



CAMPAIGN CHECKLIST

Build Better Codes

The U.S. Green Building Council is committed to transforming the way we design, construct and operate buildings by addressing the negative impacts of building on the environment and people who live, work, and occupy them. Riding on the coattails of beyond-code green building rating systems like LEED, a new set of building codes is emerging in order to support communities that wish to raise the floor for better, greener building practice. The [Build Better Codes](#) campaign is mobilizing a nationwide conversation on the role of codes and regulations to establish a floor for minimally acceptable building practice in light of the many benefits of green buildings. If adopted and effectively implemented, better, greener building codes can help buildings slash energy consumption, water use and waste while also restoring natural systems, improving indoor air and benefitting bottom line.

TASK

Complete

1. Review all campaign materials under the [Build Better Codes Campaign](#) section at www.usgbc.org/campaigns. Discuss, ask questions, and share your progress with the entire USGBC Advocacy network via [this campaign page on Yammer](#).

2. Research your community’s current codes. How are codes adopted and implemented in your city/state?

Objective: Research is an important first step to understanding the landscape for your advocacy campaign efforts. How do proposed regulations become building code in your community? Most states have a unique set of boards and commissions that administer this process over the course of many months and even years. Who do you know on these boards or within the relevant city or state agencies that can help orient you to the code adoption and amendment process? Who are the vocal interests at the table, and what do they think? What building energy codes are adopted in your community, and how well are they understood?

3. Get to know the model codes.

- International Codes - [International Green Construction Code](#) (IgCC), [International Energy Conservation Code](#) (IECC)
- ASHRAE Standards - [ASHRAE Standard 189.1](#) (Standard 189), [ASHRAE Standard 90.1](#) (Standard 90.1)

Objective: Before advancing too far, make sure you know the codes that you will be promoting. The codes are very lengthy sets of technical requirements, but are fairly easy to skim or read up on. A major goal is to get these documents in front of the right people. Also see the campaign brief for other examples of green building codes in NYC, California and beyond.

4. Convene key building community stakeholders: what do they think about a greener building code?

Objective: Initiate a conversation amongst your peers in the building industry and representatives from the code development boards and agencies to explore how better, greener codes might match the sustainability goals of your city or state. As a legislative goal, consider promoting the draft legislation that would commission a formal task force to review the IgCC and that would expand the existing regulatory board or commission to include a critical green building perspective.

5. Develop a plan to achieve greener building code goals.

Objective: Develop a plan to carry your goals across the finish line, relying on the strategic support of the coalition that you have already begun and grow the effort to include other important parties. Make sure to take advantage of the IgCC coalition partners, but also to reach well outside of the typical environmental advocacy community. Ideally, the policy goal will be at least as issue-advancing as the [draft legislative text](#) provided for this campaign.

6. Put your plan into action, keeping the door open for more strategic partners, allies, and insights.

Objective: Bring your advocacy efforts to the legislature and/or into the public review meetings for the city or state building code. Note that these types of regulatory initiatives can bring advocacy efforts out of the woodwork, so be prepared to listen, broaden your coalition, and defend your ground. Focus also on the building department, providing proactive support, training and relationship-building to ensure a comfort level with existing energy codes and green building requirements. A code not well implemented is not one that will be very effective. Learn more about ways you can promote improved implementation of building energy codes [here](#).

7. Support transition through mentoring, education and maintaining relationships.

Objective: You probably will not get the full set of green building code requests adopted on the first try, but even so, celebrate this victory and support the city or state in its newly expanded scope of work to oversee these new fundamental protections. Make certain to thank all allied individuals, organizations and volunteers who helped along the way.

8. Repeat.

Objective: An advocacy victory that advances green building through the codes should be celebrated (contact the media, USGBC national and all of your friends), but codes are continually evolving. Ultimately, we want both a comprehensive code and also [full compliance](#). A critical way green building advocates can influence the ongoing code adoption dialogue is with a seat on the state or local codes board or commission. In a best-case scenario, this seat may be officially designated (see 2011 [CA AB930](#)).

For more information on USGBC’s *Build Better Codes* campaign, contact Matt Pearce, Campaign Specialist, at mpearce@usgbc.org or visit www.usgbc.org/campaigns.