



I. Modern Building Codes Promote Flood Resilience

Modern model building codes are among the most effective and systemic measures to reduce the risk to buildings and their occupants from natural and manmade hazards, including flood risk. In its 2020 report, *Building Codes Save: A Nationwide Study of Loss Prevention*, FEMA found that adopting up

While there would be value in each participating community receiving a report highlighting potential CRS program credits,

(2) Should FEMA auto enroll all NFIP participating communities into the CRS program to give the community CRS credit for activities that they already undertake that exceed NFIP minimum floodplain management standards (e.g., community has an open space preservation program to reduce flooding)? Auto enrollment means all communities would automatically participate in CRS by virtue of participating in the NFIP.

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Under the Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) program, applicant adoption and effective implementation of current codes are weighted aspects of the program's technical criteria for mitigation project evaluation. The Agency limits BRIC funding for code adoptions to those that update communities to hazard resistant codes and requires BRIC funded infrastructure adhere to current codes.¹⁷ The Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018 (BBA18) permitted FEMA to increase the federal share of post-disaster public assistance based on similar code adoption and implementation considerations.¹⁸

In August of 2019, the Mitigation Framework Leadership Group (MFLG) chaired by FEMA and made up of another 13 federal agencies and departments as well as state, tribal, and local officials released the National Mitigation Investment Strategy (NMIS). The Strategy makes several recommendations concerning the use, enforcement, and adoption of building codes, including that "update building codes and standard criteria should be required in federal and state grants and programs."¹⁹

NFIP's building standards are not aligned with PA, BRIC, the BBA, or the NMIS. NFIP's flood resilience standards are lower and not tied to the codes and standards these other programs and policies rely upon for both their mitigation measures and their development processes, which ensure continued advancement in mitigation considerations. The lack of a coherent approach creates confusion regarding the Agency's views and expectations concerning resilient construction, with some areas defaulting to NFIP's minimums and others more closely aligning with FEMA's other programs. Instead of advancing a common understanding of what is necessary for adequate flood mitigation, the Agency's approach promotes a patchwork, leading to market inefficiencies for materials and product manufacturers, which can increase costs. The variation in FEMA policy also misses an opportunity to standardize and improve training outcomes for code officials and the construction industry.

(4) What are the advantages and/or disadvantages of providing technical assistance to communities to support CRS participation? Would communities take advantage of technical assistance and if so, what type(s) of technical assistance would be most helpful? Examples of suggested technical assistance include assisting communities with the preparation of required CRS documents, CRS project

management standards for communitywide activities that reduce future flood risk, there would be demonstrable growth in the number of CRS participating communities.

(6) Are there additional community level activities that are not currently included in the CRS program that measurably reduce flood risk to property? Please describe and, if available, provide national data that demonstrate how the activities measurably reduce current and/or future flood risk reduction to property.

From ICC

In 2022, the Code Council and the Ohio Department of Commerce prepared a report for the state's Board of Building Standards that identified a regional approach to code adoption and enforcement as an effective approach to combatting the effects of a rapidly aging workforce and resultant staff shortages in the building safety industry as these officials retire from service. The Code Council recognizes the importance of local governance and administration and the efficiencies that may be gained from implementing CRS from a more regional role. That said, ICC staff often hear from local officials that such sharing agreements are difficult to execute due to the complexities of politics, costs, or legal concerns. In some instances, it may also require statutory policy changes to ease or eliminate the burdens of 0.00 Tw 231 (153) e0

The CRS program already credits several Code of flood mitigation measures including, for example, where communities ensure fill is compacted and protected from erosion and scour, consistent with the