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INDEPENDENT REGULATORY  
REVIEW COMMISSION

# 2804  
**EMBARGOED MATERIAL**

December 9, 2009

Independent Regulatory Review Commission  
333 Market Street, 14<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Harrisburg, PA 17101

**Re: Updating the Pennsylvania Uniform Construction Code to reference the 2008 National Electrical Code (NEC)**

Dear IRRC Members and Staff,

By way of background, the National Electrical Contractors Association (NECA) is the voice of the electrical contracting industry ([www.necanet.org](http://www.necanet.org)). NECA has provided a century of service to the \$130 billion electrical construction industry that brings power, light and communications technology to buildings and communities across the United States. NECA advances the industry through advocacy, education, and research and standards development. Penn-Del-Jersey Chapter, NECA, the local chapter headquartered in Philadelphia, PA represents approximately 200 electrical contractors, employing over 10,000 employees who perform over \$1 billion of work in the Pennsylvania, Delaware and parts of New Jersey and Maryland ([www.neca-pdj.org](http://www.neca-pdj.org)). Our Chapter is a joint sponsor, with the IBEW, of 14 local apprentice and journeyman training centers throughout our jurisdiction.

I request that the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania adopts the 2008 National Electrical Code (NEC®) by replacing Part VIII (Chapters 34-43) of the 2009 International Residential Code (IRC) with reference to the 2008 National Electrical Code (NEC®). Acceptance of the NEC® in the exact format established by the National Electrical Code Committees will enhance safety, because it has been used for decades by those in the electrical industry. Direct adoption of the NEC® will have no financial impact and will increase the technical feasibility of the Uniform Construction Code.

The use of electrical safety requirements that are repackaged into a set of rules, such as Part VIII of the IRC, is causing much confusion throughout the commonwealth. It does not benefit anyone in the electrical safety business, from apprentice electricians to the manufacturers of the latest products that integrate the latest technology. The 2008 NEC® has worked and will continue to work providing electrical installations that are essentially free from fire and shock hazards.

The IRC electrical chapters are limited to one- and two- family dwellings and if a three-family or multi-family dwelling is built, the NEC® will have to be used. The code officials will have to be familiar with both sets of requirements, when they are involved in all construction types. This means electrical training for code officials and code users will have to come from two different documents. If the NEC® is used, all interested parties can be trained on electrical requirements using a single document.

There are numerous examples of where the limited scope of the IRC make it necessary to refer to the NEC®, such as for electrical services rated more than 400 amperes, three-phase residential services, solar photovoltaic systems, several types of electric heating systems (e.g. radiant ceiling panels and cables), large air-conditioning equipment, and installation of standby power systems. These items are not uncommon in residential construction in the commonwealth, thus it will necessitate the use of both the IRC electrical chapters and the NEC® for installation and inspection of electrical systems in one-and-two-family construction.

The IRC electrical chapters are arranged and formatted based on the ICC editorial style. Although it is intended that the electrical chapters directly correlate with technical requirements of the NEC®, it is entirely possible that when the material is repackaged in a different editorial style, a different interpretation of a requirement could result or an unintended change in the intent of an NEC® requirement could occur due to the editorial revision. This was evident in the three proposals for exclusion to the Electrical Provisions of the IRC that the Council received in April 2009.

In summary, the 2008 NEC® represents another step forward in providing requirements that help minimize electrical fire and shock hazards. Updating the Pennsylvania Uniform Construction Code to reference the 2008 NEC® is an important step to take in protecting the public.

Sincerely,

Nicholas Bradley  
Government Affairs Coordinator  
Penn-Del-Jersey Chapter, NECA

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**From:** Nick Bradley [mailto:nbradley@neca-pdj.org]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, December 09, 2009 12:48 PM  
**To:** Smith, James M.  
**Subject:** Uniform Construction Code

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Jim,

Following up on our conversation, attached you will see my testimony.

Thank you for your help.

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HEALTH COMMISSION

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