

Published: Sep 10, 2008 12:30 AM
Modified: Sep 10, 2008 02:25 AM

Easley pushes stricter energy standards for buildings

MARTHA QUILLIN, Staff Writer
[Comment on this story](#)

RALEIGH - Gov. Mike Easley asked the N.C. Building Code Council on Tuesday to help make North Carolina one of the most energy-efficient states in the country by requiring better construction techniques.

Easley sent his top policy adviser to tell the council to design an energy code -- part of the state's building code -- that would require buildings to be 30 percent more energy efficient than those built to national standards.

"You folks have the opportunity to make a difference," Alan Hirsch, Easley's senior policy adviser, told the council.

Hirsch also announced to the council two grants, worth a total of \$550,000, that will help teach local inspectors how to enforce the existing energy code and to encourage architects, engineers and others to go beyond the code to build structures that will save money and reduce energy waste for decades to come.

The Building Code Council makes the rules that govern every aspect of a building's construction, from the materials that can be used to whether sprinklers must be installed.

By 2030, Hirsch said, North Carolina's population is expected to grow by 40 percent, and about half the buildings these people will use don't exist yet.

"Nobody wants to build bad buildings," said Chris Mathis, who runs a consulting businesses out of Asheville and helped write the grant applications. "But we haven't done a lot of really aggressive training with regard to the energy code."

With a \$50,000 grant from the National Governor's Association and \$500,000 from the U.S. Department of Energy, a team of organizations with an interest in the state's energy use will hold training sessions on energy code and energy-efficient construction. The group also will work with the Building Code Council to help it find ways to expedite updates to the energy code.

All rights reserved. This copyrighted material may not be published, broadcast or redistributed in any manner.

-- Martha Quillin



Gov. Mike Easley holds an hourglass given to him by Agriculture Commissioner Steve Troxler at a meeting Tuesday, in recognition of Easley's work on behalf of the preservation of the state's natural resources.

Staff Photo by Shawn Rocco

© Copyright 2008, The News & Observer Publishing Company

A subsidiary of [The McClatchy Company](#)