

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: July 27, 2022

Contact: Donna Campbell | (734) 660-6518

dcampbell@iccsafe.org | www.iccsafe.org

U.S. Senate passes legislation for research to improve safety, efficiency and resilience of aging plumbing systems

The NIST Plumbing Research Act is expected to clear the U.S. House and be signed into law

Washington, D.C. – On Wednesday, July 27, 2022, the U.S. Senate passed the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) Plumbing Research Act as part of a broader legislative push to enhance U.S. economic competitiveness. The act directs NIST, working in concert with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), to conduct research on premise plumbing systems to improve their safety, efficiency and resilience. The research will be coordinated among academia, the private sector, the International Code Council, and federal agencies. The Code Council, through its leadership role on the High-Performance Building Coalition, [strongly supported this legislation’s advancement](#).

The NIST Plumbing Research Act will address the challenges surrounding the size of existing plumbing systems in the United States which were based on research conducted in the 1930s by NIST predecessor, the National Bureau of Standards. The current water piping in our communities is oversized, which decreases efficiency and has implications for water quality. New research from NIST will complement studies by the Code Council, already underway at the University of Miami, and other academic institutions in the U.S.

“The adoption and implementation of up-to-date building and plumbing codes are key to increasing the availability of clean water globally. The Code Council applauds Congressmen Cartwright and Tonko and Senator Duckworth for their leadership and commitment to improving the efficiency and safety of water systems in the United States,” said Matt Sigler, PMG Executive Director at the Code Council. “As an international leader in ensuring water quality and building safety, the Code Council looks forward to partnering with NIST, the EPA and others to develop next-generation codes and standards that will protect and modernize our plumbing infrastructure.”

The codes and standards developed by the Code Council have helped improve water safety and efficiency for decades. In particular, the [International Plumbing Code \(IPC\)](#) and [International](#)

[Green Construction Code \(IgCC\)](#) are modern plumbing codes that set minimum requirements to safeguard public health, safety, and property, while conserving water resources. The Code Council is in the beginning stages of developing a new American National Standard Institute (ANSI) plumbing pipe sizing standard (ICC 815). The new standard will take a worldwide approach to properly size water, sewer, and vent piping for residential, mixed-use, and institutional occupancies based on today's plumbing fixtures and post-COVID-19 water usage patterns. It will also help conserve water and energy beyond the scope of current model codes and standards.

"Improving the efficiency and reliability of our nation's plumbing systems is key in strengthening our infrastructure and ensuring Americans have access to safe, clean water," Congressman Paul Tonko said. "I supported the NIST Plumbing Research Act that will take the needed steps to at last bring U.S. plumbing standards into the 21st century. I was proud to push for these research investments and, moving forward from this success, I'll continue working alongside colleagues and advocates to modernize our water infrastructure and strengthen public health."

"Plumbing Manufacturers International (PMI) applauds the passage of this important legislation which contains increased investments in scientific research and strong science, technology, engineering, and math education provisions to support U.S. global competitiveness," said Kerry Stackpole, PMI CEO. "The creation of a robust program for premise plumbing research at NIST will have a vital impact on homes, schools, and buildings across the nation by utilizing innovative technologies to significantly improve water efficiency, reliability, and reuse in our water systems."

For more information, please visit the Code Council's [PMG webpage](#).

###

About the International Code Council

The [International Code Council](#) is the leading global source of model codes and standards and building safety solutions. Code Council codes, standards and solutions are used to ensure safe, affordable and sustainable communities and buildings worldwide.