



Illinois Climate Action Network

Illinois CAN

H.B. 1842/S.B. 526: The Energy Efficient Building Act

What: The Energy Efficient Building Act sets a statewide standard for residential building energy efficiency that will reduce Illinois' contribution to global warming pollution while, at the same time, lowering the costs associated with owning a home.

How: This Act requires Illinois to adopt the International Energy Conservation Code (IECC) as the minimum energy efficiency standard for new home construction. The IECC has already been adopted by 13 states including Iowa, Ohio and Pennsylvania. (Illinois is one of only a handful of states without any statewide residential energy efficiency standards, instead relying on a patchwork of codes at the municipal level.)

Why: Building energy consumption represents 40% of the total U.S. energy use and accounts for over 70% of total electricity consumption. Inefficiency means more energy produced, more pollution generated, and greater utility bills for families, which create a barrier to home ownership.

Economic Benefits

A 2007 study found that Illinois homes built under the most recent IECC standards would save homeowners up to \$466 annually in utility bills. In most instances, this would pay for additional construction costs within three years or sooner.

Bill Specifics:

- ✓ Establishes statewide residential energy efficiency standards by adopting the latest International Energy Conservation Code.
- ✓ Allows municipalities with existing residential efficiency codes that meet or surpass 2000 IECC standards (and the 2001 supplement) to continue regulating residential efficiency under their codes.
- ✓ Encourages the use of solar energy by disallowing residential deed restrictions prohibiting solar panels or devices for Illinois residencies.

Legislative History: In 2008, the Energy Efficient Building Act was passed by a 55-0 margin in the Senate and a 109-5 margin in the House. Unfortunately, the Illinois House and Senate leadership never came to agreement on a unified version of this legislation and this bill did not become law during the 2008 legislative session.

The Bottom Line: Illinois is one of only a handful of states that don't have a statewide residential energy efficiency code. We need comprehensive energy efficiency standards for new homes this year.