



ROOF DESIGN & CONSULTING SERVICES, INC.

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January 16, 2008

Statewide Codes Adoption Postponed

In 2007, the State Fire Marshal's Office (SFMO) and the State of Tennessee approved adoption of the 2006 edition of the International Building Code and the 2006 edition of the NFPA 1 Uniform Fire Code. These statewide codes were to have gone into effect January 31, 2008.

However, these rules were withdrawn by the Division of Fire Prevention on December 28, 2007, and will not take effect on the proposed date. Accordingly, the 1999 Standard Building Code and the 2003 Uniform Fire Code remain the minimum statewide building construction safety standards for Tennessee.

Apparently, there is disagreement within the SFMO and among some architects and engineers as to which codes should be adopted, if at all. The result is that it leaves the State with a hodge-podge of codes, depending on the location of the project.

Tennessee state law allows for local jurisdictions to obtain a State Fire Marshal Office (SFMO) exemption for many occupancies. This exemption permits "exempted" jurisdictions to establish their own codes enforcement programs and function locally for most occupancies covered by the SFMO. If an exempted jurisdiction chooses to adopt codes other than those adopted by the State, the different codes do not supersede the State Codes, but the State has concurrent jurisdiction in exempt locales on "public" projects. Hence, there may be a conflict between the two sets of requirements, in which case, the Project Designer must determine how to satisfy each. So, before assuming that State Codes are in effect, check with your local codes enforcement office.

Presently, the International Building Code has been adopted and is enforced state-wide in 46 States.