

**Plumbing and Mechanical Systems Board  
Plumbing Code Meeting Notes  
Tuesday, November 17, 2009 at 1:00 P.M.**

**Committee Members Present:** Thomas Day, Mick Gage, Jane Hagedorn, Stuart Crine, and Mike Magnant

**Committee Members Absent:** Carol Crane

**Staff Attending:** Cindy Houlson, Susan Van Horn, Matt Oetker, Stephanie Underwood and Mary Swinehart

Tom Day welcomed the group and set down the rules for the presentations.

**Presentation by**

Tom Clause Architect (Winterset)

- Used the UBC for 25 years
- Each code is attempting to insure the health and safety of its users. Each code is a bit different.
- The International Building Code has been adopted by 70 jurisdictions and municipalities in Iowa. 27 of those municipalities have adopted the UPC as part of that family of codes. This is a family of codes which includes the International Electric Code, Energy Conservation Code, Existing Building Code, International Fire Code, Fuel Gas Code, International Mechanical Code, Performance Code, Plumbing Code, Private Sewage Disposable Code, Property Maintenance Code, International Residential Code and Wildlife Interface Code.
- Our staff responds to architects outside the state questioning which codes have been adopted and inconsistencies and lack of conformity.
- The ICC staff has shown superior responsiveness responding to code questions, interpretations and training.
- This family of codes is founded on and designed for safety of public and has been adopted by many municipalities while working in rural area.
- ICC staff has shown superior response to questions.
- Do not increase construction costs; UPC has increased the number of plumbing fixtures required.
- Traditionally since adoption of the ICC, architects have gone to the state to relax some of the requirements in the UPC.

Bill Dikis FAIA, Chair, Government Affairs Committee, AIA Iowa (attached)

- See attachment
- Recommend the singular adoption of the 2009 International Building code for maximum coordination among codes and responsible investment in buildings by the public.
- Should that not be acceptable to the Board, we recommend adoption of both the IPC and the UPC, with the choice available to the owner and design professional.
- Should neither of these be acceptable, we recommend adoption of the IPB Table 403.1 in lieu of the UPC Table 4-1, to be used in conjunction with the UPC.
- If none of the above is acceptable, we recommend amendment of UPC Table 4-1 to closely approximate the provisions of IPC Table 403.1
- We also recommend the continuation of the common approach to resolving fixture count by granting logical variances for occupant load upon which fixture counts are base.

Board Questions:

*Schools seem to be way out on fixture counts as far as codes. Has there ever been a school, based upon what you said, that cost the tax payers 4.5% more because of the UPC code? Not in a good position to answer that.*

*Do building owners complain about too few fixtures? They do complain about too many, but not too few.*

*Going back to your example of an office building when you base the number of employees in there and the codes, that would be fine if that office building is always an office building, but if it changes it is more difficult to add fixtures than to remove fixtures.*

Have experienced that with City Hall has more to do with ADA accessibility, than fixture counts.

Rick Seely, member of American Institute of Architects.

- Both codes are very safe, different ways of applying the details and designs.
- Consistency in codes and inspections is greatly desired.
- We do collectively agree that better coordination of codes. Consistency in codes and inspection.
- Greater attention to making all buildings more efficient. Smart use of material resources.
- Increase in fixtures counts results in increased square footage and ultimately increased construction costs.

Brian Rogers Cedar Rapids, Project Manager for AAA Mechanical in Iowa City, serves on three boards for IAPMO

- As an instructor the illustrating manual supplied by IAPMO is a vital piece to instruct apprentice and journeypersons. To include code sections and study guide, goes thru each chapter, illustrates and tests individuals on the code.
- Prometric testing UPC both the journey and journey with gas – allow to bring one code reference book in during the exam. In the IPC there are a lot of references – if references other family codes are we testing on the family codes. Example: water heaters International Plumbing Code have a page and a half, referencing the international fuel gas code and the international mechanical code. During the exam process there are no questions referencing the fuel gas code or the mechanical code.
- Example: In International Plumbing Code the alternative engineered design concerns. Speaking of computerized drainage systems. engineered bed systems and computerized engineered design systems. In the definition of alternative engineered design states a plumbing system that performs with the intent of chapters 3-12.... System design is not specifically regulated by Chapters 3-12. Question the regulation.
- Purchase of codes, as project manager would be easier for one code book to have questions answered. Private water supplies and septic tanks 50 feet for IPC and 150 for UPC.
- Recommend adoption of the Uniform Plumbing Code.

#### Board Questions

*How many code books would you need to carry to meet the references that are in the International Plumbing Code? There are at least eight, such as International Fuel Gas Code, International Mechanical Code, International Building Code, International Energy Code, ASTM, TWS and National Standards are a few.*

#### Flora Schmidt, Home Builders Association of Iowa (attached)

- The International Plumbing Code and the Uniform Plumbing Code both provide comparable safety features for construction and for the safety of the public consumer.
- The HBA presented a series of questions see attached

#### Kevin Kruse, Executive Director of Plumbing & Heating Contractors of Iowa (attached)

- The UPC is developed and published by the International Association of Plumbing and Mechanical Officials (IAPMO). IAPMO has over 80 years experience in developing codes.

#### Dave Keefer

- IPC references other codes and standards at least 5 different code references are needed. One of the big things is cost- to the plumber, contractor, whoever is testing.
- IPC does not address reference items such as complete water heater installation.
- Plumbers are the guys that are doing the installation.
- Adopting the IPC would be disruptive, costly and unnecessary.
- Contractors, installers, plumbing and mechanical inspectors plumbing and mechanical apprentice schools are trained with the Uniform Plumbing code.
- There are 1400 plumbers and pipe fitters in Local 25.

John Oatts Local 33 Training Coordinator for the Apprenticeship Program

- We have 225 apprentices and we have 1200 in Local 33 strongly supporting the UPC.
- Economics – we are in the process of equipping our resource library. We are spending approximately \$40,000 on references supporting the IPC. Additional cost is an extreme burden on our apprenticeship program.
- We will continue to use the UPC training manual to install plumbing systems in the State of Iowa. We have made an initial investment to allow us to use IMC.
- Would much rather keep the UPC, allowing us to use reference materials we have right now.

Board Question:

*In researching what books or materials needed for reference, did you come across in the International Family of Codes any illustrated training manual, specific for plumbing? There are no training tools for the International Plumbing Code.*

*You commented that you may need to purchase an additional 8 references are any of those for both and be common to both? Not sure if there is cross-over.*

Matt Leland Local 25 Davenport

- UPC is all I know. UPC is code Local 25 is trained with. UPC is the bible of plumbing for union construction and plumbing in the state. Ultimately, which code does a better job of protecting their citizens? Cost to train to these standards. Safety of this state – UPC does a better job.
- Added costs to switch gears for those that are already out there and those just learning.

Bill Switzer, IAPMO, North Central Regional Manager for IAPMO

- Disagreed on a couple of items. There is much misinterpretation or misuse the table. Reference was made of family of codes and the International electrical code. Is no international electrical code.

Question: *When will this be decided?* This subcommittee will make a recommendation to the full board. From there our recommendation will be presented to the ARC committee and rules can be written. It may be as late as July before the rules are Adopted and Filed. Testing is based upon the code in place now.

**Next Meeting:**

Next Meeting is scheduled for December 8, 2009 8-9 a.m.

**Meeting adjourned**