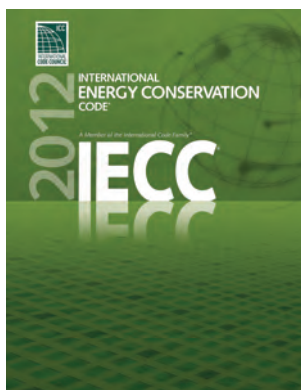


MECHANICAL CODE DISCUSSION

2012 IECC, Commercial Energy Efficiency

FOLLOWING THE end of the recent Utah Legislative Session, Governor Herbert signed into law two bills dealing with building codes. House Bill (HB) 310, identified several of the 2012 International Code Council (ICC) Codes that will become law on July 1, 2013.

The list of Codes adopted included Building, Plumbing, Mechanical, Fuel Gas and the 2011 National Electrical Code. Absent from HB 310 is the 2012 International Energy Conservation Code (IECC), which was considered under a separate bill, HB 202. The reason for separating the IECC from the other codes was the opposition and possibility that adoption of IECC would fail on the House and Senate floors. As RMGA members, we know moving Bills through the Legislature is a difficult process. Ultimately, after a year of debate and amendment writing, the 2012 IECC also moved through the Legislature, with a number of weakening amendments to the



residential section, with the Governor signing the IECC into law early this month. The residential sections will be discussed in a future issue, with this issue focusing on the commercial requirements.

The commercial energy requirements in the IECC consists of three areas of compliance; envelope, mechanical systems and lighting. A change in the economizer requirements will impact your light commercial work as the 2012 IECC goes into effect the first of July.

The 2009 IECC requires economizers in all Utah Climate Zones, 3, 5 and 6 for air conditioning units with a capacity greater than or equal to 54,000 Btuh.

The 2012 IECC reduces the threshold to systems with a capacity greater than or equal to 33,000 Btuh. This commercial requirement applies to retrofit and new systems. All cooling systems from 3 ton and up will require economizers. Several exceptions are provided, with one for the St. George area, allowing an air



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conditioner efficiency improvement of 15% to offset the economizer requirement. This exception applies only to Climate zone 3, Washington County. Most of you are aware, it's relatively simple for rooftop units, not so easy when it's a split system.

A new section has been added to the IECC; Section C408 System Commissioning — Prior to passing the final mechanical inspection, the registered design professional shall provide evidence of mechanical systems commissioning and completion in accordance with the provisions of this section.

Don't panic, there is an exception for buildings with a cooling capacity less than 480,000 Btuh and less than 600,000 Btuh heating capacity. Most projects with equipment capacities in these ranges are engineered, often with the engineer already requiring commissioning. The code now makes it mandatory. ■

We'll continue the discussion on 2012 Code Changes through the year. Please continue with your questions and comments. —Brent

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