

A NOTE FROM THE AD HOC COMMITTEE ON TALL WOOD BUILDINGS (9/19/2017)

With national and international interest in the design and construction of tall wood buildings, the ICC Board of Directors solicited feedback from the ICC Membership on the creation of an ad hoc committee for tall wood construction. This ultimately led to the Board's establishment of the Ad Hoc Committee on Tall Wood Buildings in December/2015. The Board charged the Committee with exploring the building science of tall wood buildings and to investigate the feasibility of and take action on developing code changes for tall wood buildings. To accomplish the work, the Board appointed members to the committee who represent a cross section of stakeholder interests, including code officials, fire protection engineers, structural engineers, architects, fire service personnel, and representatives of the construction materials industries.

In the execution of this scope, the committee is reviewing available information relative to the design, construction, occupancy and use of tall wood buildings. The investigation is focused solely on mass timber wood products and the need for the requisite technical justification to support the code development process. The Committee has excluded from discussion any light frame wood construction, and has preserved the requirements for Heavy Timber construction in their present form in the I-Codes.

The Committee has identified over 80 issues to investigate. In addition, the Committee has identified over 60 current code sections in the I-Codes that may be impacted by this work. Many code sections would only require editorial changes, while others may require technical changes to incorporate the concepts of tall wood buildings. To address these issues, four separate work groups were formed. These are the Standards and Definitions Work Group, Fire Work Group, Structural Work Group, and the Codes, Height/Area, and Performance-Based Code Work Group. Participation in the Work Groups is open to anyone with an interest in tall wood buildings.

The Committee has collected information from a variety of sources, including industry experts, current ongoing investigations, fire tests, and previous studies, in order to assess the fire performance and structural capabilities of tall wood buildings. As concepts are developed into draft code change proposals, these will be posted to the Committee website. **It is important to note that these are draft code change proposals and are subject to change prior to the January 8, 2018 deadline.**

The Ad Hoc Committee on Tall Wood Buildings continues to collect and review data, including analysis of the results of ongoing full-scale fire testing, in the development of draft code proposals. While there has been general Committee consensus on some concepts, there are some significant items still being debated, and many details still in development. Please continue to visit the website to follow and monitor further Committee progress.

For additional information, be sure to contact Mike Pfeiffer, P.E. at mpfeiffer@iccsafe.org.
