

# The 30 Percent Solution 2012

*Cities in more than 40 states use the IECC to set baseline energy efficiency standards for residential construction.*

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## GUEST COLUMN

This October, city and county building code officials from across the nation will gather in Charlotte, N.C., to cast one of America's most significant energy, environmental and climate policy votes of 2010. Odds are it's a vote that you've never heard about; ironically, its outcome is in the hands of your city's employees.

At stake is a comprehensive proposal developed by our broad-based organization — the Energy Efficiency Codes Coalition (EECC) — to boost the 2012 International Energy Conservation Code (IECC) by more than 30 percent over its 2006 counterpart.

Cities in more than 40 states use the IECC to set baseline energy efficiency standards for residential construction. It is also the only model residential energy code recognized in federal law and its adoption was linked to states' receipt of State Energy Program funding under the \$800 billion stimulus package enacted last year. The IECC is also the basis for legislation setting national efficiency improvement targets of 30 percent and 50 percent that has passed the full House of Representatives and the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee.

EECC urges city leaders to send their code officials to vote for "The 30% Solution 2012," which uses a variety of readily available products and construction methods — like efficient lighting and windows along with better insulation — to boost new home efficiency. While it is the only comprehensive proposal before the International Code Council that will achieve this ambitious 30 percent goal, EECC is far from its only advocate: the US Department of Energy testified in favor of "The 30% Solution 2012," a U.S. Conference of Mayors' resolution endorses its

adoption and the loud and growing chorus supporting a 30 percent boost in efficiency includes such diverse voices as the Business Roundtable, Sierra Club, American Institute of Architects, the Western Governors Association and many others.

Why should cities improve building energy codes? Because buildings are America's largest energy consuming sector, using more than 40 percent of our energy and more than 70 percent of our electricity. It isn't surprising that they are also our largest source of wasted energy. In fact, there are only benefits to stronger energy codes. They:

- Stabilize homeowner energy costs, while improving homeowner comfort,
- Pay for themselves through proven savings on utility bills,
- Delay the need to build new power plants,
- Lessen U.S. reliance on energy imports, and
- Benefit future generations with long-lasting building energy-saving improvements

That's why sending your code officials to vote for "The 30% Solution" may be the most effective energy and environmental policy investment your city can make.

According to a National Association of Home Builders survey, a majority of consumers will pay up to \$11,000 more for their home if it lowers their annual energy costs by \$1,000. And a Department of Energy analysis found that increasing an average home's efficiency by 30 percent would add \$4,000 in initial cost — assuming a 30-year fixed mortgage at 7 percent, that's \$211 in annual mortgage payments — but reduce energy costs by \$723 a year!

*Send Your Voting Delegation to Charlotte to ICC Final  
Action Hearings from October 27-31*

Because only government officials can vote to strengthen the new, 2012 IECC, the future of shaping our nation's building energy efficiency is squarely in your hands.

**Here's a checklist:**

- ✓ **Make sure your city has joined the International Code Council or renewed its membership by October 15. ICC member applications can be downloaded at: [www.iccsafe.org/Membership/Documents/Government\\_Membership\\_App.pdf](http://www.iccsafe.org/Membership/Documents/Government_Membership_App.pdf)**
- ✓ **Submit your city's list of four, eight or 12 voting representatives (based on population) by October 15.**
- ✓ **Urge your voting representatives to support "The 30% Solution 2012." (In early September, EECC will post a sample ballot on our website, [www.thirtypercentsolution.org](http://www.thirtypercentsolution.org)).**
- ✓ **Log on to [www.eshow2000.com/iccbwi/lodging\\_and\\_transportation.cfm](http://www.eshow2000.com/iccbwi/lodging_and_transportation.cfm) for special registrant hotel rates, airline discounts airfares and other transportation information. Additional information on ICC's annual conference and Final Action Hearings can be found at [www.eshow2000.com/iccbwi/splash.cfm](http://www.eshow2000.com/iccbwi/splash.cfm).**

After October, the next opportunity to improve the IECC will be in 2014. Therefore EECC strongly encourages you to send your delegation of building and energy officials to the ICC Hearings in Charlotte this October, to vote "yes" on "The 30% Solution 2012."

**Details:** If you or your staff has questions about this issue, please contact the author at the EECC, (202) 857-0666 or [bfay@ase.org](mailto:bfay@ase.org) or visit [www.thirtypercentsolution.org](http://www.thirtypercentsolution.org).

*This article is written by guest columnist William D. Fay of the Energy Efficiency Codes Coalition (EECC). Views expressed here are those of EECC and do not represent official policy of NLC. Energy efficient buildings and codes have been identified as a priority issue by NLC's Energy, Environment, and Natural Resources (EENR) Policy Committee. To learn more about EENR's work on this issue, please contact Carolyn Berndt, [berndt@nlc.org](mailto:berndt@nlc.org).*