas lingers in the basement, the pool pump won't start and the irrigation and water reuse piping shows signs of scorching. While structural and electrical inspections often take center stage, the plumbing, mechanical, fuel gas, swimming pools and spas, private sewage disposal and water reuse systems are equally critical and frequently underassessed. These systems can sustain hidden damage that poses serious safety and health risks if not properly inspected, tested and documented. This article focuses on those components, using the International Residential Code® (IRC®), International Swimming Pool and Spa Code® (ISPSC®) and International Private Sewage Disposal Code® (IPSDC®) as a roadmap for what to check, how to test and how to document the work.

[Read more here →](#)

Webinar highlights 2025 housing supply progress and 2026 opportunities

HousingTech and the Housing Innovation Alliance recently hosted a national public webinar examining progress made in expanding U.S. housing supply in 2025 and researching opportunities for 2026. The recorded webinar is available [here](#). A summary report from the webinar is available [here](#). Ryan Colker, International Code Council Executive Director of Energy, Resilience & Innovation, joined other national housing leaders as a presenter. The discussion covered a broad range of policy solutions at the federal, state and local levels, including zoning reform, permitting modernization and the growing role of off-site construction. Congress is advancing bipartisan housing legislation aimed at increasing supply, and state legislatures have significantly accelerated action, tripling the number of housing-related bills passed since 2023. Speakers emphasized the need for well-informed policy development grounded in engagement with diverse stakeholders to streamline processes effectively.

[Read more here →](#)

ICC Plumbing, Mechanical, and Fuel Gas Updates

The Plumbing Prescription: Proper flow leads to better water quality

A groundbreaking study conducted by researchers at Drexel University offers crucial insights into a surprising yet vital factor for building safety: the power of flow velocity in plumbing. The study, [Impact of Premise Plumbing Design, Velocity, and Operational Factors on Microbial Activity During Stagnation in Pipes](#) suggests that higher flow rates and smaller-diameter pipes are key to maintaining water quality and reducing the presence of harmful pathogens reaching the user. The research clearly shows that rightsizing and prioritizing higher flow velocities are vital for maintaining water quality. This research study serves as a critical first step toward developing evidence-based guidelines for plumbing system design, providing a clear call to action for the industry to ensure safer, cleaner water for all.

[Read more here →](#)

Water Heater Sizing and Location: Code requirements vs. practical realities

Water heaters are indispensable to any building plumbing system, yet their sizing and placement are often misunderstood or undervalued. While the International Plumbing Code® (IPC) offers clear guidance on installation and performance expectations, real-world conditions frequently challenge strict compliance. Let's explore the intersection of code requirements and practical realities, offering insights for inspectors, installers and designers alike. The IPC does not mandate a specific method for sizing water heaters. Instead, it places the responsibility on the system designer to select equipment that meets the building's operational demands. For storage-type water heaters, performance during peak demand is defined by two interrelated characteristics: draw capacity and recovery rate.

[Read more here →](#)

ICC Family of Solutions Updates

ICC-ES Acceptance Criteria process for new, innovative products explained

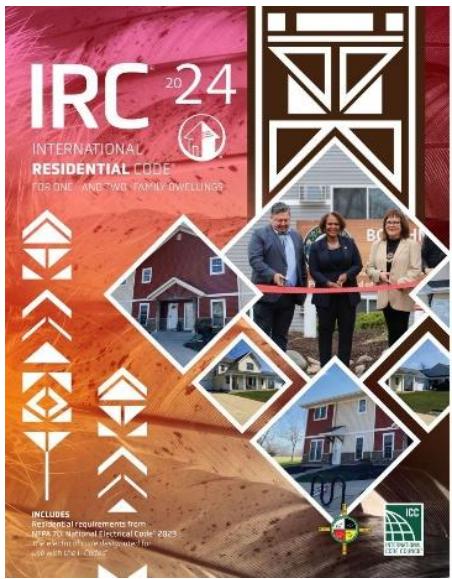
ICC-ES Acceptance Criteria (AC) are developed by ICC-ES technical staff in consultation with report applicants and with input from interested parties. New criteria and revisions to criteria are approved through one of two formal processes: [ICC-ES Evaluation Committee Hearing Process](#) or the [ICC-ES Alternative Criteria Process](#). Acceptance Criteria are developed for new and innovative products, primarily for products that are alternative to those directly recognized by the International Building Code and International Residential Code or Canada's National Model Construction Codes. The ICC-ES [U.S. Evaluation Committee](#) and [Canadian Evaluation Committee](#) each meet three times per year to consider new acceptance criteria and revisions to existing criteria. **All hearings are open to the public**, and attendees may speak on acceptance criteria and provide information to committee members. Here is how it works:

1. ICC-ES technical staff develops acceptance criteria in consultation with the report applicant and interested parties.
2. Firm deadlines apply for materials to be considered by the Evaluation Committee.
3. New acceptance criteria and revisions to criteria are approved by the Evaluation Committee during open public hearings.

The [Alternative Criteria Process](#) (i.e. alternative to the ICC-ES Hearing Process) is an option for criteria needing formal Committee action but are intended for quick approval, typically for revised criteria. This process:

- Uses public comment and Committee ballot on the ICC-ES website instead of a full Committee hearing.
- There is an option for public comment only, which can be used for preliminary criteria drafts to gather early public feedback prior to official approval.

[Read here for monthly postings →](#)



Special Native American design of 2024 IRC now available through ICC bookstore

The special edition cover 2024 International Residential Code book is [now available through the Code Council bookstore](#). It was unveiled in October by ICC Board Member Jack Applegate and CEO John Belcik at the Native American Code Officials (NACO) 2nd Annual Summit in Arizona. The two-day NACO Summit was attended by members from over 30 tribal nations along with many allies from the code industry. Copies of the special edition of the IRC were donated by the ICC and distributed by NACO to summit attendees.

Numerous attendees presented the special edition IRC to their respective tribal elected leadership at subsequent tribal council meeting. The special edition IRC books are now being actively used by tribal building officials, tribal plan reviewers, and tribal inspectors. NACO Board Member Matthew Beaudet also formally presented a copy of the special edition IRC book to the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) at the NCAI Annual Convention in Seattle in November. Word of the Native American-themed special edition IRC book has spread and has been well-received in Indian Country and in our code industry. This

marks only the second time that the ICC has issued a special edition themed cover, the first being a special edition military camouflage cover to honor veterans in our code industry.

As housing remains a vital need in tribal communities, the IRC was chosen as the appropriate code to showcase both the need for tribal housing and equally important to celebrate the successes by tribal nations in creating new residential construction across the country. The photos featured on the cover highlight the new construction of tribal single-family and multi-family housing built by the Pokagon Band of Potawatomi on their tribal lands in southern Michigan. The choice of cover photos also celebrates tribal sovereignty, as the Pokagon Band Building Code incorporates the 2021 IRC as opposed to the Michigan Building Code which was then based on the older 2015 IRC. We are grateful to the Pokagon Band of Potawatomi Tribal Council Chair Matthew Wesaw, the Tribal Council, and the amazing Pokagon Band tribal staff for allowing the use of the wonderful photos.

Also included on the cover is original artwork by NACO Board Member Matthew Beaudet, and enrolled member and Elder of the Montaukett Indian Nation and former City of Chicago Building Commissioner. The artwork celebrates the four directions, four elements, four life cycles, four seasons, four kingdoms, four medicines and other features sacred in Native American culture incorporated into a medicine wheel. The Native American-themed special edition IRC cover is another example of the ICC's support for Native American Tribal Nations as well as a celebration of the many success stories occurring in Tribal Nations in new residential construction coast to coast.