

NORTH CENTRAL TEXAS COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS
REGIONAL CODES COORDINATING COMMITTEE

OPERATING PROCEDURES

PURPOSE

The primary purpose of the Regional Codes Coordinating Committee (RCCC) is to foster municipal government and private industry cooperation in promoting the standardization of construction codes used within the North Central Texas region. Standardization is defined as the adoption of the NCTCOG Recommended Codes and NCTCOG Regional Amendments, the reduction of local amendments by all municipalities in the region and the consistent interpretation of these codes by public and private construction personnel. The work of the RCCC is an extension of the work initiated in 1967 by the Regional Codes Strategy Committee of NCTCOG which: documented the wide disparity of codes in use by the region's local governments at that time, cited the advantages of code standardization, and outlined steps to be taken to correct the situation.

MEMBERSHIP

Membership on the Regional Codes Coordinating Committee shall consist of twenty-eight members appointed by the Executive Board. Members are appointed for their technical expertise and should place regional interests above those of their individual jurisdiction for the purposes of this committee. The composition of the committee shall include representation from the various technical code disciplines and be representative of the region geographically. Specifically, membership representation shall be as follows:

- thirteen professionals involved in municipal inspections with a city in North Central Texas who possess technical expertise in construction codes (building, plumbing, electrical, mechanical, or residential).
- three professionals involved in municipal inspections with a city in North Central Texas who possess technical expertise in fire codes.
- two professionals involved in either city management, city planning or community development.
- nine professionals from the private sector - such as architects, engineers, builders, or contractors - who are involved with municipal building and construction codes and are interested in the regional standardization of codes.
- one energy professional from the Texas A&M University Energy Systems Laboratory.

TERMS OF OFFICE

Each fall members of the RCCC shall be appointed by the Executive Board to two year staggered terms with one-half of the members of the RCCC appointed each year. One member shall be appointed as chairperson, another as vice-chairperson. There is no limit to the number of terms a member may serve. At the annual review or if the Executive Board deems it necessary, a slate of potential appointees shall be recommended to the Executive Board by the RCCC or NCTCOG staff. This slate, with any additional names the NCTCOG Executive Director or the Director of Environmental and Development may include, will be sent to the Appointments Committee of the Executive Board. This Committee's recommendation will be forwarded to the Executive Board.

ATTENDANCE

Members shall be removed from the RCCC after they miss three consecutive meetings or four meetings in the previous twelve months. Removal may be appealed to the RCCC for reason of extenuating circumstances. If the appeal process is not successful and a vacancy is declared, the RCCC chair, RCCC committee, or staff (as designated by the RCCC's normal appointments procedures) shall be asked to recommend a new representative for approval by the Executive Board.

Members may send alternates when necessary to avoid an absence being counted. The alternate will have the same voting rights as the member. It is the member's responsibility to sufficiently brief the alternate on the RCCC meeting agenda items before the meeting they attend.

Records of attendance shall be kept and presented at each meeting as part of the RCCC minutes. These records will be referenced for the purpose of enforcing the attendance policy.

MEETINGS

The RCCC shall meet approximately once every quarter for the purpose of transacting important business at hand.

The first meeting of every NCTCOG fiscal year (which runs from October - September) will be to recognize new and retiring members, examine progress, and set future goals.

Meetings are open, but because their primary purpose is the exchange of ideas between RCCC members, non-members who wish to speak at them must notify staff or the chairperson prior to the meeting and submit to the chairperson's wishes regarding the length of time they will be allowed to speak. Members are encouraged to seek a variety of opinions and evidence on matters of substantial controversy. Information should be presented in a concise methodical fashion.

VOTING

A quorum and a positive vote of two-thirds of those members of the RCCC present is required to send a recommendation to the Executive Board and establish or abolish subcommittees or other special groups. This ensures the RCCC advice to the Executive Board represents a consensus of the RCCC and recognizes the stature of RCCC Advisory Boards/subcommittees. All other actions require a quorum and only a majority vote of those members of the RCCC present.

A quorum consists of a simple majority of the current roster membership of RCCC.

Roberts Rules of Order shall be followed in making motions and conducting meetings.

ADVISORY BOARD PROCEDURES

The following Advisory Boards are hereby created:

- Building and Energy Advisory Board
- Fire Advisory Board
- Plumbing and Mechanical Advisory Board
- Electrical Advisory Board

Additional Advisory Boards/subcommittees may be created or any of the following Advisory Boards may be abolished by the RCCC provided that a quorum is present and two-thirds of those members present vote to do so.

Every municipality in the sixteen-county North Central Texas region and any interested industry associations (trade/professional) shall have the opportunity to seek membership on each Advisory Board. On an annual basis NCTCOG will solicit member participation. It will be the responsibility of municipalities and associations to nominate members to NCTCOG for potential appointment to the Advisory Boards. Members of these Advisory Boards shall be appointed by the RCCC by a majority vote of those present and shall:

- 1) be a representative of a public jurisdiction or a private association,
- 2) have technical expertise in that board's area of interest, and
- 3) be inclined to act for the good of the region.

The RCCC shall appoint the chairperson and vice chairperson of each Advisory Board. The chairperson of each Advisory Board shall be a member of the RCCC from the public sector and may only serve as chairperson as long as he/she is a member of the RCCC. Maintaining at least two-thirds Advisory Board representation from the public sector, the overall number of Advisory Board members may change from time to time as approved by the RCCC. Members shall be appointed in an effort to satisfy representation from municipalities of varying size and geographic location across the region.

ROLE OF NCTCOG STAFF

NCTCOG staff will serve in an advisory and administrative support capacity to the RCCC. The staff shall prepare all meeting notices, agendas and support materials, record the proceedings of each NCTCOG-hosted meeting, and otherwise provide support functions within the limits of fiscal resources. Staff will serve as parliamentarian for the RCCC and Advisory Boards.

Since the Advisory Boards are the working bodies of the RCCC, staff support to them will consist of preparing meeting notices, working with Advisory Board chairpersons to develop meeting agendas, distributing support material generated by the Advisory Boards, and recording the proceedings of each meeting. Advisory Board members will develop and write any proposals they wish to submit to the RCCC in the format necessary for action to be taken on them.

CHANGES TO OPERATING PROCEDURES

Changes to these operating procedures can only be made by a vote of two-thirds of the RCCC's membership or by the NCTCOG Executive Board.

POLICY FOR RCCC AND ADVISORY BOARD CODE ACTIVITIES

This policy is established to define appropriate avenues for RCCC and Advisory Board code activities and to ensure that recommendations to the Executive Board represent a consensus of opinion among the region's public and private construction professionals. It is not NCTCOG's intent nor does it have the resources to develop specifications for building materials. It does intend to inform national code publishers and organizations which establish material standards of problems involving material specifications and vigorously press for their solution at that level. It also intends to use its expertise to develop improved construction procedures and techniques and promote safety and affordability through the construction codes.

Below are the four sets of code activities which the RCCC and Advisory Boards are involved in:

1. Model codes standardization
2. Recommending Regional Amendments to the NCTCOG Executive Board and submitting Code Change Proposals to the code publisher
3. Marketing the Regional Amendments to communities in North Central Texas
4. Developing Position Papers and Opinion Statements on matters involving the codes

1) Model Codes Standardization

Code standardization will occur when all localities in the region adopt the NCTCOG recommended construction codes, local amendments are eliminated or replaced by NCTCOG Regional Amendments, and there is consistent interpretation of these codes by public and private construction personnel.

Toward this end, the RCCC and NCTCOG staff: 1) recommend construction codes from those developed by various national codes organizations for adoption by the region's local governments, 2) provide periodic documentation of codes disparity between the region's cities, 3) provide code classes and informational seminars for public and private construction personnel, and 4) provide information and technical assistance to localities which have expressed an interest in adopting the recommended codes.

2) Recommending Regional Amendments to the NCTCOG Executive Board and submitting Code Change Proposals to the code publisher

a. History

Since 1967, the North Central Texas Council of Governments has actively promoted the standardization of model construction codes in an effort to simplify the construction process, advance the safety of building systems, promote common code interpretation, facilitate the mobility of contractors, and reduce training and construction costs. This includes developing and recommending regional amendments and code change proposals. For the purposes of this section, "regional amendment" is defined as a proposed regional change to a model code that is needed because of conditions unique to this region or because of deficiencies or errors in the code. Regional amendments recommended because of deficiencies or errors in the code should be submitted as code change proposals to the code publisher.

b. Regional Amendment Development and Code Change Process

During the spring and summer of 2002, the Electrical Advisory Board developed a successful and efficient code review model for reviewing the 2002 National Electrical Code. The Board split into Task Forces that met independently to review specific sections of the code and to recommend amendments. Beginning with the fiscal year 2003 code review cycle, each Advisory Board will follow the Electrical Advisory Board's model:

- i. Advisory Boards will split into Task Forces to review specific sections of the applicable codes and to recommend amendments. Each Task Force will select one member to be responsible for setting the date, time, and location for the Task Force's meetings and for compiling recommendations, interpretations, and/or comments into one document.

- ii. Each Advisory Board will decide if its Task Forces should prepare meeting summaries. Task Force members will be responsible for meeting summaries, not NCTCOG staff. Staff will continue to take meeting notes and to prepare meeting summaries for Advisory Board meetings.
- iii. An article in InSight and on the codes web page will invite the general public to submit amendment proposals to NCTCOG staff, by electronic media. Staff will forward proposals to the appropriate Task Force(s).
- iv. Task Forces will submit recommendations in Microsoft Word format (.doc) or plain text format (.txt) to NCTCOG staff for publication on the codes web page. Advisory Board members and the general public will be encouraged (via an InSight article) to review the recommendations and submit comments to NCTCOG staff, by email or on electronic media.
- v. Each Advisory Board will conduct approximately five day-long NCTCOG-hosted meetings during NCTCOG's fiscal year to review all proposals and comments submitted by the Task Forces and the general public. To facilitate discussion and instant editing, NCTCOG staff will provide a laptop, projector, and screen at NCTCOG-hosted meetings. Attendees will be encouraged to bring their own hard copies of the applicable code books, recommendations, and comments. However, NCTCOG staff will provide a minimal number of hard copies of all recommendations and comments received to date. During these meetings, all amendments will be finalized.
- vi. Amendments will be forwarded to the RCCC and then to the Executive Board. After Executive Board approval, the finalized amendments will be advertised in InSight and posted on the codes website.
- vii. Each Advisory Board will review their recommended regional amendments for amendments that should be submitted as code change proposals to the code publisher. Code change proposals should consist of amendments that are not based on regional conditions or that have not already been submitted to the code publisher. Advisory Board members will be responsible for formatting code change proposals in the format required by the code publisher and for submitting the proposals to the publisher by the publisher's deadline.

3) Marketing Regional Amendments

After the Executive Board approves an Advisory Board's regional amendments, NCTCOG staff will post the amendments online and advertise their availability through InSight. The RCCC and Advisory Boards may also assist in marketing the amendments.

4) Position Papers and Opinion Statements

A Position Paper is a collection of opinions representing different perspectives on a codes issue. An Opinion Statement is a written RCCC or Advisory Board opinion to an individual, organization, or locality, which at staff's discretion might be submitted to the Executive Board for approval. Position Papers and Opinion Statements may consist of:

- 1. An Advisory Board's interpretation of an unclear section of a code.
- 2. An Advisory Board's opinion of a local amendment that was sent to the Advisory Board by a

locality for review and comment. This would include the reasons for the opinion and possible alternative wordings.

3. An Advisory Board's opinion of a proposed code change for a code publisher's subcommittee or private organization. This opinion is to be construed only as advice and not as the official position of the Advisory Board, RCCC, or Executive Board.

ADVISORY BOARD MEETING POLICY

Based upon current fiscal considerations, this section outlines the meeting policy for the Advisory Boards of the Regional Codes Coordinating Committee. This meeting policy is not intended to limit the work of the Advisory Boards. The goal is to encourage thorough code review and the preparation of recommendations prior to Advisory Board meetings. The additional preparation should allow for more productive and efficient Advisory Board meetings.

- 1) Number of Meetings

During NCTCOG's fiscal year (which runs from October through September), the Advisory Boards will have no more than twenty full-day NCTCOG-hosted meetings. This allows five meetings per Advisory Board. Since a code review cycle spans two fiscal years, each Advisory Board may have ten full-day meetings for the purpose of code review during a code review cycle. If additional meetings are necessary, Advisory Boards may hold off-site meetings. However, NCTCOG staff will not be responsible for preparing handouts or meeting summaries for off-site meetings.

Advisory Boards may share meeting days. For example, if the Fire Advisory Board meets in the morning and the Electrical Advisory Board meets in the afternoon, only one full-day meeting will be counted. Further, if the Fire Advisory Board only needs four meetings for the year, another Board may use the extra meeting. Task Force meetings do not count toward the twenty meeting limitation as long as they do not require NCTCOG staff attendance.

- 2) Meeting Attendance

Attendance at NCTCOG-hosted Advisory Board meetings will be recorded and members shall be removed from the Advisory Boards after they miss three consecutive meetings or four meetings in the previous twelve months. Removal may be appealed to the RCCC for reason of extenuating circumstances. If the appeal process is not successful and a vacancy is declared, the Advisory Board Chair, Advisory Board, or staff shall be asked to recommend a new representative for approval by the RCCC. Members may send alternates when necessary to avoid an absence being counted. The alternate will have the same voting rights as the member. It is the member's responsibility to sufficiently brief the alternate on the Advisory Board meeting agenda items before the meeting they attend. Records of attendance shall be presented at each meeting as part of the meeting summary. These records will be referenced for the purpose of enforcing the attendance policy.

- 3) Roberts Rules of Order

Roberts Rules of Order shall be followed in making motions and conducting meetings.

- 4) Recommendations to the RCCC

In order to forward recommendations to the RCCC, a quorum must be present. A quorum consists of a simple majority of the current roster membership of Advisory Board members.

Recommendations to the RCCC require a two-thirds vote of those members present. The Advisory Boards are primarily working subcommittees where full and frank discussions may occur; therefore, each member of the Advisory Board shall be given the opportunity to speak at length to the issues at hand. Meetings are open, but because their primary purpose is the

exchange of ideas between Board members, non-members who wish to speak at them must notify the chairperson prior to the meeting and submit to the chairperson's wishes regarding the length of time they will be allowed to speak. Members are encouraged to seek a variety of opinions and evidence on matters of substantial controversy. Information should be presented in a concise methodical fashion.

Adopted January 27, 2011 by the Regional Codes Coordinating Committee.