

Case Study

Achieving Building Code Energy Efficiencies in Florida

The Issue

Florida has long been one of the leading states for work in energy efficiency. It became the first state to adopt a statewide mandatory energy code in 1980 by establishing performance requirements for heating and cooling systems. The requirements that the state of Florida has maintained since then have been equal to or greater than those standards set by the US Department of Energy. These codes work to create energy efficiency levels that work with priorities regarding air quality in a climate overwhelmed with heat and humidity.

In his July 2007 executive order, Governor Charlie Crist directed the Florida Building Commission to increase the energy efficiency requirements described in the Florida Energy Efficiency Code for Building Construction. The increase in efficiency was to be by 15% for residential and commercial buildings. The Florida legislature passed the Energy Act of 2008 which created assignments and goals for the commission. Following this bill, a supplement to the 2007 Florida

Building Code took effect in March 2009.



The Process

The Florida Building Commission was assisted by the FCRC Consensus Center at Florida State University in meeting proceedings. Jeff Blair of FCRC helped to facilitate consensus building with the Florida Energy Code Workgroup and the Florida Solar Energy Center where they worked to evaluate the options for achieving the building code energy efficiencies. The purpose of the workgroup is to develop recommendations that will increase energy conservation to 20% by the 2010 Florida Building Commission. These building efficiency increases will be based on the International Energy Conservation Code, while maintaining Florida energy efficiencies. The workgroup worked to analyze several options for efficiency improvement including energy efficiency for new additions to

code, examining improvements to equipment to make it more efficient in the humid climate and design criteria for new equipment.



The Players

The Florida Building Commission is chaired by Raul Rodriguez of American Institute of Architects (AIA). A twenty-five member workgroup was tasked by the Governor to represent their stakeholders group's interests. The Florida Energy Code Workgroup is charged to work with stakeholders to develop consensus packages of recommendations for submittal to the Commission.

The Product

The Florida Energy Code Workgroup unanimously voted on recommendations regarding cost effectiveness tests for evaluating the

proposed amendments to the building code in May of 2009. These recommendations were submitted to the Florida Building Commission, and the Commission voted unanimously at the June 2009 meeting to adopt the package of recommendations. The workgroup will continue to work in facilitated meetings to develop recommendations to increase energy efficiency for the Florida Building Code.

Next Steps

Future work by the Florida Energy Workgroup will include the development of a model for energy code efficiencies in residential building, the evaluation of the current code for both residential and commercial energy effectiveness, a comparison of the Florida code to that of the International Energy Conservation Code and strategies for developing and implementing the public awareness on energy efficiencies and its benefits. These meetings will continue to be facilitated by the Florida Consensus Center and will develop recommendations to the Commission for consideration during

the 2010 Florida Building Code Update
Process.

For more information about this case,
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This case study is published jointly by the Policy Consensus Initiative (PCI) and its applied research and development arm, the National Policy Consensus Center (NPCC). PCI is a national nonprofit organization that promotes consensus building and effective problem solving in states. NPCC is a center of expertise on consensus building for public leaders.

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