

FEMA POLICY 204-078-2 – Disaster Risk Reduction Minimum Codes and Standards

POLICY STATEMENT – FEMA will encourage and, to the extent permitted by law, require the integration and use of nationally recognized voluntary consensus-based building codes and standards consistently across FEMA programs.

SCOPE – This policy applies to all FEMA offices and programs, including the provision of disaster and non-disaster grant programs.

PRINCIPLES – Integration of nationally recognized voluntary consensus-based building codes and standards into Agency activities will: 1) Protect Lives and Property; 2) Support the efficient use of Federal Dollars; 3) Inform Development of Nationally Recognized Voluntary Consensus-Based Building Codes and Standards; and 4) Increase Effectiveness.

REQUIREMENTS – FEMA programs, where legally allowable, consistently require the use of consensus based codes and standards. To the extent permitted by law, FEMA will: 1) Require the use of national model building codes developed by the **International Code Council (ICC)** or equivalent voluntary consensus standards; 2) FEMA will adopt and establish as appropriate, regulations, policies, grant conditions, or other appropriate instruments to require the use of, at minimum, hazard-resistant standards and provisions found in the most recent edition of the family of codes developed by the **ICC** or equivalent nationally recognized voluntary consensus standards as a condition to receiving federal assistance; and 3) Adopt as appropriate regulations and policies ensuring adherence to hazard-related federal standards.

ADOPTION OF CODES AND STANDARDS – FEMA programs and offices shall adopt as appropriate regulations, policies, grant conditions, or other appropriate instruments, where legally permitted, to encourage state, local, tribal, and territorial adoption and enforcement of hazard-resistant building codes, standards, and provisions that reduce disaster risk.

FEMA will encourage building codes, standards, and provisions that reduce disaster risk. These codes and standards may include, but are not limited to:

- a. Building codes and standards promulgated by the **ICC** including the **International Wildland-Urban Interface Code (IWUIC)** and the **ICC 700, National Green Building Standard**.
- b. American Society of Heating Refrigerating and Air-Conditioning Engineers (ASHRAE) Standards or equivalent standards.
- c. American Society of Engineers/Structural Engineers Institute Minimum Design Loads for Buildings and Other Structures (ASCE/SEI 7-15) and the Seismic Evaluation and retrofit of Existing Buildings (ASCE/SEI 41-13)
- d. Upgrades of existing codes to incorporate disaster-resistant code provisions.
- e. Integrating flood-resistant elements of the building code into floodplain management ordinances.