

## ICC [Government Relations](#) Chapter Monthly Update – April 2020

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### **A NOTE TO CHAPTERS AND MEMBERS from Sara Yerkes, Senior Vice President, ICC Gov't. Relations**

This is a time like no other. Emergency declarations from the President and from Governors and local jurisdictions show no state is being spared from the COVID-19 pandemic. We at ICC Government Relations are proud of the public service you perform at all times as “first preventers,” and even more so now as you encounter challenges of this crisis. The GR staff has been conducting a [survey to chronicle how code officials are adapting](#) to this “new normal” and how innovations are shaping best practices to protect code officials while they work in the field. We will be conducting follow up surveys because your input is vital to our ability to obtain more assistance to your offices and communities. The Code Council’s staff is working in home offices to assist you and to provide you with the services you need. While we are limited to “essential travel,” we can help you with electronic services for [training, testing and certification](#), [product evaluation reports](#), [electronic code resources like premiumACCESS](#), [online plan review](#), code updating and field [documentation services](#). As we move forward, please know that we will do our best to keep you *informed* and *supported*.

*Sara C. Yerkes*

### **Code Council offices are closed but ICC staff staying on top of evolving issues in states and D.C.**

The International Code Council has closed all of its office locations in response to the COVID-19 pandemic until at least April 30, but the organization is continuing many of its functions and deliverables, including the creation of the [Coronavirus Response Center on the ICC website](#). The Code Council is closely tracking and compiling information from the Code Council, governments, and building and fire prevention departments around the world. We highlight relevant virtual products, solutions, services and best practices to support business continuity for the building safety community. Here are the latest updates from the Code Council, including deadline extensions and other service updates:

- We have extended the [2020 Code Council Chapter Annual Report deadline to April 15](#).
- We have [extended award nominations](#) to May 1.
- We are [extending all currently active membership accounts](#) due to terminate in March, April or May, through June 1, 2020.
- The application filing deadline for the [Emory R. Rodgers Leadership in Building Safety Fellowship](#) is extended from April 1 to May 1.
- More than one-fifth of building and fire prevention departments report that remote staff do not have access to hard copy codes. Free-view online versions of the International Codes and additional materials are available through the [Code Council's Digital Codes Library](#). The Code Council offers a premium subscription service, [premiumACCESS](#), for more enhanced features.
- We are [extending the renewal dates of all certifications](#) scheduled to expire between March 1 and August 31, 2020. The new renewal date will be extended to September 1, 2020.

ICC’s warehouse will remain open and operational, and we are still fulfilling publication orders. The Code Council’s infrastructure remains intact telework, and we will continue to provide the majority of our products and services without significant delays or disruptions. Meetings will be conducted virtually, and employees continue to be available via phone and email. While in-person events have been canceled, members may be looking for alternative educational opportunities. The Code Council is working to maximize available options for virtual [training](#) and [assessment](#). Your professional development remains a top priority. Contact us at 888-ICC-SAFE (888-422-7233) ext. 0, or [customersuccess@iccsafe.org](mailto:customersuccess@iccsafe.org).

### **The Code Council’s President and CEO author special letter to ICC Members on ICC efforts to help**

Code Council CEO Dominic Sims and ICC Board President Greg Wheeler [issued a joint letter this week to ICC members](#) to let them know ICC’s staff is working hard to make sure code officials remain on a list of federally-recognized “essential” personnel in a national crisis. Events are shaping support measures for code officials, including [a letter to decision makers from Code Council CEO Dominic Sims, CBO](#). This letter is being sent to top federal authorities as well as a copy to state Governors. On March 28, 2020, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security’s Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) updated its [Essential Critical Infrastructure Workforce advisory list](#). Building on [guidance published March 19, 2020](#), the government has expanded its advisory list significantly. [Read the list here](#). CISA

stressed the list is advisory in nature and not an all-inclusive federal directive or standard. Jurisdictions should add or subtract essential workforce categories based on their own requirements and discretion.

### **HOW ARE YOU COPING? Code Council staff issue report on March 22-April 1 national survey**

The International Code Council surveyed building and fire departments to learn how code officials are coping with the professional challenges brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic. From March 22 through April 1, 2020, more than 1,150 respondents from all 50 U.S. states and the District of Columbia provided input. [Respondents came from jurisdictions](#) of all sizes ranging from 1,000 people to over 4.6 million. Although the U.S. Department of Homeland Security [has determined](#) the work of building and fire prevention departments to be essential to the nation's response to the coronavirus pandemic—and no state has made a contrary determination—6 in 10 survey respondents did not have the capability to remotely carry out critical aspects of their work. The Code Council's Washington, D.C., staff have stayed on top of the recently passed legislation addressing the COVID-19 crisis as it applies to state and local government needs, the Code Council staff has also urged the U.S. Congress to allocate support specifically for code department remote capabilities as part of a fourth coronavirus response measure Congress is currently considering. [Read more on the code officials survey by clicking here.](#)

### **CANCELLED: The June 8-10 ICC Chapter Leadership Academy in Denver removed from schedule**

The popular annual ICC Chapter Leadership Academy has been cancelled. It was to be held at the Crowne Plaza in downtown Denver, Colo. Chapters may still use their benefit to finance one person (the Chapter President or designee) to the 2020 ICC Annual Conference in October in St. Louis.

### **Call for Committees 2021-2022 Code Development Cycle application deadline is June 1**

[Applications are being accepted until June 1](#) for the following Committees. [Download applications here.](#)

- 2021/2022 Code Committees – responsible for the review and evaluation of code change proposals submitted to the 2021 I-Codes.
- 2021/2022/2023 Code Interpretation Committees – provide technical support for adopting jurisdictions by processing official interpretations for the I-Codes.
- 2021/2022/2023 Code Correlation Committee – responsible for evaluating matters of consistency, coordination and format in the I-Codes.

The 2021/2022 Code Development Schedule is now available. [View here.](#)

### **Take a few minutes to share your experiences and best practices working during the global pandemic**

The coronavirus pandemic presents unique challenges to the public safety communities, and the Code Council's staff hopes you'll take a few minutes to answer our online survey which will grow in usefulness to your profession and your office's effectiveness. Identities will be kept confidential. The Code Council is compiling examples of how building departments and jurisdictions are responding to the pandemic. As your member association, we can help you weather this crisis and connect with others around the world dealing with the same problems and concerns. [You can take the online survey here.](#)

### **Building departments considering virtual permitting and inspections strategies to adapt to challenges**

Departments are conducting inspections with only inspectors present, or with all parties maintaining the [CDC's recommended six feet of separation](#). In some cases, inspection practices have not been altered. In other instances, [states have sought to expand the pool of eligible inspectors/plan reviewers](#) by permitting inspection and plan review beyond the scope of work for a code certification in certain instances. Many departments have utilized virtual inspection, which are conducted between a contractor and an inspector by using a video call on a smart phone or tablet using FaceTime, Skype, GoogleDuo, etc. These options require internet, cell phones, and the adoption of appropriate technology resources. Here is a sample of jurisdictions and how they're meeting challenges:

- [Arlington County, Virginia](#)
- [City of Austin, Texas](#)
- [North Carolina Code Officials Qualification Board](#)
- [North Carolina Department of Insurance](#)
- [North Las Vegas](#)

- [Los Angeles County Video Inspection Process](#) and [Inspection Guide for PV Systems For One- and Two-Family Dwellings](#)
- [Metro Nashville's fast-track for tornado rebuilding permits](#)

If you are considering a switch to virtual permitting and inspections, we can help you. The Code Council offers a highly configurable web-based software solution for building and code enforcement officials called [Municipity](#). This software includes permitting, inspection management, mobile inspection, and public access to the permitting and scheduling process. [Find out more](#).

### **NFPA shares fact sheet to guide code officials on to conduct a remote video inspection (RVI)**

As code officials, enforcers, and inspectors work to ensure building safety during the COVID-19 pandemic, the [National Fire Protection Association](#) (NFPA) has created a fact sheet that provides guidance on how to conduct a remote video inspection (RVI), enabling one or more parties to remotely perform an inspection of a building or building component. It's one of the areas that the International Code Council, NFPA and American Society for Testing and Materials are collaborating on to help code officials, said Karl Fippinger, ICC Vice President, Fire and Disaster Mitigation. [Read more here](#).

### **Code Council offers toolkit to help communities celebrate May's 40<sup>th</sup> annual Building Safety Month**

As we look forward to celebrating the 40th annual [Building Safety Month](#), we understand that your chapter's engagement in this public awareness campaign will be executed differently this year. Below are resources your chapter can download free and use to promote building safety in your community. Use the Code Council's [Campaign Toolkit](#) to put together virtual materials including:

- [Chapter proclamation](#): Proclamations help increase awareness within your community. Proclamations from the mayor, commissioner or governor also help to gain even more recognition and local support for the campaign.
- [Press release](#): Inform your communities and elected officials about Building Safety Month and the important role you play in the safety of your community through a press release to local media. You can also post the press release on your website and social media.
- [Letter to the editor](#): Draft a letter to the editor to promote your department and the important role you play in the community through local newspapers. Send it in early April to your newspaper's editorial page editor.
- [Social media campaign](#): Spread the word about Building Safety Month, the importance of building safety and the role of the code official by engaging with your followers on social media. Use the official Building Safety Month hashtag **#BuildingSafety365** on all your posts.

Engage with your community by sending free downloadable resources from ICC's [Safety Toolkit](#). Help parents educate children on building safety at home by sending the free downloadable materials from the [Kids Corner](#) including the [Coloring Book](#) and [Activity Book](#). The BSM poster is also [available for free download](#) and digital use. If you have questions, call our ICC Call Center 888-422-7233 and press 0, or email [chapters@iccsafe.org](mailto:chapters@iccsafe.org).

### **Administration issues order to allow non-hospital buildings to be used for patients during pandemic**

The Trump Administration is using its authority under the Social Security Act to waive requirements under the Medicare Conditions of Participation and permit certain non-hospital buildings to be used for patient care and quarantine sites as a response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The blanket waivers are in effect until the end of the federal emergency declaration, and made retroactive to March 1, 2020. According to the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), the "CMS will permit non-hospital buildings/space to be used for patient care and quarantine sites, provided that the location is approved by the state (ensuring that safety and comfort for patients and staff are sufficiently addressed) and so long as it is not inconsistent with a state's emergency preparedness or pandemic plan. This allows for increased capacity and promotes appropriate cohorting of COVID-19 patients." [Read more here](#).

### **NIBS moves 2020 Building Innovation Conference from April to August in Arlington, Va.**

The leadership of the [National Institute of Building Sciences](#) has made the decision to move the Building Innovation Conference, scheduled for April 6-9, to [August 16-19 at the Renaissance Arlington Capital View Hotel](#) in Arlington, Va. This change was related to COVID-19. [Click for registration information](#).

**No-cost access to standards for personal protective equipment made available by ASTM International**  
ASTM International is providing no-cost public access to important ASTM standards used in the production and testing of personal protective equipment - including face masks, medical gowns, gloves, and hand sanitizers - to support manufacturers, test labs, health care professionals, and the general public as they respond to the global COVID-19 public health emergency. Visit [www.astm.org/COVID-19](http://www.astm.org/COVID-19) to access the standards. ASTM International is also relying on online communications [to continue task groups and subcommittees](#) to continue standards work, including crucial after-ballot discussions, without meeting in person. [Read more about meetings.](#)

**NFIP Technical Bulletins 1 & 5: Out with the old, in with the newly updated bulletins from FEMA**

For the first time in more than 10 years, FEMA has updated **The National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) Technical Bulletins** which provide guidance for complying with the NFIP's building performance requirements and are designed to help state and local officials interpret the NFIP Regulations. They are also a useful resource and reference for homeowners, insurance agents, building professionals and designers. Two updated Technical Bulletins were just released:

- [Technical Bulletin 1, Requirements for Flood Openings in Foundation Walls and Walls of Enclosures](#) (TB 1) explains the NFIP requirements for flood openings in foundation walls and walls of enclosures below elevated buildings. Flood openings equalize flood forces by allowing the entry and exit of floodwaters. This Technical Bulletin describes two options for satisfying the requirements, referred to as engineered openings and non-engineered openings. In addition to illustrating enclosures that require openings and those that do not, TB 1 covers the requirements and guidance for installation of openings.
- [Technical Bulletin 5, Free-of-Obstruction Requirements](#) (TB 5) provides guidance on the National Flood Insurance Program free-of-obstruction requirement in Coastal High Hazard Areas (Zone V), as well as general construction methods that minimize flood damage potential in Zone V. TB 5 describes methods of avoiding potential building and site obstructions that could divert or obstruct floodwater and waves below elevated buildings which could impose additional flood loads on foundation systems or adjacent buildings.

These updated editions incorporate the latest relevant codes and standards and state-of-the-art guidance and best practices. They were developed with significant stakeholder input to help local officials meet or exceed relevant NFIP requirements. For more information on FEMA's National Flood Insurance Program's Technical Bulletins, visit: <https://www.fema.gov/nfip-technical-bulletins>.

**NVFC mount effort to make Congress, HHS aware of challenges to emergency response community**

The National Volunteer Fire Council (NVFC) is asking Congress and the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to be aware of challenges facing the emergency response community in dealing with the outbreak of COVID-19. On March 2, the NVFC sent a letter to House and Senate appropriators expressing concern that many fire and EMS agencies will require assistance as COVID-19 spreads, and specifically requesting that "...EMS be included as an eligible recipient for funds made available to support the public health system..." The Coronavirus Preparedness and Response Supplemental Appropriations Act (H.R. 6074) was signed into law on March 6 and provides \$8.3 billion in emergency funding for federal agencies to respond to the coronavirus outbreak. [Click to read more on this effort.](#)

**New, free "Digital Solutions for Continuity of Government" webinar is set for April 9 at 1 p.m. Eastern**

Solutions from ICC Community Development Solutions enable government organizations to continue to function through calamities and emergencies. Employees can remotely access information and processes that are critical to operations. The "digital citizen" can engage with your organization through eForms and Public Portals. Decision-makers can analyze data and collaborate from home, at the office, in the field. A panel of our in-house experts will discuss the ways communities can benefit from Web Access, Public Portals, eForms, Laserfiche Cloud, Muncipity, and other tools. Join us at 1 p.m. Eastern on Thursday, April 9. Register here: <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/7483234763128561422>

**Code Council's education, testing, certification team expand opportunities during emergency period**

The International Code Council is committed to the health, safety and welfare of its members. As the nation continues to respond to COVID-19, ICC staff remain dedicated to upholding that commitment and

helping building safety professionals like you navigate through the developing crisis. We understand this is an unprecedented situation, so we're working to identify flexible solutions to help you with your training, testing, and certification needs. [Learn more by clicking here.](#)

### **Got Pulse?** NTA leader explains NTA's offerings in the ICC family of solutions in Episode #25

In this episode, ICC-ES President [Shahin Moinian](#) and NTA President and CEO [David Tompos](#) share excitement for the expanded offerings that have come with the acquisition of NTA. [Click here to listen.](#)

### **Upcoming from the [ICC Learning Center](#): Institutes, training, seminars, webinars, etc.**

Online learning is available from the ICC Learning Center. Find course listings you'd like to attend in the [Learning Center](#) using the Search function. Single-day training events are an opportunity to focus on topics to ensure your code knowledge stays up to date, with some seminars offering a Virtual Classroom option so you can participate in the event from any location with an internet connection:

- April 7 - [2018 IFC and IBC Hazardous Materials.](#)
- April 8 - [Fire and Connection Design and Special Inspection \(New Mass Timber\).](#)
- April 8 - [2015 IRC Performing Residential Plumbing Inspections.](#)
- April 9 - [2021 IPC Highlights Web Session.](#)
- April 15 - [2018 IPC Essentials.](#)
- April 16 - [Basic Code Enforcement.](#)
- April 23 - [2021 IMC Highlights Web Session.](#)
- May 26 - [Mass Timber Building and the IBC®.](#)
- June 4 - [2018 IECC® Essentials.](#)
- June 9 - [Advanced Legal Aspects of Code Administration.](#)
- June 11 - [Accessibility & Usability: Commercial and Residential.](#)
- July 9 - [2018 IRC Essentials.](#)
- July 21 - [Inspector Skills.](#)
- July 22 - [Basic Code Enforcement .](#)
- July 23 - [2018 IBC Means of Egress.](#)
- August 13 - [Essential Skills for Rising Leaders.](#)
- August 18 - [Effective Communication.](#)
- August 25 - [Mass Timber Building and the IBC®.](#)
- September 1-2 - [Permit Tech Institute.](#)
- September 10 - [Formulating an Effective Code Enforcement Program.](#)
- September 30 - [Millennials in Code Enforcement.](#)
- November 18 - [Essential Skills for Rising Leaders.](#)
- Available daily online, [2015 Permit Technician 14 Study Guide.](#)
- Available daily online, [IRC® Online Study Guide for Residential Building Inspectors B1.](#)