



Code Update Newsletter

The Public Works and Engineering Department
Planning and Development Services Division

"Providing information pertaining to the Codes and how they affect you."

Phased Energy Efficiency Standards for Residential Structures October 1, 2009

In January the City of Houston adopted amendments to the 2006 International Energy Conservation Code & Chapter 11 of the 2000 International Residential Code. As part of the city's commitment to energy efficiency, the amendments included increased phased requirements effective October 1, 2009.

Beginning October 1, 2009, all new construction of Single Family Residential and Multifamily (3 stories in height or less) will be required to achieve a 15% minimum improvement in energy efficiency above the Houston Residential Energy Conservation Code.

During our process of meeting with stakeholders to prepare for the implementation of the changes, we identified some areas that needed some modification to simplify compliance. These minor modifications were approved by City Council on September 30.

A summary of the modifications to the code are as follows:

- Deleting the 15% above requirement for additions – only new constructions will need to comply.
- Allowing other above code programs in addition to the Energy Star program – this will allow for other programs when approved by the Building Official.
- Allowing other software programs to evaluate above code percentage.
- Modified some of the prescriptive option packages minimum values/ratings. This was primarily to clarify the provision or revise when another option was deleted to maintain a 15% balance.
- Added a new option package table for Multi-family structures for electric resistance heating – most multi-family new construction projects are built with electric compared to gas.

To assist in this process, we are also preparing a guideline and adding a supplemental page to the current City of Houston Energy Form for use with the option packages.

For questions, please email Lisa Fleming Brown at lisa.fleming@cityofhouston.net.