



Codes and Standards

What You Should Know

JUNE 2024

**News from the
International
Code Council**

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EPA?**

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The International Code Council (ICC) Board of Directors removes anti-competitive provisions from 2024 International Energy Conservation Code

Washington, D.C. – The International Code Council’s Board of Directors approved appeals from AGA and others to the 2024 International Energy Conservation Code.

SUMMARY of IECC Commercial Appeals Ruling: The final IECC 2024 Code will remove the **electric-ready provisions** of the code and place these provisions in a **non-mandatory appendix**. The Final Draft of the **IECC 2024 Commercial Section** to incorporate the following:

Buildings without heat pumps (Natural Gas Buildings) Energy Credit Provision to be included in a non-mandatory appendix:

Buildings without heat pumps: a requirement that a building using purchased energy that is not electricity and not using heat pumps for space and water heating achieve not less than 1.25 times the number of required efficiency credits shown in the credits table to be included in a non-mandatory appendix.

Demand responsive controls (electric systems) to be included in a non-mandatory appendix: Demand responsive controls: a requirement that electric heating and cooling systems, electric storage water heaters and lighting systems shall be provided with demand responsive controls capable of executing actions in response to a demand response signal to be included in a non-mandatory appendix.

Electric Vehicle (EV) Ready Provision (Power Transfer Infrastructure) to be included in a non-mandatory appendix:

Electric Vehicle Power Transfer Infrastructure: a requirement that parking facilities shall be provided with electric vehicle power transfer infrastructure, EV capable and EV ready spaces to be included in a non-mandatory appendix.

All-Electric Commercial Building Provision is moved to a “resource section” with a cautionary note regarding the risk of preemption (federal law overrides state and municipal law): This provision is listed in a resource section only (not in the Appendix) due to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit issuance of a final decision declaring that the City of Berkeley California cannot ban natural gas appliances in new construction.

[Read More Here from ICC](#)

[Read More Here from AGA](#)

This important ICC Ruling will “safeguard affordability for consumers” as the AGA has stated by removing the unnecessary and costly provisions to include electric systems at each natural gas appliance.

International Fuel Gas Code (IFGC)

On Wednesday, April 10th, the IFGC Code Change Committee met to act on all the proposals to the 2024 version of the IFGC which will then create the 2027 edition of the IFGC. The Committee for the most part voted in alignment to the AGA Building Energy Codes and Standards (BECS) Committee recommendations on most of the proposals submitted on the IFGC. Included changes are:

- Adding optional methods to provide combustion air from adjacent rooms for appliance,
- Reducing the burden of adding test ports interior piping systems, rejecting onerous non-metallic venting requirements,
- Permitting press-connect joints for hydrogen interior piping systems,
- Rejecting proposals to Chapter 7 on Hydrogen since the chapter deals with mainly hydrogen only distribution applications and would not be appropriate for the hydrogen blending approaches that the gas industry is currently developing. Proposed blends being developed would limit hydrogen amounts to 15% - 20% being added to existing fuel gas distribution systems. An amendment to clarify the application for blending was not addressed by the committee but can be introduced during the open public comment period that will take place within the next few months for comments on all committee actions on all the I-Codes subject to this code cycle.

The IFGC Committee AGA representatives and BECS Committee members on the 12 member IFGC Code Change Committee include Chris Byers, Piedmont Natural Gas, Kevin Carney SoCal Gas & San Diego Gas and Electric Company, Ralph Euchner, Dominion Energy, Andrea Lanier Papageorge, Southern Company Gas, Stanley Smith, Oak Ridge Utilities District and Jason Stanek Metropolitan Utilities District.

Public comments received during the public review of the Committee actions will be heard at the ICC final hearings on October 23-31, 2024, in Long Beach, CA. The gas industry will be closely involved in the development of public comments, especially for hydrogen, so that a reasonable proposal can be developed for the Committee to consider.

International Fire Code (IFC)

A proposal to the International Fire Code would have required all “R” (residential) occupancies that are served by a fuel-gas source to have a fuel-gas detection device. This requirement would have mandated a fuel-gas detector either in or in the immediate vicinity of every sleeping room. It would have also applied to existing and new buildings. The fire code committee voted to disapprove the proposal, saying that there was no cost substantiation supplied and that there are a lot of unresolved issues that need to be addressed. There will more than likely be a public comment, or comments filed prior to the ICC final action hearings for the committee to reconsider. The gas industry has the opportunity to be involved in the resolution of this proposal.

What's up with EPA and DOE?

Furnace Product Specification, NextGen, Final Ruling for Consumer Water Heaters

EPA Energy Star updated Furnace Product Specification

EPA Energy Star issued an updated Product Specification for Furnaces April 16th, 2024, proposing an alternative to the previous 2023 proposal to sunset furnaces in the program [ENERGY STAR Version 5.0 Furnaces Draft 1 Specification .pdf](#). The updated product specification proposal maintains furnaces in the Energy Star program with new requirements. The AFUE would be increased to 97 beginning 2026 with no regional distinctions. This would be an increase from 95 AFUE in the Northern states and an increase from 92 AFUE in the Southern states. Comment letters were due May 16th. AGA submitted a comment letter.

EPA Energy Star NextGen

EPA announced May 7th the launch of an additional optional certification level for homes and apartments called EnergyStar NextGen. This certification requires efficient electric technologies and electric vehicle charging capabilities. The requirements do permit optionality for backup furnaces. [About ENERGY STAR NextGen | ENERGY STAR](#)

DOE Final Rule for Consumer (Residential) Water Heaters

DOE recently issued the Final residential water heater rule. The rule finalizes the standards for all residential water heaters EXCEPT gas-fired instantaneous water heaters (GIWH) with a compliance year of 2030. DOE will maintain the current non-condensing minimum efficiency requirements. Previously DOE proposed condensing only requirements for GIWH which might have led to product switching to less efficient technology due to the venting requirements of condensing technology. [cwh_fr1.pdf \(energy.gov\)](#)

State Happenings

Illinois, Washington State

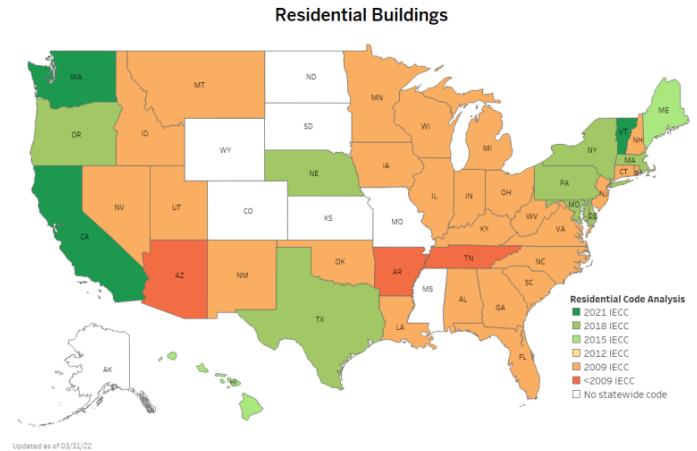
Illinois Future of Gas Proceedings

In March 2024, the Illinois Commerce Commission (ICC) initiated a statewide Future of Gas proceeding. The proceeding will “evaluate the impacts of Illinois’ current decarbonization and electrification goals on the natural gas system.” Workshops will be held. There are two phases of the workshops. Phase 1 consists of workshops which describe issues outlined in the initiating order as well as issues related to decarbonization and the gas sector. Phase 2 examines issues presented in Phase 1, considers proposed legislation and/or regulatory solutions, and presents recommendations for the ICC.

[Future of Gas Proceedings \(illinois.gov\)](https://www.illinois.gov/futureofgas)

Washington State House Bill 1589

In the latest Washington State legislative session, a controversial bill was passed, HB 1589. This bill requires that by July 1, 2025, the Utilities and Transportation Commission (UTC) must complete rulemaking to implement consolidated planning requirements for gas and electric services for large combination utilities. A large combination utility is defined as a company that serves more than 800,000 retail electric customers and 500,000 retail gas customers in Washington as of June 30, 2024. By January 1, 2027, large combination utilities must file an integrated system plan. Plans must be updated on regular basis. Many subjective issues must be addressed in these



subjective issues must be addressed in these plans such as “equity” and “health and safety concerns”.

There are differing stances on the effect of this HB in Washington State. Some critics state that it is intended to transition large combination utilities natural gas customers, such as Puget Sound Energy (PSE), to electrification.

[House passes HB 1589, clearing path for electrification, energy rate hikes - Building Industry Association of Washington \(biaw.com\)](https://www.biaw.com/news/2024/03/house-passes-hb-1589-clearing-path-for-electrification-energy-rate-hikes)

[HB 1589's ban on natural gas adds "more resources" to solve problems created by the CO2 tax » Publications » Washington Policy Center](https://www.washingtonpolicycenter.org/publications/hb-1589s-ban-on-natural-gas-adds-more-resources-to-solve-problems-created-by-the-co2-tax)

PSE claims that there has been a lot of misinformation about HB 1589 and that:

- HB 1589 does not include a ban on natural gas, and it does not change PSE’s obligation to serve natural gas to our customers.

- There is no rate increase associated with HB 1589.
- Nothing in the bill forces electrification.

PSE | Facts about HB 1589

In any case, the bill directly states, “As the state transitions to cleaner sources of energy, large combination utilities are an important partner in helping their customers make smart energy choices, including actively supporting the replacement of fossil fuel-based space and water heating equipment and other fossil fuel-based equipment with high-efficiency non-emitting equipment.” (See HB 1589, page 1 lines 20 and 21, and page 2 lines 1-4.)

<https://lawfilesexternal.leg.wa.gov/biennium/2023-24/Pdf/Bills/House%20Passed%20Legislature/1589-S.PL.pdf?q=20240607055248>

Most states have completed their legislative sessions for this year. But going forward, gas utilities must remain vigilant for this type of legislation in their service territories.

Additional reading:

[Wash Gov HB 1589](#)

[1589 House Bill Report](#)

Other News

IECC 2027 Call for Committees

Contact Tom Schultz with any questions

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SCAN ME

