

New energy code goes in to effect Nov 14th 2024

By John Marcantonio Editor

For nearly a year we've been hearing the 2024 International Energy Conservation Code was coming. The Rhode Island Builder caught up with Jim Cambio, the RI State Building Code Commissioner to ask when it is in fact being implemented and what to expect.

Q. We've been hearing about the new energy code for a while. When is the new energy code being implemented?

A. In 2023, the State Building Code was amended to require the adoption of the 2024 International Energy Conservation Code within three (3) months of its release. The IECC final draft was published and made available on August 14, 2024, and as such, must go into effect statewide no later than November 14, 2024.

Q. Is there a grace period and if so what it it?

There is language in the building code that allows an exception for those projects that are already in the design phase. While this is not a "grace period" to comply with the new code, if an owner or owner's agent notifies the building official within three (3) months after the new code adoption that the plans and specifications were previously prepared based upon the provisions of the prior 2018 code, then the applicant shall be allowed to obtain the permit under the prior code provisions.

Q. What should builders expect?

We recognize that this is going to be a significant change from the prior 2018 energy code in that the 2024 code will be adopted with no weakening amendments. Hopefully local builders are taking advantage of the energy code training modules offered at RIBA to prepare for these changes. On the inspection side, we are also going to experience a learning curve given the new code requirements in all aspects of the building envelope. Now that the code is officially published, we are going to offer educational sessions highlighting the new requirements.

Q. What should builders be communicating to their customers?

To make this as transition to the 2024 code I think it is going to be vital for the success of this roll-out that both builders and building inspectors recognize the need to properly educate themselves and work together through the multi-step inspection process to ensure compliance with the code. To that end we can ensure that the homeowners/customers can rest assured that their buildings meet this higher standard.

RI Builders Association in partnership with the National Association of Home Builders has created several training modules to prepare builders, remodelers, building officials and others for the new code. Contact Bob Salvas at bsalvas@ribuilders.org or call 401-438-7400 to sign up for one of the classes.