



# Code Cracking 101: Yes, You Can Help Update Standard 189.1

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As I mentioned in my last post, [it's public review season](#) for green building codes, standards and rating systems! Released in early 2010 as a fully-published [ANSI standard](#), Standard 189.1\* has been something of a constant amidst the past year's public review process for the International Green Construction Code (IGCC). But to better coordinate the technical development and alignment with the IGCC, ASHRAE is currently targeting a release date of the Standard's next version before the end of the year. We need your expertise and input in the development process. Let me introduce you to how it works and how you can help.

As a matter of policy, ANSI standards keep the door permanently open for proposals to change the requirements of any standard. So ASHRAE is always collecting proposals for Standard 189.1, and your input is always welcome.

The project committee overseeing the maintenance of the Standard meets regularly throughout the year to review these proposals and take a close look at any additional areas of the Standard that may need revision. As revisions to the Standard (including approved proposals and committee recommendations) are approved by the Committee for public review, they are posted on the ASHRAE web page for free download and solicitation of constructive comments by any member of the public for a period of 30-45 days.

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You'll find it easier to keep track of these opportunities for review and comment if you sign up for the [Committee email distribution list](#). You may also find that you get a better sense of how it all works if you attend one of the two annual public meetings of the 189.1 committee, held at the [ASHRAE winter and summer meetings](#). The more frequent [interim meetings](#) (typically virtual meetings or phone calls) may be easier to join as an observer. At any meeting you may address the project committee and participate in discussions with permission from the chair.

All of this information and more is available on the [Standard 189.1](#) portion of ASHRAE's web site. There, you can also [preview the Standard](#). So get out your red pen and consider [drafting your own proposal](#). If you've never written a proposed change for an ASHRAE standard before, [here's how](#). You may also consider simply [commenting](#) on the committee-approved changes that are currently out for public review (and you'll be notified of when these are released if you sign up for the [email list](#) I mentioned above). If you've never commented on an ASHRAE standards committee-approved change before, [here's how](#).

Of course, ASHRAE staff is always available to assist you as needed. Email [ashrae1891faq@ashrae.org](mailto:ashrae1891faq@ashrae.org) with any further questions.

When you take a look at Standard 189.1 through your lens of professional expertise and interest, we hope that you will keep in mind what green building rating systems are good at, and in that context, what a good green building standard should offer. Wherever possible, we hope you will help us to coordinate the technical content of Standard 189.1 with the most appropriate, "street-ready" ideas from LEED, and also with the best "code-appropriate" ideas currently in the public versions of the IGCC.

If you're left confused about the similarities or differences between codes, standards and rating systems, [watch this free webinar](#) (available for AIA and GBCI continuing education credit). Additionally, note several of my recent posts dig deeper into this topic of code, standard, and rating system development:

- [Green Building Codes: New Regulatory Approaches Set Sights on Compliance for the Future](#)
- [As Green Building Codes and Standards Emerge, Where Do We Go from Here?](#)
- [Pinpointing the Best Stringency Level for a Green Construction Code](#)
- [How Stringent Should a First-Ever Model Green Construction Code Be?](#)

\*Note: the Standard's full name is ANSI/ASHRAE/USGBC/IES Standard 189.1-2009, the Standard for the Design of High-Performance Green Buildings Except Low-Rise Residential Buildings. Most people call it Standard 189.



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U.S. Green Building Council

Chapter members, Member employees, USGBC staff

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