

STRUCTURAL BUILDING COMPONENTS MAGAZINE

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Code Connection

ICC Code Development Process by WTCA Staff

How well do you know the code process? An understanding of the code cycle is half the battle in learning how codes like the ICC impact component design.

Part of the complexity of the building and fire codes involves not only the content contained within the code, but the code review process itself. Dissecting the elements of the code review and having a firm grasp on the code change timeline will help you better understand the process. The International Code Council (ICC) updates their code editions every three years. However, in order to manage the volume of code change proposals, the three year cycle is made up of two eighteen month cycles. The International Building Code (IBC) and the International Residential Code (IRC) receive the most attention, but the International Fire Code (IFC) and the International Existing Building Code (IEBC) are also monitored.

The following example describes the process to go from the 2003 editions to the 2006 editions of the ICC Codes. The arrow indicates the current place in the process. This cycle is repeated every three years.

Event	Date
First 18 month cycle (completed):	
Code change proposals deadline	March 24, 2003
Reviewed & published	July 3, 2003
Code hearings	September 5-14, 2003
Publication of Report of hearings	November 14, 2003
Public Comment deadline	January 14, 2003
Publication of Final Action Agenda	April 1, 2004
Final Action Hearings	May 2004
Publication of 2004 Supplement	August 2004
Second 18 month cycle (in progress):	
Code change proposals deadline	August 20, 2004
Reviewed & published	December 21, 2004
Code hearings	February 21 to March 2, 2005
Publication of Report of hearings	May 2, 2005

Public Comment deadline	June 17, 2005
Publication of Final Action Agenda	August 24, 2005
Final Action Hearings	September 28 to October 1, 2005
Publication of 2006 edition (inc. 2004 Supplement)	End of 2005, beginning of 2006

WTCA and TPI, in concert with other industry groups such as AF&PA's American Wood Council and National Council of Structural Engineers Associations (NCSEA), were successful in the first eighteen-month cycle in proposing and influencing the passage of a code change revising the IBC and IRC language concerning bottom chord live loading. WTCA and TPI have submitted ten code change proposals in the second eighteen-month cycle, which is part of our industry goal to be much more proactive in this arena.

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