From Expectation to Reality: Understanding and Leveraging Public Perceptions to Improve Earthquake Resilience

The No Code. No Confidence. Inspect2Protect.org Initiative

Leslie Chapman-Henderson
Friday, March 6, 2020
Building codes … proven performers

Atwood Building, Anchorage, Alaska – 2018 M7.1 Earthquake
A home in Eagle River is badly damaged on Dec. 1, 2018. The house, which was partly built on fill, suffered severe problems during a strong earthquake that shook Southcentral Alaska on Nov. 30, 2018. (Loren Holmes / Alaska Daily News)
Yet, there are challenges …

- Jurisdictions with One or More Hazards (Seismic, Hurricane, Flood, Tornado, Wind)
- Building Codes Adopted with Disaster-Resistant Provisions Incorporated for Commercial and Residential Buildings
  - 7,265 of 23,143 (31%)
  - Approximately 69% of U.S. communities facing one or more of the above-described hazards is doing so without the benefit of current, relevant structural building codes
BCAP – The Approach

1. Conduct behavior-focused study to support development of public awareness campaign strategies, messaging, and assets
   • Identify communication barriers; identify levels of understanding of building codes; identify motivators to drive appreciation for building codes
   • Benchmark current attitudes and behaviors
2. Create data-driven transparency tool
3. Implement national awareness program
Why Americans Aren't Concerned About Building Codes (even though they should be)

Understanding the research-inspired “No Code. No Confidence.” outreach campaign to increase public awareness and decrease the policy gap between vulnerable and resilient communities

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No real reason to worry: We’re protected already.

8 out of 10 Americans assume they are at least moderately protected.

Assumed Protection from Building Codes

- A great deal of protection: 18%
- A lot of protection: 29%
- A moderate amount of protection: 35%
- A minimal amount of protection: 10%
- No additional protection: 9%

March 2018 Survey
What truly frightens Americans: No code at all

No code? Two-thirds of Americans would be very or extremely concerned.

Concern If Had No Building Code

- Extremely concerned: 43%
- Very concerned: 25%
- Concerned: 16%
- Somewhat concerned: 9%
- Not at all concerned: 7%

March 2018 Survey
While most aren’t engaged with codes, they have high expectations of their officials and builders

- It's important to me to work with a builder who supports the latest building codes
  - Strongly Agree: 49%
  - Somewhat Agree: 41%

- State and local leaders should protect the integrity and independence of building code enforcement
  - Strongly Agree: 46%
  - Somewhat Agree: 45%

- It's important for state and local elected officials to prepare communities to resist damage from a natural disaster or extreme weather
  - Strongly Agree: 40%
  - Somewhat Agree: 50%

- Reputable builders and contractors support the latest building codes
  - Strongly Agree: 40%
  - Somewhat Agree: 47%

- My state and local leaders should adopt the latest building codes to protect the community from disasters
  - Strongly Agree: 40%
  - Somewhat Agree: 46%

- Builders and contractors who don't support stronger building codes are looking for ways to cut corners
  - Strongly Agree: 36%
  - Somewhat Agree: 46%
Officials’ response to and prep for disaster more important than taxes, business & environment

Importance to an Elected Official’s Job

- Maintaining law and order and addressing crime: 58%
  - Absolutely Essential: 27%
  - Very Important: 31%
- Responding well to a natural disaster or extreme weather event: 44%
  - Absolutely Essential: 33%
  - Very Important: 31%
- Ensuring the community holds up well to a natural disaster or extreme weather event: 38%
  - Absolutely Essential: 36%
  - Very Important: 31%
- Keeping taxes low: 36%
  - Absolutely Essential: 31%
  - Very Important: 31%
- Keeping property insurance rates low: 32%
  - Absolutely Essential: 31%
  - Very Important: 31%
- Attracting business to the area: 26%
  - Absolutely Essential: 31%
  - Very Important: 31%
- Protecting the environment: 30%
  - Absolutely Essential: 31%
  - Very Important: 31%

Officials’ response to and prep for disaster more important than taxes, business & environment.
## Findings – undercut assumptions/focus on specific benefits

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Finding</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Has no building codes at all.</td>
<td>226.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has codes that allow renovators and builders to perform shoddy work.</td>
<td>181.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has a building code that is not enforced.</td>
<td>140.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has codes that allow for construction that looks fine, but leads to problems later.</td>
<td>133.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does not use codes with the latest engineering for safety and durability.</td>
<td>125.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does not use codes that make every home as safe as possible in a fire.</td>
<td>116.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allows construction that could lead to flooding after extreme weather.</td>
<td>104.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has one of the weakest building codes in your state.</td>
<td>101.60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

March 2018 Survey
Modern building codes ensure that your home is built using the latest practices and standards. Use this tool to determine the building codes used in your community today, or contact your local government for information about building codes used in the past.
How does it work?

This simple tool will help you understand residential code status in your community.

1. Once we have your location, you will see a map of your area.

2. Our data is color coded for your convenience.

3. Check out surrounding communities and share with your friends.

SHOW ME THE CODES
Birmingham, Alabama
35203
Coolidge, Arizona
85128

The color-coded analysis is based on the best available data and reflects the status of International Residential Code adoption only and does not reflect the status of building code enforcement.

City of Coolidge
Building Code 2006 International Residential Code

County of Pinal
Building Code 2018 International Residential Code

Nearby cities
- Kearny, AZ
- Mammoth, AZ
- Superior, AZ
- Casa Grande, AZ
- Queen Creek, AZ
- Gilbert, AZ

Contact your local city or county government officials for more information.
Caruthersville, Missouri
63830

The color-coded analysis is based on the best available data and reflects the status of International Residential Code adoption only and does not reflect the status of building code enforcement.

Read the full disclosure.

City of Caruthersville
Building Code 2006 International Residential Code

County of Pemiscot
Building Code Not available

Contact your local city or county government officials for more information.

Nearby cities
- Hayti, MO
- Ridgely, TN
- Steele, MO
- Portageville, MO
- Samburg, TN
- Obion, TN
- Kennett, MO
- Marston, MO
- Gideon, MO
The color-coded analysis is based on the best available data and reflects the status of International Residential Code adoption only and does not reflect the status of building code enforcement.

City of San Diego

County of San Diego

Contact your local city or county government officials for more information.

- Statewide Building Codes
- Uniform requirements
- Updated seismic provisions
The color-coded analysis is based on the best available data and reflects the status of International Residential Code adoption only and does not reflect the status of building code enforcement.

Read the full disclosure.

**City of Florence**
Building Code  ●  2003 International Residential Code

**County of Lauderdale**
Building Code  ●  Code not adopted

Contact your local city or county government officials for more information.

**Nearby cities**
- Sheffield, AL
- Muscle Shoals, AL
- Tuscumbia, AL
- Saint Florian, AL
- Leighton, AL
- Cloverdale, AL
- Killen, AL
- Cherokee, AL
- Town Creek, AL
Getting the word out …

• Multiyear implementation
• 2019 Building Safety Month
• Creative assets
  • Partner engagement (briefings)
  • Traditional/social media advertising and promotion
  • Ongoing news generation and general promotion
  • Partnerships w/ broadcast community
    • *The Weather Channel* (Dr. Rick Knabb & Alex Wilson of *Weather Underground*)
    • On-camera meteorologists
    • 91,000 views
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