BUILDING SAFETY MONTH

On April 22, Governor Nathan Deal signed a proclamation declaring May 2015 as Building Safety Month in Georgia. Founded by the International Code Council (ICC), Building Safety Month (BSM) is celebrated by jurisdictions worldwide during the month of May. (See picture inset). Building Safety Month is a public awareness campaign offered each year to help individuals, families and businesses understand what it takes to create and sustain safe and sustainable structures. The campaign reinforces the need for adoption of modern, model building codes, a strong and efficient system of code enforcement, and a well-trained, professional workforce to maintain the system.

The ICC Region 8 Chapter also issued a proclamation proclaiming May 2015 as Building Safety Month. The Region 8 Chapter consists of Georgia, North Carolina, South Carolina and Tennessee. May marks the 35th year of this event which raises the profile of building safety professionals. This year’s theme is Resilient Communities Start with Building Codes. Each week of Building Safety Month spotlights a specific area of building safety. For more information about Building Safety Month, visit the website, www.iccsafe.org/2015-building-safety-month-is-may/.

MEET DCA’S NEW COMMISSIONER

Camila Knowles was appointed as commissioner of the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA) by Governor Nathan Deal in 2015.

Knowles leads DCA’s work for community development, ensuring that through workforce housing, community infrastructure, downtown development and economic development financing, communities are prepared for opportunities to meet Governor Deal’s top priority: creating jobs across the state. Commissioner Knowles joined DCA after serving as Chief of Staff for U.S. Senator Saxby Chambliss of Georgia. She began her career with Senator Chambliss in 2003 as a legislative assistant and chief counsel in Washington. She moved in 2009 to his Atlanta office as State Director and was named Chief of Staff in 2013.

While on Senator Chambliss’ staff, Knowles worked on legislation directly impacting communities across Georgia, including the designation of Arabia Mountain as a National Heritage Area, the amendment of the Coastal Barrier Resources Act, and the deepening of the Savannah Harbor. As a native of the city of Moultrie and Colquitt County in Southwest Georgia, she cares about making life better for citizens in every corner of our state. Prior to her work with Senator Chambliss, Knowles served as a legislative aide to U.S. Senator Kay Bailey Hutchison of Texas. She holds a bachelor’s degree in history from Harvard, from which she graduated with cum laude distinction, and a law degree from Georgetown University. She is also a member of the State Bar of North Carolina. Knowles is a member of the 2014 class of Leadership Georgia and an alumni interviewer for Harvard.

She resides in Atlanta with her husband Sean and their three children. Commissioner Knowles is an active member of Peachtree Road United Methodist Church, where she and her husband teach kindergarten Sunday School.
The 2012 Edition of the International Residential Code (IRC) Section R312.1.3 Opening limitations states that “Required guards shall not have openings from the walking surface to the required guard height which allow passage of a sphere 4 inches in diameter.” There are two exceptions listed for this section that apply to the guards on stairs. The first is the triangular opening formed by the riser, tread and bottom rail, which “shall not allow passage of a sphere 6 inches in diameter.” The second allows for a slightly larger spacing for the spindles or pickets on stair railings. The exception states, “Guards on the open side of stairs shall not have openings which allow passage of a sphere 4-3/8 inches in diameter.” This exception is new in the 2012 IRC.
ADOPTIONS IN GEORGIA FOR THE DISASTER RESILIENT CONSTRUCTION APPENDICES

In 2013, Georgia adopted two optional Appendices for Disaster Resilient Construction that are available for adoption by local jurisdictions containing increased construction requirements for disaster resilience. The Georgia Department of Community Affairs would like to congratulate The City of Kennesaw for being the first community in Georgia to adopt both Appendix N and Appendix R, both adopted November 4, 2013. The City of Kennesaw has adopted Appendix N for the IBC in its entirety, choosing to enforce a Flood Elevation of +3 feet and a Wind Load Design Option A (meeting EF0 & EF1, IBC level Hurricane) with exceptions for increased protections for Risk Category III and IV buildings. The City also adopted Appendix R for the IRC in its entirety, choosing to enforce a Flood Elevation of +3 feet and a Minimum Wind Speed Option A – 100 MPH.

The Georgia Department of Community Affairs would also like to congratulate The City of St. Marys for being the second community in Georgia to adopt both Appendix N and Appendix R, both adopted April 7, 2014. The City of St. Marys has adopted Appendix N for the IBC in its entirety, choosing to enforce a Flood Elevation of +2 feet and a Wind Load Design Option C (meeting EF3, Cat. 4 Hurricane) with exceptions for increased protections for Risk Category III and IV buildings. The City also adopted Appendix R for the IRC in its entirety, choosing to enforce a Flood Elevation of +2 feet and a Minimum Wind Speed Option C – 120 MPH.

DCA staff presented the Building Officials, Mark Rice with the City of Kennesaw and Jerry Sizemore with the City of St. Marys, with certificates at the Building Officials of Georgia (BOAG) Annual Conference for being the first adopters of the DRC Appendices in Georgia helping to make their communities safer and more resilient.

Mark Rice, Building Official for the City of Kennesaw, & Dee Leclair, DCA

Jerry Sizemore, Building Official for the City of St. Marys, with Dee Leclair

IWUC CODE NOT RECOMMENDED FOR ADOPTION AS NEW PERMISSIVE STATE CODE

At the July 2014 meeting, the State Codes Advisory Committee (SCAC) formed a Subcommittee that was charged with reviewing the new 2012 Edition of the International Wildland Urban Interface Code (IWUIC) along with any proposed state amendments for potential adoption as a new Permissive State Minimum Standard Code in Georgia. The Subcommittee was comprised of seven State Codes Advisory Committee (SCAC) members:

• Bill Duck, Chairman, representing Code Enforcement Officials
• David Adams, representing Local Fire Officials
• Dwayne Garriss, representing Georgia Safety Fire Commissioner
• Steve Cooper, representing General Contractors
• Ryan Taylor, representing Profession of Architecture
• Morgan Wheeler, representing Code Enforcement Officials
• Tim Williams, representing Home Builders

The Subcommittee met three times from January through March and conducted a thorough review of the new proposed code. On April 16, Chairman Bill Duck made a final report to the State Codes Advisory Committee (SCAC). Based on the recommendations of the Subcommittee, Mr. Duck made a motion to adopt the 2012 IWUIC with proposed GA amendments. However, after further discussion, the SCAC did not recommend going forward with adoption of the new code with amendments as proposed. Consequently, the original motion to adopt was withdrawn and a new motion not to adopt the proposed 2012 IWUIC with GA amendments was passed unanimously.

If you have any questions or further concerns regarding this matter, please contact Bill Towson, DCA Staff Subcommittee Liaison, at 404-679-3109 or bill.towson@dca.ga.gov.
GEORGIA RESIDENTIAL ENERGY CODE FIELD STUDY

The on-going Georgia Residential Energy Code Field Study (http://www.dca.state.ga.us/development/ConstructionCodes/programs/documents/ CodesUpdateWinter2014.pdf) is now underway in Georgia. As part of the three-year research study, the project team of DCA, GEFA, SEEA, Southface and Advanced Energy, have kicked off Phase 1 and have begun collecting field observations around the Metro Atlanta area.

Phase 1: Data Collection of Single-Family Homes Under Construction

With the goal of finding whether investments in education, resources and trainings will produce measurable energy savings in single-family newly constructed detached homes, Southface is visiting construction sites to observe key energy code requirements (installed insulation, windows, duct leakage, etc.) to determine the average energy used by a newly constructed Georgia home. Important factors to understand with the data collection of Phase 1:

- Information from individual homes visited will be confidential.
- Permit holders will be contacted before the project team visits a selected home.
- Only homes that have not yet received a Certificate of Occupancy will be visited.
- Homes will only be visited once during the entire study.

In addition, the project team also spent February travelling statewide to engage with the construction industry in three open discussion forums in Atlanta, Perry and Savannah. These meetings were held to encourage participation and awareness of the study, as well as to give the local building industry the chance to give feedback, and for the project team to learn of energy code challenges in the field. A voting activity by participants determined that the following items are challenges that hinder energy code requirements from being met:

- inconsistencies in code interpretation and application
- undervaluing of energy saving construction features in a new home by real estate professionals
- estimated higher building costs of energy efficiency

After identifying challenges of implementing the energy code in construction, participants brainstormed resources and solutions that would be most helpful in Georgia. Along with other challenges and possible solutions identified, these meetings gave the project team a framework to develop the resources to be deployed in Phase 2 of the study.

Phase 2: Providing Education and Resources to the Construction Industry

Once data collection is complete, Phase 2 of the project will begin, and the project team will provide free training, resources and trainings statewide based on observations in the field and construction industry feedback. Even though the forums have concluded, if you would like to contribute and provide feedback and suggestions for Phase 2, please see our website: http://www.seealliance.org/policy-initiatives/initiatives/energy-codes/residential-energy-code-compliance-southeast/codecompliancega/ or contact Lauren Westmoreland, SEEA Energy Codes Manager, at LWestmoreland@seealliance.org, or Amy Dzura, Energy Codes Associate, at adzura@seealliance.org.

Q: When am I required to add Carbon Monoxide detectors in my existing home?

A: Per the 2014 Georgia State Amendments to the 2012 Edition of the International Residential Code (IRC) Section R315.3, Carbon Monoxide Alarms are required to be added in existing dwellings “when alterations, repairs, or additions requiring a permit occurs, or when one or more sleeping rooms are added or created in existing dwellings, the individual dwelling unit shall be equipped with carbon monoxide alarms in accordance with Section R315.1.” There are two exceptions to this requirement, the first being work involving the exterior surfaces of the dwellings, such as the replacement of roofing or siding, or the addition or replacement of windows or doors, or the addition of a porch or deck. The second exception is when work involves the installation, alteration or repairs of plumbing or mechanical systems.
DOE AMENDS ENERGY EFFICIENCY STANDARDS FOR WATER HEATERS (EFFECTIVE APRIL 16, 2015)

According to the US Department of Energy (DOE), water heating is, on average, the second largest household energy expense behind space heating, representing about 18% of total household energy consumption in the United States. On April 16, 2015, water heaters will take the next great stride when manufacturers must comply with amended DOE efficiency standards.

The most common residential water heaters manufactured on and after this date will have a modest boost in efficiency; units larger than 55 gallons will shift to next-generation technology, cutting utility bills by one-fourth to one-half depending on the technology. These amended mandatory standards are expected to save $63 billion in energy bill savings and avoid about 172.5 million metric tons of carbon dioxide emissions for products manufactured from 2015-2044.

Certain residential water heating products manufactured on or after April 16, 2015 must comply with the new amended standards found in the Code of Federal Regulations 10 CFR 430.32(d). However, units manufactured prior to that date can still be sold and installed until their current market supply is exhausted.

What Changes?

Residential water heating products affected by the new 2015 Energy Conservation Standards include: gas-fired, oil-fired, electric, tabletop, instantaneous gas-fired and instantaneous electric. See chart for new energy factor requirements for all these products.

While all affected models will see an increase in the Energy Factor (EF) requirement, the most dramatic changes are in the larger capacity models. To meet the new required minimum EF, gas-fired and electric water heaters over 55 gallons may require additional insulation. The overall height and diameter of their tanks may increase which raises possible insulation concerns.

Oil-fired products are faced with similar challenges. The new EF for tankless (instantaneous) gas goes from .62 to .82. However, most tankless products currently have EF ratings of .82 or better. While the new rule does not require a specific technology, tank-type water heaters with available technology that meets the new EF requirements will likely cost more but the increase will be offset by additional energy savings.

For more information on the new federal standards for water heaters, contact DOE at (202) 287-5772 or by email at water_heaters@ee.doe.gov or visit http://www1.eere.energy.gov.
IB ANGLE: INDUSTRIALIZED BUILDINGS FEE STUDY
Throughout 2015, DCA’s Office of Building Construction Codes will be conducting a fee study regarding other southeastern states’ Industrialized Buildings Programs. The states of interest include Alabama, Florida, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, and Virginia. The goals of this study are to assess fee structures and determine if Georgia’s program is charging appropriate fees. Thus far, we have seen that Georgia is one of few states that charges fees exclusively to manufacturers and third party review agencies. Preliminary findings were presented to the Industrialized Buildings Advisory Committee (IBAC) on May 7, 2015.

INSIGNIA DISPOSITION REPORTS
GA IB Program Rule 110-2-10-.08 requires manufacturers to report monthly the present dispositions of all insignia received from the Department. The report must indicate the model number (designation), module(s) serial number, state insignia number(s), total building square footage, agency insignia number(s), date of manufacture, and the purchaser’s name and address of the building where it is installed. The report must be submitted using the appropriate insignia disposition form which is available to download here: http://www.dca.state.ga.us/development/constructioncodes/programs/industrialized.asp. The report form should be submitted electronically by email to DCA at dca-ib@dca.ga.gov. Important note: It is not necessary to submit a monthly report whenever there is no insignia activity by the manufacturer. If you have any questions or need further assistance about disposition reports, please contact the IB Program Office at dca-ib@dca.ga.gov or 404-679-3118.

PROFILE CORNER

WINDELL PETERS, SCAC DCA COMMISSIONER’S DESIGNEE
Windell Peters is the owner and manager of WFP Code Services, LLC. His primary customer is AGL Resources (Atlanta Gas Light) where he provides assistance in the codes and standards field. Windell served AGL Resources as Manager of the Codes and Standards Department for 18 years. His career in code enforcement began with the City of Atlanta after graduating from Smith Hughes Vocational School with a degree in Carpentry/Construction Management. Windell spent 17 years with Atlanta. The next 10 years he spent some time with each of the following communities as a Building Official/Department Head: City of Altamonte Springs, Florida; Cobb County, Georgia; and Chatham County, Georgia.

During his career he has obtained the following industry certifications: Building Official, Fire Safety Inspector, Building Inspector, Mechanical Inspector, Mechanical Plans Examiner, Plumbing Inspector. His awards include the following: Building Official of the Year (1989) from the Building Officials Association of Georgia; William H. Downs award of excellence (1997) from the Building Officials Association of Georgia; and Alton T. Riddick award (1999) from the Southern Building Code Congress International. Mr. Peters has served as a member of the Georgia State Codes Advisory Committee for 24 years.

TYLER MARTIN, IB INTERN
Tyler Martin joined DCA’s Office of Building Construction Codes and Industrialized Buildings as a part-time Industrialized Buildings Intern in January 2015. Tyler is currently a student at Georgia Tech and is completing a dual degree in City and Regional Planning and Civil Engineering. He obtained his Bachelor’s of Science in Architecture from Georgia Tech in May 2014 and began his job as a full-time drafts-person at Panel Built, Inc. immediately after. Working at Panel Built allowed him to gain a variety of skills and knowledge regarding industrialized buildings and led him to apply to DCA’s intern position in Industrialized Buildings.

Tyler is currently conducting a fee study concerning Industrialized Buildings Programs in the southeast. The preliminary findings of this study were presented to Georgia's Industrialized Buildings Advisory Committee in May 2015. He is also assisting the Industrialized Buildings and Building Codes staff in administering the IB Program and answering questions about Georgia’s Minimum Standard Codes.

Tyler was raised in the North Georgia mountains in Blairsville and went to school in Murphy, North Carolina. Tyler studied abroad in Barcelona, Spain and Wellington, New Zealand during his undergraduate career and enjoys traveling. During his free time, he enjoys hiking, kayaking and working on personal creative projects.
Destiny Industries, LLC recently hosted a meeting of the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA) Industrialized Buildings Advisory Committee (IBAC) on May 7, 2015 at their manufacturing facilities located in Moultrie, GA. Bob Qurnell, Vice President, and Jerry Brooks, General Manager of Destiny Industries, LLC, guided IBAC members, DCA staff and guests on a tour of their plant followed by a luncheon at one of their fully constructed homes. This home, the Olive House, had a one and one-half story Cape Code floor plan with 1930 sq. ft. of living space. Seven committee members, four DCA staff, and five guests were in attendance at the meeting.

Ted Miltiades, Director of Building Construction Codes and Industrialized Buildings in Georgia, updated IBAC members on the new 2014 Electrical Code (NFPA 70) and the new 2015 Georgia amendments to the State Minimum Standard Codes that became effective on January 1, 2015. He also discussed the new “gray sheet” which lists the current State Minimum Standard Construction Codes, Fire and Life Safety and Accessibility standards. The “gray sheet” is intended for Industrialized Buildings only. It is updated annually to reflect any new code editions and GA amendments that are adopted by the Department of Community Affairs and is available on the IB Program webpage. Bill Towson gave a business report on the IB Program’s revenue and Tyler Martin reported on a research survey he conducted on the IB programs, services and fees charged by other surrounding states.

Destiny Industries, LLC has been an active manufacturer in the Georgia IB Program since 2007. Their plant is located at 250 RW Bryant Road and has approximately 200,000 sq. ft. of conditioned manufacturing space across three facilities that total 94 acres. Currently employing approximately 167 local employees, Destiny is a wholesale producer of premium quality, conventional homes built with systems technology that are marketed through a regional modular network of builders or developers.

GA’s Industrialized Buildings (IB) Program was created by the Industrialized Buildings Act (1976) for the purpose of establishing construction standards for residential and commercial buildings that are mass-produced in factories and then transported to building sites for erection and installation. DCA has the overall responsibility for the administration and enforcement of the program. To assist in this responsibility, an eleven-member Industrialized Buildings Advisory Committee, with representation from manufacturers, third party agencies, local government and the construction trades and professions, advises DCA Commissioner Camila Knowles on the program’s rules and regulations.

Manufacturers are required to obtain state approval for their manufacturing systems and quality control procedures. Every industrialized building is fully inspected during the open construction phase at the approved manufacturing facility. Inspection is accomplished by independent third party agencies which utilize private engineers and construction experts.

All state-approved Industrialized (Modular) Buildings must be manufactured to meet State Minimum Standard Codes for Construction as adopted and amended by DCA. These buildings are required to have a DCA insignia affixed to each module or unit. The insignia certifies the unit is deemed to comply with the state’s construction codes and rules for its intended application and use. However, local governments retain full control over all matters relating to a building’s installation at a site, including subdivision controls, zoning issues, site grading, foundation installations and utility hook-ups.

GA’s Industrialized Buildings Program provides a mechanism whereby local building inspection departments can be assured that quality buildings are being installed in their jurisdiction. It also provides a cost effective means whereby manufacturers can have their buildings inspected during the manufacturing process, and it establishes a set of minimum construction standards to safeguard the public safety, health and welfare of the citizens of Georgia.

For questions about GA’s Industrialized Buildings Program, please visit www.dca.ga.gov or contact the Department of Community Affairs at 404-679-3118 or by email at industrializedbuildings@dca.ga.gov.

CONTACT CODES AND INDUSTRIALIZED BUILDINGS

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A new map has been created from the county responses to the 2014 Government Management Indicators (GOMI) Survey. It is currently included in a group of maps on the “Government Management Indicators Survey (GOMI)” page under “MAPS of Selected County Services Provided” and can be found at the following link: http://www.dca.ga.gov/development/research/programs/gomi.asp. The image below is the result of the survey and displays how individual counties handle the permitting and enforcement of building codes.

as of map creation date  March 2015

Data source: 2014 Government Management Indicators (GOMI) survey
Question II-203 and 204 Are building permits issued and/or construction codes enforced in the jurisdiction?

GOMI is a mandated annual survey required of all Local Governments in Georgia by O.C.G.A. 39-81-8.
WEBSITES OF INTEREST

International Association of Building Officials (IABO)  
www.iaboinc.com

International Codes Council (ICC)  
www.iccsafe.org

ICC Region Chapter  
iccreg8.com

ICC Codes and Standards Discussion Forum  
www.iccsafe.org/iccforums/pages/default.aspx

Building Officials Association of Georgia (BOAG)  
www.boagcodes.org

Governor’s Office of Consumer Protection  
http://georgia.gov/agencies/governors-office-consumer-protection

Georgia Plumbers Trade Association (GPTA)  
www.gpta.net

Georgia Association of Home Inspectors (GAHI)  
www.gahi.com

Georgia Fire Safety Commissioner (State Fire Marshal)  

Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA)  
www.dca.ga.gov

Call before you DIG  
www.georgia811.com

Georgia State Inspectors Association  
http://georgiastateinspectors.com/

GA State Historic Buildings Preservation Office (DHR)  
http://georgia.shpo.org/laws

GA State ADA Accessibility Office (GSFIC)  
http://ada.georgia.gov/

GA Association of Zoning Administrators (GAZA)  
www.georgiazoning.org

GA Association of Floodplain Management (GAFM)  
www.gafloods.org/

National Floodplain Insurance Program (NFIP)  
http://www.floodsmart.gov/floodsmart/

Plumbing & Mechanical Association of GA (PMA)  
www.plumbingpros.com

Storm Shelters: Selecting Design Criteria (FEMA)  
http://www.fema.gov/library/viewRecord.do?id=2973

Safe Rooms (FEMA)  
http://www.fema.gov/safe-room-resources

Carbon Monoxide Indoor Air Quality (EPA)  
http://www.epa.gov/iaq/co.html#CPSC2

Carbon Monoxide Detectors  
http://www.aboutcarbonmonoxide.com