

## The latest with IgCC and tile



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More than two years since the inaugural release of the International Green Construction Code (IgCC), the document's first major revision cycle is nearing completion. What is the IgCC, and how is the current revision cycle relevant to tile?

Developed by the International Code Council (ICC), the IgCC provides model code language for states and municipalities to establish baseline sustainable design requirements for new and existing buildings. Serving as an overlay to the existing set of Codes developed by ICC, including the International Building Code (IBC), IgCC allows for the implementation of corresponding, credible and enforceable criteria. This minimizes the need for jurisdictions to rely on rating systems such as LEED which are not written to be enforced as law and sometimes contradict existing building Codes.

When the IgCC was originally developed, the Chapter 5 working group on materials, of which Tile Council of North America (TCNA) was a member, strived to develop and embed multi-attribute and lifecycle-based criteria. For over a decade leading up to that time, many manufacturers were promot-

ing single environmental attributes (recycled content, regional materials, etc.) represented by different labels across different industries, which resulted in an disorganized, confusing, and often misleading marketplace. For this reason, many industries, including the tile industry, recognized the need to report on the true lifecycle impacts in the form of Environmental Product Declarations (EPDs) and establish multi-attribute sustainability criteria based on broadly-recognized international standards. At the time, however, many industry sustainability specifications and EPD initiatives were still in development and not yet available for simple reference in IgCC, so the first version was released without mention of them. Since then, much progress has been made that led to a new proposal, GG212, in the current IgCC revision cycle.

TCNA is a proponent of GG212, which involves a revision to Chapter 5 to establish an option for sustainable product selection based on conformance to multi-attribute sustainability standards such as Green Squared® and/or on the availability of EPDs. This proposal identifies a list of reference multi-attribute

sustainability standards to be used, encompassing approximately 10 product industries and applicable to over 1,000 domestic manufacturers and many more worldwide. Similar to industry specifications for strength and performance referenced throughout the Building Code, these industry specifications for sustainability would allow for IgCC product selection based on consensus criteria. Additionally, GG212 allows for the use of EPDs so that specifiers can better understand the lifecycle environmental impact of products when making a selection.

In addition to TCNA, proponents of GG212 include the Resilient Floor Covering Institute, Carpet and Rug Institute, US General Services

Administration, US Environmental Protection Agency, NSF International, JSR Associates, and Stopwaste.org. GG212 was preliminarily approved for inclusion in IgCC during the Committee Action Hearings in May 2014. Final action on GG212 will be taken by the ICC membership in October at the Public Comment Hearing.

What's next for tile? Should the ICC membership vote to uphold the Code Change Committee's May 2014 ruling to approve GG212, provisions of the proposal will be rolled into the 2015 IgCC. This means that Green Squared Certified® tile products and/or products with EPDs will meet Code criteria for sustainable building materials.