



Metro Codes

E—News For Professionals

Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Concurrent Plans Review A First In The Nation	1
National Green Building Standard Approved	2
Why We Train	3
Metro Clean Water Infrastructure Program	4
Mayor Appoints Bicycle / Pedestrian Coordinator	5
Save The Date! 2009 Annual Codes Charity Golf Tournament Announced	5

“Autodesk, who developed the electronic plans review system, told us that to the best of its knowledge, Nashville has the only electronic submission and electronic plans review system implemented across all governmental lines,” Terry Cobb, Director of Codes and Building Safety.

Concurrent Plans Review A First In the Nation

Metro Nashville can be credited with another first as the Department of Codes and Building Safety’s new electronic plans review system, called Buzzsaw, is the first in the nation to be implemented allowing all governmental agencies responsible for plans review to do so concurrently.

Autodesk, Inc. (a world leader in 2D and **3D design software** for the manufacturing, building and construction, and media and entertainment markets) informed the department that this milestone had been achieved.

Nicholas Johnson, Autodesk’s Mid-South Regional Manager for State and Local Government, said Codes and Building Safety said some cities were using the system as a lineal process (that is, moving through the system like an assembly process), but confirmed the plans review process in Nashville is the most integrated system operating.

“Many other cities and counties have implemented the same Buzzsaw solution, some even on a much larger scale. But Nashville is the first city to begin with an across the board plan.” Johnson said.

Johnson said that the Metro Nashville team’s in-house due diligence demonstrated that Buzzsaw could improve review cycle times and practically eliminate the cost of printing plan sets. The team verified similar successes with other cities and determined the best approach was to include all reviewing agencies.

“Going forward, other cities, like Metro Nashville, will be able to harness the power of Buzzsaw for collaboration among internal division and with outside agencies, developers, designers, and contractors,” Johnson said.

“Nashville’s Codes and Building Safety Department took a bold step by implementing Autodesk’s Buzzsaw solution for electronic plan review across all divisions simultaneously.” Nicholas Johnson, Autodesk Regional Manager

Cobb said working as a unit; Metro agencies are able to serve better than ever before.

“All comments made during the review process, are captured and stored in the same location,” Cobb said. “Everyone has instant access to everyone else’s review comments. This means we’re all on the same page and it speeds up the process of plans review.”

During the last several years, developers and builders have been asking for a system such as this to be made available.

Mitzi Spann, of Spann Builders, said she was the third customer for the new system and was very pleased.

“Buzzsaw is a great addition,” Ms. Spann said. “I am very impressed that Metro stepped up with a green project for this review.”

She said that by filing the building plans on line, her company saves the cost of five sets of building plans per project which she estimated would save more than \$500. She said it saves her time as well as trips to various governmental agencies.

Ms. Spann added this also provides the project owners a set of plans which can be reviewed easily far into the future. “This is a permanent set of plans that the owners can always go back to,” she said.

Cobb said Ms. Spann’s comments are similar to others who have utilized the system.

“Now there is only a single set of plans submitted electronically, via the internet. This means the process is streamlined and accelerated,”



“This is a significant savings for us. It also gives my owners another green option which is something we try to do as many times as possible.” Mitzi Spann, of Spann Builders

Concurrent Plans Review A First In The Nation

Continued from page 1

Cobb said, "This is a major step forward since this review process is complex and reviews must be made on several levels."

He also said "this means there is a reduction of paper, im-

proved communications between the reviewing agencies and the customer and there is now complete transparency". Since its introduction of AutoCAD software in 1982, Autodesk has developed a broad portfolio of state-of-the-art Digital Prototyping solutions to help customers. Fortune 1000 companies use Autodesk for the tools to visualize, simulate and analyze real-world performance early in the design process.

National Green Building Standard Approved

Metro Council has adopted the National Green Building Standard, or ICC-700, as the third approved green building rating system available to residential builders in Davidson County applying for green building permits.

According to Terry Cobb, Director of Codes and Building Safety, the standard defines what green practices can be incorporated into residential development and construction on a national scale and how home owners can operate and maintain their green homes.



The new Standard provides guidance for safe and sustainable building practices for residential construction, including both new and renovated single-family to high-rise residential buildings. This is the first and only green standard that is consistent and coordinated with the Code Council's family of I-Codes and standards.

Code Council Board President Adolf Zubia said, "this is an enormous step forward in bringing focus to green practices for the built environment. ICC-700 provides a benchmark for green building in the residential market, serving as a new and needed starting point for comprehensive approaches to green residential construction. This is the result of many months of hard work by our members and our partners around the country."

Code Council CEO Richard P. Weiland said, "the development of high performance 'greener' housing can have a tangible and positive impact on our environment and communities. This new tool for state and local governments fills an important gap to provide a measurable framework for efforts to produce green and sustainable housing. In concert with energy codes such as the *International Energy Conservation Code*, and rating systems such as the LEED Green Building Rating System, Energy Star, the CHPS Criteria, Green Globes or similar programs, application of ICC-700 can contribute to greater energy, water and resource efficiency along with reduced long-term costs to consumers and to our planet."

"Now home builders in Davidson County can choose between the the National Green Building Standard, LEED or EarthCraft, when building green. Our hope is that builders will embrace this process and utilize these standards for construction as often as possible."

**Terry Cobb, Director
Codes & Building Safety**

The International Code Council and National Association of Home Builders developed the Standard with broad input from several thousand stakeholders, ranging from code officials and other building professionals to the entire spectrum of the green building community. This new standard provides a practical route to green, sustainable and high-performance construction, especially in communities with little if any green/sustainable buildings or guidelines to build green. The standard also promotes homeowner education for the maintenance and operation of green residential buildings in order to ensure long-term benefits.

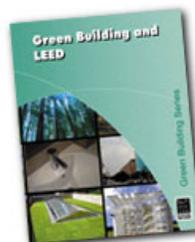
The standard's rating system allows builders, designers and communities to choose the levels of high-performance green buildings that best suit their needs. Key provisions include:

- Land conservation
- Rainwater collection
- Construction of smaller homes to conserve resources
- Energy performance starting at 15% above the baseline requirements of the 2006 *International Energy Conservation Code*
- The use of low VOC (Volatile Organic Compound) materials and detached garages or carports to improve indoor environmental quality
- Homeowner education on proper maintenance and operation to maintain its green status throughout its life cycle

ICC-700 is available along with related ICC publications through the Code Council [website](#).

Training on ICC-700 already is available. Additional training

is also available on related topics such as current green building practices and their relationship to the International Codes, overview of the LEED green building rating



Additional ICC publications on "Green" Building Practices.



National Green Building Standard Approved

Continued from page 2

systems, and developing green building ordinances to help governmental departments and agencies tasked with establishing sustainable building programs.

The Code Council is finalizing its Green Building Technologies Certification program for building officials, inspectors, planners, zoning personnel, mayors, city council members, developers and other interested parties. The exams will be available in March. These certifications will demonstrate the ability to understand the application of green building technology and assess adherence with green building programs.

In addition, the International Code Council Board has approved the creation of a Sustainable Building Technology Committee to support the Council's many ongoing efforts in green, sustainable and safe construction.

A Code Council subsidiary, ICC-Evaluation Service, has developed the Sustainable Attributes Verification and Evaluation (SAVE) program to provide independent confirmation that evaluated building products are sustainable and may qualify for

points under ICC-700 as well as major green rating systems such as LEED or Green Globes. A SAVE evaluation involves both inspection of the manufacturer's production process and reviews of independent product testing, where required. Manufacturers that successfully complete the evaluation process receive a *Verification of Attributes Report* in one or more of nine key categories. Design professionals will be able to use the reports as evidence that products or systems they select qualify for points under those programs.

Another Code Council subsidiary, the International Accreditation Service (IAS), offers accreditation to testing laboratories, inspection agencies and product certifiers in several fields related to energy and sustainability to support manufacturers and regulators involved in green building development and approval. IAS also accredits curriculum developers and training agencies focused on green initiatives.

The International Code Council, a membership association dedicated to building safety and fire prevention, develops the codes used to construct residential and commercial buildings, including homes and schools. Most U.S. cities, counties and states choose the International Codes, building safety codes developed by the International Code Council.

WHY WE TRAIN

Regardless of the inspection assignment in the Department of Codes and Building Safety, it is very important for inspectors to have excellent knowledge and skills as a background for their assignment. Training each inspector on a regular basis insures currency in codes and standards, which brings with it better inspection services.

"The level and amount of training our inspectors has a great deal to do with the quality of the service we provide and a lot to do with public safety," Terry Cobb, Director of Codes and Building Safety said. "By training our inspectors and their becoming certified in their professional area, we gain independent confirmation about what we already know about them...they are among the best at what they do."

Cobb said that each inspector is required to be certified in their specific area and they are required to attend continuing education classes each year in order to maintain the certification.

The Tennessee Department of Commerce and Insurance requires certification in fire prevention, building, plumbing, mechanical and electrical inspectors. The reason for the requirements is to establish a uniform minimum requirement designed to increase the level of competency and reliability for code enforcement personnel. Once certified, all inspectors are required to attend minimum of 36 hours of classroom continuing education to be re-certified each three years. Of these 36 hours, 24 hours are required in the area of certification and 12 other related (or elective) education hours.

"Of course, there are some legal obligations to make certain each inspector is highly skilled, but it goes beyond just being legal," Cobb said. "It's about being professional and being proficient in their skills. It is incumbent on this department to provide the highest possible level of inspection services for the citizens of our community."

"Whether the inspectors are doing construction inspections, property standards inspections, or zoning inspections, the way we know each one is capable is because they have been examined by a third-party and determined to be competent and certified. A professional certification is a banner of credibility," Cobb added.



Instructor Dwayne Hicks, gives Property Standards Inspectors critical instruction in preparation for their upcoming Zoning Certification exam.



Clean water is vital to life. The average person uses 50 gallons of water a day. In Nashville, our water comes from the Cumberland River. The water is cleaned and transported to over 174,000 businesses and homes by the department of Metro Water Services.

The water department is also responsible for collecting and treating wastewater and providing stormwater services. All of these services are supported by an extensive infrastructure system, including 2,994 miles of pressurized water mains, 44 water reservoirs and 57 pumping stations.

The cost of operating and maintaining this infrastructure is solely supported through revenues generated from rates customers pay for services, meaning Metro Water Services does not receive general tax funds.

Metro Water rates have not increased in over a decade. In fact, the last time rates were changed was in 1999 and they went down. Current rates are not sufficient to cover all operating costs and the cost of a necessary capital improvement program. While Nashville has an ample water supply through the Cumberland River, it is necessary to continually invest in our water, sewer and stormwater infrastructure to ensure we have plenty of safe, clean drinking water now and in the future.

The **Clean Water Infrastructure Program (CWIP)** will:

- Provide **economic benefits**. By making necessary capital investments now, we will prevent further deterioration of our infrastructure, which could lead to more costly repairs in the future.
- **Protect our environment** by meeting the requirements of the [Clean Water Act](#) by eliminating sewer overflows and properly addressing issues with stormwater runoff.
- **Ensure public health and safety** by maintaining a system that provides safe, clean drinking water and a sufficient water supply for fire protection.

Proposed Rate Adjustments

[Water and Sewer Rates](#) will be adjusted over a three-year period. Water rates and sewer rates are charged at different levels because the costs associated with operating the water system and the sewer system are different. The adjustment for the combined rate for the first year is 7.8 percent. The [impact on the average water and sewer bill](#) will be \$3.76.

A monthly [stormwater fee](#) will be assessed for all properties in Davidson County with the exception of those in the six satellite cities. The fee will be based on the amount of impervious square footage on the property. The [impact on the average residential bill](#) will be \$3.00. [Read more about the stormwater rate structure.](#)

The *late fee* will be reduced to \$2.50 or 5 percent of the total bill, whichever is more. In addition, the grace period before being charged a late fee will be extended from 15

days to 20 days from the bill date.

Capacity fees for both water and sewer will be reduced. The capacity fee for sewer will be reduced from \$2,000 per unit of flow to \$750, and the capacity fee for water will be reduced from \$1,000 per unit of flow to \$250.

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PASS IT ON!

Pass the word about our newsletter! We would be honored if you would share our newsletter with your colleagues and co-workers. If anyone would like to sign up to receive it themselves, they just need to send us their email, and we will be happy to "Pass It On" to them.

MAYOR APPOINTS BICYCLE/PEDESTRIAN COORDINATOR



Mayor Karl Dean has appointed a Bicycle and Pedestrian Coordinator for the Mayor's Office. Toks Omishakin, currently the Bicycle and Pedestrian Planner for the Metro Planning Department, is moving to the Mayor's Office.

The appointment follows an update to the Strategic Plan for Sidewalks and Bikeways, initiated by the mayor shortly after taking office in the fall of 2007. Dean also recently appointed a

Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC) to assist in the implementation of the updated sidewalks and bikeways plan and other efforts to make Nashville a more walkable and bikeable city.

"My goal is to transform Nashville into one of the most walkable and bikeable cities in the country, and to do that will take consistent effort and coordination from my office," Dean said. "Toks brings to my office the right experience and expertise in this area. I look forward to what I know he will be able to help us accomplish."

Omishakin will work with various Metro and State departments on policy issues related to pedestrians and cyclists, including coordinating efforts of the BPAC.

During his tenure with Metro Planning, Omishakin spent five years managing Music City Moves, a community partnership committed to community design that supports active lifestyles. He also worked on bicycle and pedestrian issues for Nashville's 14 planning communities, and on the implementation of the Strategic Plan for Sidewalks and Bikeways,

**Department of
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**Save The Date—Codes Announces
Annual Golf Tournament
October 17, 2009**

The 13th Annual Metro Codes Charity Golf Tournament will be held on October 17, 2009 at the Ted Rhodes Golf Course.

Last year's tournament, through the support of 128 golfers and 99 sponsors, resulted in yet a new record \$28,000 being donated to three local charities through the Metro Employees Consolidated Charities Campaign (MECCC).

This year, all proceeds will again go to the MECCC for the benefit of local charities.



For information regarding accessibility, please contact Manley Biggers at (615) 862-6521 or fax (615) 862-6499. He can also be reached at manley.biggers@nashville.gov

Terry Cobb and **Wade Hill** welcome your feedback on our e-newsletter. Please send your comments to [Wade Hill](mailto:Wade.Hill@nashville.gov), at wade.hill@nashville.gov Plans Examination Chief, 862-6520