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National Green Building Standard Approved

The National Green Building Standard, known as ICC-700, was approved yesterday (Jan. 29, 2009) as an American National Standard. The new Standard provides guidance for safe and sustainable building practices for residential construction, including both new and renovated single-family to high-rise residential buildings. This is the first and only green standard that is consistent and coordinated with the Code Council's family of I-Codes and standards.

Code Council Board President Adolf Zubia said, "this is an enormous step forward in bringing focus to green practices for the built environment. ICC-700 provides a benchmark for green building in the residential market, serving as a new and needed starting point for comprehensive approaches to green residential construction. This is the result of many months of hard work by our members and our partners around the country."

Code Council CEO Richard P. Weiland said, "the development of high performance 'greener' housing can have a tangible and positive impact on our environment and communities. This new tool for state and local governments fills an important gap to provide a measurable framework for efforts to produce green and sustainable housing. In concert with energy codes such as the *International Energy Conservation Code*, and rating systems such as the LEED Green Building Rating System, Energy Star, the CHPS Criteria, Green Globes or similar programs, application of ICC-700 can contribute to greater energy, water and resource efficiency along with reduced long-term costs to consumers and to our planet."

The International Code Council and National Association of Home Builders developed the Standard with broad input from several thousand stakeholders, ranging from code officials and other building professionals to the entire spectrum of the green building community. This new standard provides a practical route to green, sustainable and high-performance construction, especially in communities with little if any green/sustainable buildings or guidelines to build

green. The standard also promotes homeowner education for the maintenance and operation of green residential buildings in order to ensure long-term benefits.

The standard's rating system allows builders, designers and communities to choose the levels of high-performance green buildings that best suit their needs. Key provisions include:

- ✓ Land conservation
- ✓ Rainwater collection
- ✓ Construction of smaller homes to conserve resources
- ✓ Energy performance starting at 15% above the baseline requirements of the *2006 International Energy Conservation Code*
- ✓ The use of low VOC (Volatile Organic Compound) materials and detached garages or carports to improve indoor environmental quality
- ✓ Homeowner education on proper maintenance and operation to maintain its green status throughout its life cycle

ICC-700 is available along with related ICC publications through the Code Council website at www.iccsafe.org/700.

Training on ICC-700 already is available, including a special session March 23-26 at Codes Forum in New Orleans. Additional training is also available on related topics such as current green building practices and their relationship to the International Codes, overview of the LEED green building rating systems, and developing green building ordinances to help governmental departments and agencies tasked with establishing sustainable building programs.

The Code Council is finalizing its Green Building Technologies Certification program for building officials, inspectors, planners, zoning personnel, mayors, city council members, developers and other interested parties. The exams will be available in March. These certifications will demonstrate the ability to understand the application of green building technology and assess adherence with green building programs.

In addition, the International Code Council Board has approved the creation of a Sustainable Building Technology Committee to support the Council's many ongoing efforts in green, sustainable and safe construction.

A Code Council subsidiary, ICC-Evaluation Service, has developed the Sustainable Attributes Verification and Evaluation (SAVE) program to provide independent confirmation that evaluated building products are sustainable and may qualify for points under ICC-700 as

well as major green rating systems such as LEED or Green Globes. A SAVE evaluation involves both inspection of the manufacturer's production process and reviews of independent product testing, where required. Manufacturers that successfully complete the evaluation process receive a *Verification of Attributes Report* in one or more of nine key categories. Design professionals will be able to use the reports as evidence that products or systems they select qualify for points under those programs.

Another Code Council subsidiary, the International Accreditation Service (IAS), offers accreditation to testing laboratories, inspection agencies and product certifiers in several fields related to energy and sustainability to support manufacturers and regulators involved in green building development and approval. IAS also accredits curriculum developers and training agencies focused on green initiatives.

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 choose the International Codes, building safety codes developed by the International Code Council.

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