

# COLORADO CHAPTER CODE CHANGE COMMITTEE UPDATE

By Tim Pate

Co-Chair and Secretary of Board of Directors

The Code Change Committee met on August 7 and August 28 to review the Code Change Challenges that will be heard at the Final Action Hearings in Minneapolis from September 17 and 23<sup>rd</sup>. We had our final review meeting on September 11 to finish items and verify all speaking assignments.

There were approximately 27 to 28 Chapter members who attended both the Annual Business Meeting and the Final Action Hearings. The Chapter has been successful in setting up working relationships with other Chapters and with various people from industries and private groups in order to mutually assess the applicability of code changes and challenges. We also work closely with CAPMO (Colorado Association of Plumbing and Mechanical Officials) and FMAC (Fire Marshals Association of Colorado) who have their own code change committees. Every year our Chapter's reputation has grown in the national arena by not only authoring code changes but by having many of our members serve on the national committees.

The Code Change Committee has recently grown to a stable group of over 30 active members. We are represented by members from jurisdictions all along the Front Range, the mountains, and industry. The following is a list of currently active jurisdictions and groups:

City and County of Denver, City and County of Broomfield, Estes Park, Longmont, Westminster, Thornton, Lakewood, Aurora, Colorado Springs, Littleton, Parker, Aspen, Castle Rock, Arapahoe County, Arvada, Centennial, Jefferson County, State of Colorado Plumbing Inspection Division, Colorado Code Consulting, FireTrac, N.A.I.M.A., Associated Engineering, and Dan Nickle (formerly with Lakewood).

The benefits of participating with the Chapter Code Change Committee is not only reviewing the various code changes to determine if they are worthwhile but also to be able to understand the intent behind the code provisions once they are actually approved and become part of the published codes. This is a huge benefit in our daily jobs when we do our plan checks or field inspections. It is always better to be able to explain "why" rather than just say "do it."

Another huge benefit is to be able to have a great group of fellow code enforcement people to ask opinions of how to interpret current code sections/issues. This helps lead to better consistency between the jurisdictions which of course benefits the building community.

It has been a wonderful opportunity to serve as the Co-Chair of this committee along with Tom Meyers. We are extremely proud of the group and appreciate all of the time that everyone takes considering that this is a volunteer group. We also want to thank everyone's superiors that allow your employees take time out of their busy days to attend our meetings and take part in this important mission.

One of the primary missions of the Colorado Chapter has always been involvement with the Code Change and Code Development process. Our group will

continue to grow and get better. We will also continue to get a better reputation in the national arena.

There is a national Call for Committees up on the ICC website. You will be able to submit an application to serve on one of the national Code Change Committees that will hear the first round of code changes for the 2012 Code packages. These next hearings will be heard in late October, 2009 in Baltimore. If you served on a Code Change Committee in Palm Springs you will need to reapply. The deadline for turning in these applications will be January 2, 2009. Watch the ICC website for details. If you have any questions feel free to contact Tom or me and we will be able to help you through the process.

## **HOT OFF THE PRESSES**

The Final Action Hearings just concluded and there are a number of significant code changes that will be in the upcoming 2009 Codes. A few of the most significant changes are as follows:

1. Fire sprinklers will be required in all new single family homes and town homes built under the IRC effective January 1, 2011. I would suggest that you begin discussions with your fire department to work out all of the details and potential impacts both on your building department but also on the fire department (staffing levels for new required plan reviews and inspections). There will be much more information on the Chapter website concerning this issue after we begin working with the Fire Marshals Association of Colorado (FMAC) to help you with this issue.
2. Carbon Monoxide Alarms will be required in all new single family and town homes located outside all bedrooms and sleeping areas. These will be in addition to the already required smoke alarms. This is for dwelling units that have either gas fired appliances or attached garages.
3. There is a new section in the IBC that gives requirements for Live Work occupancies.
4. There is a new section in the IBC that will require all fire rated wall assemblies to be labeled above the ceiling.
5. Exit path markings will now be required in new high rise buildings (greater than 75').
6. An additional exit stairway will now be required for super high rise buildings (greater than 420') unless the elevator is usable by building occupants during a fire emergency.
7. Regulations for swimming pools will now reference the new standard for entrapment to be consistent with the Virginia Graeme Baker Federal Pool and Spa Safety Act.
8. The fire sprinkler exception is back in the IBC for areas of refuge.
9. Inspectors will measure stair geometry on commercial stairs without carpet to verify rise and run – not sure how this will work when we measure before carpet and it is correct and when we measure at final when carpet is installed and it is not correct.

10. There is a new exception to section 712.3.2 (Membrane penetrations) which will require both an F and T rating for boxes other than electrical boxes that penetrate membranes of fire rated wall assemblies. This will impact the In-O-Vate Dryer boxes which did not have a T rating. We have been seeing these boxes used on most of our multifamily fire rated buildings. This company has retested their product to comply with the new T rating requirement (in the 2009 IBC) and will now have a new installation requirement (2 X 6 wall minimum along with an additional layer of 5/8" X drywall behind the box).
11. There will be new wording on how to measure for when you need a guard (both IRC and IBC) which tells us to verify the 30" drop by checking our 36" horizontally from the edge of deck/platform.
12. The "30%" Energy Code Solution was defeated but our Energy Code Ad Hoc Committee was successful in getting quite a few of the individual changes either approved or defeated so that both the IRC energy provisions and the IECC are more in line with each other.

These are by no means all of the changes that could be considered "significant" and the Code Change Committee will be putting together a more complete list and get this posted on the website so everyone can use it when preparing to adopt these new Codes.