

CODES, CODES and more CODES!

It seems as if every time we finish working on one type of building codes another one is waiting for review. In April of last year the amendments for the 2005 Indiana Residential Code were signed into law and then two months later the 2008 Indiana Building, Fire, Fuel Gas, and Mechanical Codes were signed into law. There would be a break from codes, or so I thought, but the Indiana Electrical Code Review Committee soon began working on the 2008 National Electrical Code amendments. After many controversies on the Indiana Electrical Code Review Committee, the Fire Prevention and Building Safety Commission held a public hearing on May 7, 2009 and the proposed 2008 Indiana Electrical Code was presented to the Commission at the June 2, 2009 Commission meeting.

Break time? Not so fast. The Indiana Residential Code Review Committee will hold its fourth meeting to review the 2009 IRC code on June 11, 2009. At the same time Indiana is reviewing the Swimming Pool Code, Elevator Code and has been asked to start work on the Plumbing code.

B O R I N G!!!! Where is he going with all of this?

Well, the codes never stop. Just ask the staff at the Fire & Building Safety Commission. Some would

call that job security. Our industry can never assume that they can take a break from codes. Some would ask what do home builders care about the Indiana Building Code (IBC) which regulates all buildings other than One & Two Family and Agricultural Buildings. Well, I will give you just a few reasons.

Have you ever built or thought about building a three unit or larger apartment building for investment? The 2008 IBC code requires any R type (residential, other than 1 & 2 family) be protected by fire sprinkler systems.

The 2008 IRC code (1 & 2 family) regulates electrical service up to, and including, 400 amp. Anything over 400 amp is required to be wired to the NEC code. Ask the question of your electrical contractors, do they wire to the IRC or the NEC?

How many of your plumbing contractors use the IRC as the plumbing guide or are they using the IPC, the Indiana Plumbing Code?

Does your HVAC contractor use the IRC or the IMC, the Indiana Mechanical Code, as a guide?

If you are building a simple office for your business or an investor, how simply can you really build it?

Most items that make their way into the Commercial Codes eventually make their way into the 1 & 2 Family Code (IRC). I believe very strongly that we have to keep a close

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watch on all the codes. If we are proactive and stop or amend items that are proposed to the Commercial Codes we have a much better chance of keeping the IRC an affordable code. NAHB and IBA work daily on your behalf for affordable housing.

The staff people at IBA and NAHB are paid by you to protect your interests, but they are only as good as the support the membership gives them. You can't just sit back and expect them to do all the work. They open the doors, present the technical information and work on our behalf behind the scenes. It is up to the membership to supply our staff with the technical information and explanation of how a proposed code amendment will effect the construction. The more we, as members, participate in the code process the better the end product.

I am encouraged by the number of new IBA members showing interest in working on the 2009 Indiana Residential Code review. The results will have an important and positive impact on everyone in the building industry.