

Green code development update

IGCC is in the final stages of development

by Mark S. Graham

In May, NRCA participated in the International Code Council's (ICC's) 2011 code development hearing, which is one of the final steps before ICC publishes the new International Green Construction Code (IGCC). I encourage you to become familiar with IGCC because it likely will affect building construction significantly, including roof system installation.

IGCC development

During the past two years, ICC has been developing IGCC, which is intended to overlay ICC's other model codes and provide minimum requirements for sustainable buildings' design, construction and operation.



IGCC's initial public draft, referred to as Public Version 1.0, was published in March 2010. After a public comment period during which more than 1,500 comments were received and considered, the current draft, Public Version 2.0 (PV2), was published in November 2010.

At ICC's May code development hearing, ICC's code development committees heard more than 1,250 proposed changes to PV2. In addition to NRCA, Dow Building Solutions, the Asphalt Roofing Manufacturers Association, SPRI, the Center for Environmental Innovation in Roofing, RCI Inc. and several others submitted roofing-related code change proposals.

Overall, ICC's code development committees accepted only about 28 percent of

the code change proposals submitted. NRCA had submitted 16 code change proposals clarifying the draft code's roofing-related requirements; eight were approved by ICC's committees and two others were addressed by other approved code change proposals.

Although relatively few code change proposals were approved overall, Code Change No. GG150-11 is a particularly noteworthy approved proposal. PV2 currently includes language that requires no less than 55 percent of building materials to have a specific recycled content or be used, recyclable, bio-based or indigenous. With the ICC committee's approval of GG150-11, as an alternative, building materials can comply provided a whole building life-cycle assessment demonstrates the building project achieves no less than a 10 percent improvement in primary energy use and no less than a 5 percent improvement in environmental performance based on prescribed guidelines.

Also, building components must have a prescribed minimum reference service life. For roof coverings, the minimum reference service life will be 20 years with such documentation included in the construction documents.

Next step

ICC members will take final action on the code change proposals from the May

hearing and likely approve IGCC's publication at ICC's 2011 Annual Conference Oct. 31-Nov. 6 in Phoenix. As part of its final action process, ICC will receive public comments until Aug. 12 regarding its committees' May decisions.

Reroofing is a specific public comment roofing industry participants need to work on collectively. Although it is apparent the ICC committees intend for IGCC to apply to reroofing of existing buildings, that intent is not clear in PV2. It must be clarified to provide for consistent interpretation of IGCC's requirements affecting the roofing industry.

Become more knowledgeable

Because IGCC development is nearly complete and its adoption likely will affect the roofing industry significantly, roofing professionals should become familiar with IGCC's requirements.

I encourage designers and contractors to discuss with roof system manufacturers and suppliers how the roof systems and components they currently supply will comply with IGCC's requirements. It also is important to know how manufacturers and suppliers will document roofing materials' compliances.

Draft versions of IGCC already have been adopted in several jurisdictions, including Maryland and Rhode Island. Once IGCC is published in March 2012, I expect a relatively large number of jurisdictions quickly will adopt it. Therefore, it is best to prepare now. ☛☛☛

MARK S. GRAHAM is NRCA's associate executive director of technical services.



ON the WEB

For additional articles regarding IGCC's development, as well as a link to IGCC Public Version 2.0, log on to www.professionalroofing.net.