



**DPS**

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## IgCC FAQs

**Q: Why adopt the IGCC?**

**A:** Global warming is a very real problem that we must work together to address. Buildings have a significant impact on greenhouse gas emissions. The Montgomery County 2009 Climate Protection Plan, among other things, calls for an 80% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2050 with incremental reductions. Recommendation EEC-4 of the Climate Protection plan provides: “To ensure that new public and private sector buildings constructed in the County represent the pinnacle of energy-efficiency and green building design, the County should develop a process to ensure that the most rigorous energy and green building codes are adopted in a timely manner as the base for all new construction; codes requirements are effectively disseminated to builders, developers, and building managers; and that enforcement is effective, thorough and uniform.” The IGCC establishes that base and enables effective, thorough and uniform application and enforcement.

**Q: Will the IGCC apply to all types of construction?**

**A:** As proposed the IGCC will apply only to commercial construction 5,000 square feet or greater. This includes new construction as well as additions to existing buildings resulting in at least 5,000 square feet of additional floor area. For additions, the IGCC applies only to the addition. Single family dwellings and townhomes are exempt.

**Q: We are hearing this proposed regulation will eliminate alternate compliance paths. Will other methods of compliance be available?**

**A:** Yes; Groups R-2 and R-4 over 5,000 square feet may use ICC-700. This includes the Residential portions of mixed-use buildings. The ASHRAE 189.1 Standard is another optional compliance path provided by the IGCC. Alternatives such as LEED, Enterprise Green Construction or Green Globes can be pursued as well. Requests for an alternative compliance path shall be made through our Code Modification process and must show at least an equivalent level of compliance with the IGCC as amended.

**Q: It has been stated that the section on Heat Island Mitigation will effectively prohibit the use of asphalt paving having a very negative impact on jobs and the economy. Can you address this?**

A: Use of asphalt is not prohibited. The heat island impacts must be mitigated by 40% which can be done through a variety of methods including material selection, shading, landscaping, etc. Heat island areas include hardscape such as parking lots, bicycle parking, plazas and patios as well as sidewalks, bicycle paths and other pathways which will be able to achieve compliance by employing one of four options provided, or any combination of those options. For example, a designer can choose to install solar panels (which will not be considered in the hardscape calculation), use pervious paving for plazas and sidewalks; cover portions of the parking lot with shade structures; and then provide a landscaping plan where trees will shade another portion of the hardscapes. Pervious and permeable paving, including pervious asphalt, is not prohibited by the Code.

**Q. Why is it important to mitigate heat island impacts?**

A: Urban heat islands increase overall electricity demand, as well as peak demand, which generally occurs on hot summer weekday afternoons, when offices and homes are running cooling systems, lights, and appliances. During extreme heat events, which are exacerbated by urban heat islands, the resulting demand for cooling can overload systems and require a utility to institute controlled, rolling brownouts or blackouts to avoid power outages. Additionally, the water run-off entering our streams and rivers, warmed by hot paved surfaces, has a dramatic negative effect on aquatic life.

**Q: Will the tax incentives associated with LEED certification be eliminated by the adoption of the IGCC?**

A: Tax incentives associated with LEED certification will still be available. While the IGCC will set minimum conservation and sustainability standards as code, LEED certification can still be pursued on a voluntary basis and the incentives will continue to encourage developers to go above the minimum requirements.

**Q: Why has so much of the code been moved into project electives “Appendix A”?**

A: Significant sections of the IGCC fall under the authority of other agencies such as WSSC, Park and Planning, and Maryland State Department of the Environment. These related code sections have been moved to Appendix A to provide Project Electives which go above the minimum standards and requirements set by these other agencies. We are proposing requiring between 2-4 electives; 2-for projects up to 10,000 ft<sup>2</sup>, 3-for projects between 10,000-20,000 ft<sup>2</sup>, and 4-for projects above 20,000 ft<sup>2</sup>. As long as a project demonstrates their chosen project electives go beyond the required minimum standards it will be deemed to be in compliance.