

An International Celebration
of Safe and Sensible Structures



BUILDING SAFETY MONTH

INTERNATIONAL CODE COUNCIL FOUNDATION

MAY 2011

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May is Building Safety Month

(Washington, D.C.) - When you turn on a light switch, do you ever wonder if you'll be electrocuted? Do you worry about your home's roof caving in? Or believe your home's water pipes might be frozen when you turn on the faucet?

Most of us never think twice about these things. That's because we are confident in the work done every day by the 50,000 members of the International Code Council, the people who safeguard our homes and businesses by creating and enforcing strong building safety codes at the city, county and state levels.

This May, the [International Code Council Foundation \(ICCF\)](#) will celebrate its 31st [Building Safety Month](#), *An International Celebration of Safe and Sensible Structures*. Throughout the month, ICC members will educate the public and builders about building safety and sustainability issues as well as sharing ideas for making structures more energy efficient and durable.

Building Safety Month was formed in 1980 in response to a series of tragedies that could have been prevented through the existence and enforcement of safety codes.

"Building safety codes are often taken for granted, but they are incredibly necessary, and the foundation upon which healthy, secure homes and buildings are built," said Richard P. Weiland, ICCF Board of Governors and CEO of the Code Council. "Building Safety Month is our way of introducing ourselves to the public and sharing what we know so they can live healthier, safer lives in secure and sustainable homes, schools and buildings."

Building Safety Month receives support from important industry groups such as [BASF – The Chemical Company](#), the [Federal Alliance for Safe Homes](#), (FLASH), the [National Center for Healthy Housing](#), (NCHH), [The Propane Education & Research Council](#), (PERC) and [BuildingReports](#) among others.

Celebrations across the country will come in many shapes and sizes, from free deck inspections, school assemblies, and official proclamations with governors, to film festivals. Whether the celebrations are formal, ceremonial or just plain fun, the message is that adoption and enforcement of strong buildings codes can make the difference between life and death.

Week One: May 1 – 7 Energy and Green Building

The first week of Building Safety Month will be devoted to green and energy efficiency. Consumers can learn low-cost ways to make existing homes more efficient, long-term strategies for long-term savings, and tips on building green in new construction.

"As a leading provider of energy-saving, durable building materials, our vision is that all families will live in [affordable, energy-efficient, safe homes](#) that reduce environmental impacts. This mission and our company's offerings closely mirror the themes for Building Safety Month," said Michael Sievers, Business Manager, [BASF](#), the 2011 Building Safety Month Presenting Sponsor.

"Saving energy and protecting the environment are good reasons to build 'green,' and new research shows that building green can also improve health," said Rebecca Morley, Executive Director of the [National Center for Healthy Housing](#), a national non-profit committed to creating safe and healthy homes for children through practical and proven steps. "Modern, enforced building codes can help to maximize the health benefits of green building and to avoid potential unintended consequences of creating tighter buildings" added Ms. Morley.

Week Two: May 8 – 14 Disaster Safety and Mitigation

The recent disaster in Japan has shined a spotlight on the critical importance of adhering to stringent building codes. Without a steadfast devotion to building earthquake-resistant structures, the devastation in Japan would have been significantly worse.

Major earthquake fault lines, tornado zones, flood-prone coastal areas, dry wildfire targets, and even a volcano are potential hazards within highly populated areas of the United States. During week two of Building Safety Month, consumers will learn how to prepare their homes to be safer from these and other natural disasters.

Education partner the [Federal Alliance for Safe Homes](#), (FLASH) a national non-profit organization, is dedicated to educating consumers on how to prepare homes to withstand an array of national disasters such as wildfires, floods, earthquakes, high winds, hurricanes and tornadoes.

"FLASH is thrilled to support ICCF's Building Safety Month," says FLASH President/CEO Leslie C. Henderson.

"Through our work, we see first-hand the remarkable difference that codes and standards can make in avoiding the devastating effects of natural disasters. The wonderful work of the ICCF and Building Safety Month will reach many people across the country."

Week Three: May 15 – 21, Fire Safety and Awareness

Despite aggressive education efforts by many organizations, many residential fire-related deaths remain preventable. The third week of Building Safety Month focuses on the critical issue of Fire Safety. In addition to encouraging safe use of smoke detectors, candles and home fireplaces, consumers will learn important tips about safely using gas and electronic appliances.

Week Four: May 22 – 31, Backyard Safety

As Memorial Day approaches, officially kicking off the barbeque and outdoor living season in America, it's a great time to remind homeowners of the dos and don'ts of installing, operating and maintaining their outdoor appliances.

"Outdoor living spaces are increasingly popular, whether homeowners have a deck with a grill—or something more elaborate with heating, lighting and a pool or spa," says Stuart Flatow, Vice President Safety & Training of the [Propane Education and Research Council](#) (PERC). "By supporting the ICCF's Backyard Safety week, we at PERC want to help homeowners enjoy their backyards—while keeping that space safe."

First observed in 1980 as Building Safety Week, Building Safety Month is a program of the [International Code Council Foundation](#). The International Code Council Foundation is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization with the mission to promote public awareness of ideas, methods and technologies that encourage the construction of safe, durable and sustainable buildings and homes, reducing the devastating effects of building damages due to natural disasters and other tragedies.

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