

WHO NEEDS BUILDING CODES?

We all do – whether in our homes, offices, schools, stores, factories or places of entertainment. We rely on the safety of structures that surround us in our everyday living. The public need for protection from disaster due to fire, structural collapse and general deterioration underscores the need for modern codes and their administration.

BUT HOW RELIABLE ARE THEY?

Host aspects of building construction – electrical wiring, heating, sanitary facilities – represent a potential hazard to building occupants and users. Building codes provide safeguards. Although no code can eliminate all risks, reducing risks to an acceptable level helps.

WHAT IS A BUILDING CODE?

Practically, it is the government's official statement on building safety. Technically, it is a compendium of laws and ordinances setting minimum safety standards and arranged in a systematic manner (codified) for easy reference. It embraces all aspects of the building construction – fire and structural items as well as the plumbing, electrical and mechanical systems.

WHO USES BUILDING CODES?

All people are impacted in a building construction project – architects and engineers, contractors and subcontractors the manufactures and distributors of building materials and, finally, the user or occupant of the building.

WHY INSPECT A BUILDING DURING CONSTRUCTION?

It is the only way to verify independently that code compliance has been achieved. Did you know that before you moved into your home, office or factory, an average of ten inspections had been made to verify conformity to minimum standards affecting electrical safety and sanitation as well as structural and fire and the like?

HOW ARE SAFE BUILDINGS ACHIEVED?

Safety is achieved through proper design and construction practice and a code administration program, which verifies compliance. You, as a homeowner or business owner, have a substantial investment that can be seriously jeopardized through less-than-complete code enforcement or compliance.

WHAT IF I WANT TO DO A BUILDING PROJECT MYSELF?

Building departments have pamphlets and brochures explaining in detail how to obtain permits and design and construct a safe building. Inquire in your local community.

WHY SHOULD MINIMUM SAFETY CODES APPLY TO MY OWN HOUSE?

For several reasons:

- o For your personal safety and that of your family and the guests invited into your home.
- o To ensure the economic well being of the community by reducing potential spread of fire and disease.
- o For the conservation of energy.
- o To protect future purchasers who deserve reasonable assurance that the home they buy will be safe.