

2022 Chicago Energy Transformation Code

The 2022 *Chicago Energy Transformation Code* will replace the 2019 *Chicago Energy Conservation Code*, continuing Chicago's two-decade commitment to addressing climate change by aligning its requirements for energy efficient construction and renovation with the latest edition of the *International Energy Conservation Code* (IECC), a widely used model code which is updated every three years and is validated by the U.S. Department of Energy.

Energy Efficiency + Clean Energy = Energy Transformation. While this edition continues to focus on energy efficiency, it also expands upon Mayor Lightfoot's commitment to accelerating clean energy and incorporates provisions enabling and encouraging reduced carbon emissions from building operations. The *Energy Transformation Code* will help Chicago move toward cleaner energy sources and healthier buildings for occupants with a three-pronged approach:

- **Save energy first.** When it comes to energy efficiency, walls, roofs, and windows matter most for improving occupant comfort and reducing energy bills. The code requires building exteriors that minimize air leakage and heat gain or loss, as well as energy-efficient lighting, heating and cooling systems. The *Chicago Energy Transformation Code* will result in an approximately 40% improvement in energy efficiency for both residential and commercial buildings compared to the 2001 ordinance.
- **Prepare for a clean energy transition.** This code encourages building electrification infrastructure now for new residential buildings with individual gas-fired appliances. This requirement will help facilitate future electrification. The Mayor's Office and DOB continue to work with stakeholders to evaluate additional electrification measures.
- **Make it easy to harness solar energy.** This code requires that low- and mid-rise buildings with available flat roof space be structurally ready for future installation of solar panels, making clean, affordable power more accessible.

Options for Alternative Compliance. The new code also provides flexibility to builders who chose to use one of two leading building certification programs to establish an alternative compliance pathway: Passive House passive building certification and National Green Building Standard (NGBS) gold-level certification. These programs include rigorous third-party pre- and post-construction reviews and verifications, which build upon city-performed plan review and inspection services for cutting-edge projects.

Leading the Way. Chicago's leadership sets an example for the State of Illinois and other jurisdictions that are still evaluating the 2021 IECC. Chicago is adopting the latest model code without weakening amendments and is actually strengthening requirements rooted in Mayor Lightfoot's 2022 Climate Action Plan and the Chicago Building Decarbonization Working Group recommendations.

Collaboration is Key. This ordinance was developed based on input from a wide range of stakeholders. DOB will work with the International Code Council to publish print and electronic copies of the new code this fall and will work with the University of Illinois' Smart Energy Design Assistance Center (SEDAC) and other groups to provide training and support materials for professionals and the public.

Phased Implementation. Most of the new code will take effect for projects that begin permitting on or after November 1, 2022, with additional requirements phasing in on January 1, 2023.