

The 
Compliance Project

A Nationwide Initiative to Speed
the Implementation of Energy Codes

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It's official: the Compliance Project is underway.

Last week, a team of sustainable housing leaders from across the U.S. came together to help force the issue of poor energy code compliance into full view of the building industry. The intent is to build a campaign that improves consumer demand for energy code compliance, and supports the professionals who create and manage this high-performance housing.

Emerging research confirms what many of us know too well: rates of compliance in most jurisdictions remain low, and consumer awareness of the problem is next to nonexistent. The necessity of fire, structural, plumbing, and mechanical codes is generally taken for granted. But a similar grasp of energy codes -- and the building science behind them -- still eludes many contractors, and, often, the officials who sign off on their work. As a result, homeowners are cheated out of the home they thought paid for, competent builders are placed at competitive disadvantage, and society is burdened with greater public health costs and climate crises.

Our nationwide survey of practitioners found that, while gaps in education and enforcement are at the root of the issue, inadequate airtightness of the building shell and duct systems are among the most prevalent technical failures in nearly every state. The good news is we have the expertise, the desire, the talent -- and now, the strategy -- to begin to solve these problems. We invite your collaboration -- and one of the best ways to do so will be to [take a brief](#) survey to tell us more about experiences and your interests

Over the next several months, the Compliance Project will embark on several initiatives:

- We'll evaluate building enclosure, HVAC, and other performance data from several newly built homes across the U.S.. In this evaluation, we'll expand on existing research such as the DOE [Residential Energy Code Field Study](#).
- We'll craft a media campaign, targeting homeowners, through social and print media channels.
- We'll profile and promote individuals and organizations who excel in high performance residential construction.
- We'll identify appropriate policy and legal recourse to compel more widespread compliance within industry.
- And in January, we will host a webinar, on the Habitat X platform, that expands upon our recent work on Code Compliance.

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- And we'll create a media toolkit for dedicated professionals to help you leverage and benefit from our efforts.

As you can see, we have a big year ahead of us. For many practitioners in the field of high performance construction, speeding the implementation of energy codes, and creating demand for the resulting high performance homes, is one of the most hopeful industry initiatives in play at present. It's not too much to ask, we don't think, to simply adhere to the existing codes, and to support the work of the professionals who play by the rules. We're honored to be a part of this initiative, and we hope you are, too.

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If you'd like to stay connected to this initiative, [go to the sign-up page](#) to receive the Compliance Project newsletter. If you have ideas for an article in the next newsletter, contact newsletter editor Griffin Hagle.

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