

# Michigan Energy Code Compliance Collaborative

\*\*\* MEETING MINUTES – 1/10/2019 \*\*\*

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**Location:** 7109 W. Saginaw Hwy, Lansing, MI 48917  
**Date:** January 10, 2019  
**Time:** 1:00pm – 3:00pm EST  
**Call-In #:** 1 (877) 336-1829      **Access Code:** 2022874#

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## Attendees In person

**Brad Bartholomew**, Bartholomew Heating & Cooling  
**Ian Blanding**, Midwest Energy Efficiency Alliance  
**Eric Devries**, E3M Solutions  
**David Gard**, Michigan Energy Efficiency Contractors Association  
**Robert Jackson**, Michigan Energy Office  
**Chris McTaggart**, Building Efficiency Resources  
**Tim Mrozowski**, Michigan State University (Retired)  
**Terri Novak**, Michigan Energy Office  
**Jon Paradine**, Bureau of Construction Codes  
**Caile Richards**, Small Business Association of Michigan  
**Matt Rosendaul**, Great lakes Home Performance  
**Art Thayer**, Michigan Electric Cooperative Association  
**Brandon Trierweiler**, Homeworks Tri County  
**Jake Wilkinson**, Michigan Energy Office

## Attendees On The Phone

**Ed Carley**, National Association of State Energy Officials  
**Amy Glapinski**, Consumers Energy  
**Jose Goncalves**, DTE Energy  
**Scott Szymoniak**, Presque Isle Electric & Gas  
**McKenzie Tompkins**, Crane Energy Solutions

## **Welcome and Overview of Project**

Michigan Energy Office Director, Robert Jackson, welcomed the group. The goal of the collaborative is to identify and address what are the gaps, issues and opportunities in compliance with the current Michigan energy code and how we can improve compliance. The Michigan Energy Office is also interested in developing a roadmap to improve energy code compliance to make it easier for contractors/builders to meet the energy code.

## **Overview of Michigan Energy Code**

Jon Paradine, Bureau of Construction Codes, provided background into the current commercial energy code is based on ASHRAE90.1-2013 with amendments and became effective on September 20, 2017. The process for code review is: the LARA department director is the one who must open the code for review and public comment. Once comments are received and reviewed the final code is published. The Bureau of Construction Codes adopts the code but does not enforce it in most areas, that is the responsibility of the local code enforcement officials in each jurisdiction.

## Current Energy Code Status and Compliance Work in the Midwest

Ian Blanding, Midwest Energy Efficiency Alliance (MEEA)

- Michigan is currently one of only two states that are at the 2015 IECC or higher for the RESIDENTIAL code, although there are 5 that are in the process of updating their codes (to 2018 IECC).
  - Michigan's amendments to the residential code reduced the energy efficiency of the 2015 IECC code by ~11%.
- Michigan is currently one of three states that have adopted 2015 IECC or higher for the COMMERCIAL code, and there are two states currently in the process of updating their codes.
  - The amendments to the commercial code were less significant and only reduced the efficiency by ~1%
  - Pacific Northwest National Lab will do code analysis and compare to ASHRAE codes but does not do so for amendments that weaken the code.
- There are currently 4 established code compliance collaboratives in the Midwest and there are 2 in development (one of those is Michigan)
- The U.S. Department of Energy is funding field studies in several states across the country to measure the impact of energy codes on buildings and identify opportunities for savings through increased compliance. Michigan is not one of the states funded by DOE but there is an ongoing study being done funded by DTE and Consumers Energy.
- See attached [Midwest Energy Code Adoption and Compliance](#) PPT

## Identifying Key Issues for Michigan Energy Code Compliance

*Group discussion*

- One of the largest issues facing the members is that the energy code language tends to be confusing and there is no one place to go for answers to the questions that arise from the code language.
- Different jurisdictions interpret the code differently which leads to inconsistent enforcement of codes.
- BCC adopts the code but does not enforce in most areas of the state, so they have limited influence on how the code is interpreted and enforced.
- The BCC does not publish FAQ's anymore because they are no longer allowed to do so (liability issue).
- MSU has developed many training resources, including a 3-hour presentation that is free for anyone to use.
  - There is a need for developing a training for HVAC specific provisions of the code
    - This section is very in depth and there tends to be a lot of questions
  - Amendments also tend to cause a lot of confusion
    - Often, energy code amendments are unclear
    - Some people refer to the ASHRAE code without referring to the amendments and that causes them to add cost and do more than required.
  - Training for the facility/building design team would be very beneficial
    - Less than 50 of the 1,000 people trained by MSU in the last year were engineers/designers
    - Many buildings are designed out of code from the start
    - When contractors are given designs, their directive is to build exactly as is on the design, so these issues are generally not found until inspections
- There is training being done in all jurisdictions of the state due to the Association of code Officials
- Training may get additional buy-in if it is supported by the State
- Skipping versions of the code updates causes issues for contractors and builders
  - More changes per cycle when updates are skipped causing a larger learning curve

- There is a “crosswalk” document that is created for each new code but that refers only to the most recent past version of the code and not to older codes beyond the most recent.
  - This is likely most useful in preparing for a new code and not as much after the new code is in effect
- Create a follow-up study to prove savings estimates are accurate and that code improvements do in fact save energy/money for the owners
  - Some places have been trying to demonstrate the value of code improvements through a reduction in air pollutants
- Compliance checklists could be a useful tool
- Per BCC, the energy code is the hardest to get buy in for
- Create a document to highlight the changes to the as part of the new code would likely be beneficial
- Consider a hotline to call when code questions arise, so they can get answers (like some other states)

## **Collaborative Structure**

### *Group discussion*

The MEO had reached out to the Michigan Association of Code Enforcement Officials but did not receive any response; looking for MACEO interested contacts from anyone in the group

- Others that should likely be at the table include:
  - Michigan Association of Code Enforcement Officials
  - Association of Building Contractors
  - Home Builders Association (residential)
  - Local code enforcement officials (some names mentioned but will confirm interest and availability)
  - Association of Building contractors

## **Next Steps**

### *Group discussion led by Jake Wilkinson, MEO*

- Would be very helpful to have a single point of contact for code related questions
- Develop a common webpage to access code resources that anyone can access for information
  - The MEO is currently working to establish a Michigan Energy Codes Compliance Collaborative webpage that can serve as a source of this information
- This collaborative should be split into two subgroups – one for residential code and one for the commercial code. The issues that face the residential sector and commercial sector are often quite different. This will allow each subgroup to focus on the needs of their sector more effectively while still allowing the exchange of information when needed.
  - The MEO will try to host both subgroups on the same day, in order to accommodate those that want to be part of both.