OBJECTIVE: To obtain an understanding of the administrative provisions of the International Energy Conservation Code, including the scope and purpose of the code, types of uses and projects covered under the provisions of the code, materials, systems and equipment identification requirements, submission of construction documents, plan review and inspection procedures.

REFERENCE: Chapters 1 and 5, 2015 International Energy Conservation Code

KEY POINTS:
- What is the purpose and scope of the International Energy Conservation Code?
- Which occupancies are considered under the residential provisions of the IECC?
- Which occupancies are considered under the commercial provisions of the IECC?
- How does the code apply to unconditioned parts of the building?
- Which types of projects are exempt from compliance with the IECC?
- When must compliance be demonstrated for an addition, alteration or repair?
- How must compliance be shown for a mixed-occupancy building?
- Can an above-code program be used to demonstrate compliance with the IECC?
- What information is required to be in the construction documents?
- Which inspections are required to be conducted? When should they be conducted?
The International Energy Conservation Code shall regulate the design and construction of buildings for the effective use and conservation of energy over the useful life of each building. The International Energy Conservation Code is intended to provide flexibility to permit the use of innovative approaches and techniques to achieve this objective. The International Energy Conservation Code is not intended to abridge safety, health or environmental requirements contained in other applicable codes or ordinances.

The IECC enables effective use of energy in new building construction, as well as in alterations and additions to existing buildings, by regulating the building envelope, mechanical systems, electrical systems and service water heating systems. The IECC also provides flexibility through Section 102, Alternative Materials—Method of Construction, Design or Insulating Systems, which allows software approaches such as the U.S. Department of Energy’s REScheck and COMcheck software.

The IECC contains provisions for the use of new technology, such as solar modules and ground-source heating systems.
The International Energy Conservation Code applies to residential and commercial buildings and the buildings’ sites and associated systems and equipment.

The IECC is applicable to residential and commercial buildings regulated under the scope of the International Residential Code® (IRC®) and the International Building Code® (IBC®). A residential building as defined by the International Energy Conservation Code includes detached one- and two-family dwellings and multiple single-family dwellings (townhouses) as regulated by the IRC; and Group R-2, R-3 and R-4 buildings three stories or less in height above grade plane. A commercial building is simply defined as any building that is not included in the definition of residential buildings and includes all other buildings for the purpose of the code. These definitions are included in Chapter 2 for both commercial buildings and residential buildings.

Commercial buildings are generally considered to house office, warehouse, manufacturing, retail and similar uses. By definition, however, an apartment building would also be considered a commercial building for purposes of compliance with the IECC if it were four or more stories in height above grade plane.
The IECC does not require an existing building to meet the provisions of the code when an addition is created provided no changes are made to the existing structure.