On January 1, 2011, the state of Idaho adopted the 2009 International Energy Conservation Code (IECC). Every new home in Idaho is required to meet these minimum standards. **What does this mean for YOU, an elected official?** This guide will help you identify the aspects of a home that meet Idaho’s energy code, which saves consumers money, creates jobs and protects Idaho residents by increasing home values and ensuring health and safety.

The energy used in buildings impacts our communities because buildings account for over 40% of total energy use in the United States, which is more than transportation.¹ Energy requires expensive infrastructure and the cost of energy is rising - electric utilities typically increase by 3% per year. **Energy efficiency—through the adoption and enforcement of strong building energy codes—is the quickest, cheapest and cleanest way to reduce energy consumption.**

### How does Idaho’s energy code save consumers money?

A home built to the new energy code standards saves money every month and has the potential for a higher resale value. The average American spends $2,200 on annual energy bills.² The 2009 IECC is designed to reduce energy use by 10-15% compared to the 2006 IECC, which saves each Idahoan family $220 – $330 per year. More energy-efficient homes also result in higher home resale value potential, and the ROI (return on investment) is typically less than one year! **It is simply more cost effective to build a home that meets the energy code now than to try and improve its efficiency later through expensive retrofits.**

### How does Idaho’s energy code create jobs and stimulate our state economy?

Consumers can bolster the local economy with money saved from reduced energy bills. Businesses can transfer savings to production and investment in our state economy. And, jobs are created as the market for skilled labor increases for heating and cooling mechanics, insulation contractors, duct and building leakage professionals, energy auditors and weatherization specialists.

A study by the Idaho Department of Labor in 2011 identified the green occupation with the most projected green employment in 2018 is a heating, air conditioning and refrigeration mechanic and installer. **Energy codes in Idaho directly affect the demand for these jobs now and in the future.**

### How does Idaho’s energy code protect Idaho residents?

Building for energy efficiency also results in superior quality of construction, improved comfort and enhanced indoor and outdoor air quality. Inadequate insulation and air leakage are leading causes of energy waste in most homes, as well as cause moisture and mold problems. Mold is a major trigger of asthma, which affects over 104,000 children and adults in Idaho. And, recent increases in asthma prevalence seem to coincide with worsening air quality conditions throughout the state.³ Energy use directly correlates with emissions that pollute our air. **Idaho residents have a right to a home that meets national standards for energy efficiency and protects our air quality.**

For more information on energy codes, you can go to www.idabo.org/energy.htm or http://bcap-ocean.org/energycodes101.
Updating codes on a regular basis, typically every three years, with the cycle established by the International Code Council ensures that jurisdictions have support from a national level, which conserves resources on a state and local level.

**Overview of the minimum standards to meet Idaho’s energy code:**

- Energy certificate signed by the builder and posted on the circuit breaker – Evidence of the energy-efficient features of the home
- Air sealing of all holes between floors and through walls and around windows, doors and fireplaces – Critical for comfort, air quality and energy efficiency
- High-efficiency light bulbs such as compact fluorescents (CFLs) or LEDs in at least 50% of permanent light fixtures – CFLs use about 75% less energy than incandescent bulbs!
- Windows have a U-factor of 0.35 or less – Enjoy light and views while saving on utility bills
- Heating and cooling systems are properly sized and meet minimum levels of efficiency (SEER, AFUE and HSPF) – HALF of a typical energy bill comes from heating and cooling!
- Water heaters have a minimum energy factor (EF)
- Insulation meets minimum R-values and is installed per manufacturer’s specifications in walls, ceiling and floors – Properly installed insulation will blanket the home for more constant temperatures
- All ducts and air handlers are sealed with mastic (duct tape is not permitted) and insulated if in unconditioned space such as a non-heated crawlspace or attic – Proper duct sealing optimizes the home’s comfort delivery system
- If any ductwork is located in unconditioned space, then a DuctBlaster test is required to measure air leakage – designing duct systems entirely within conditioned space is a best practice

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2. Lawrence Berkely National Laboratory (2009)

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