



Southwest Energy Efficiency Project

Saving Money and Reducing Pollution through Energy Conservation

May 4, 2011

Dear Mayor Smith and Members of the Mesa City Council,

**Re: Item 1d, 11-1076
Energy Code Adoption**

The Southwest Energy Efficiency Project strongly supports Mesa's adoption of the 2009 International Energy Conservation Code ("2009 IECC") as a cost-effective solution that will meet Mesa's current and future energy needs and that will deliver substantial economic and environmental benefits for the residents, businesses, and the City of Mesa. The comments below supplement those that SWEEP delivered to the Council on Wednesday, April 13, 2011, which are also attached.

The 2009 IECC Will Deliver More than \$200 in Annual Utility Bill Savings

A 2009 statewide report by the Pacific Northwest National Laboratory (PNNL) found that the 2009 IECC would deliver annual bill savings of ~\$215 for residents in the Phoenix metropolitan area. This is in contrast to PNNL's recent Mesa report, which suggested annual utility bill savings of just \$125. Notably, PNNL's recent report excluded energy savings from the installation of efficient lighting required by the 2009 IECC. SWEEP maintains that the total savings from the 2009 IECC should encompass all of the components that the Code addresses, including lighting. Thus, \$215 is a more accurate estimate of the annual savings that the 2009 IECC will deliver.

Mesa Builders are *Already* Building to the 2009 IECC

According to the Salt River Project, 87% of the homes built in Mesa since 2009 perform at the same level or better than the 2009 IECC. This suggests that builders are already prepared for the adoption of the 2009 IECC and that the adoption the 2009 IECC would result in little -- if any -- cost increases to builders. The 2006 IECC would be a step backwards for builders.

Mesa Should Not Fall Behind: Nine Other Arizona Jurisdictions Are Considering the 2009 IECC or Greater, and the 2012 IECC Becomes Available this Quarter

SWEEP is aware of at least nine other Arizona jurisdictions that are considering implementation of the 2009 IECC or beyond. Additionally, the 2012 IECC, which will achieve a 30 percent increase in energy savings compared to the 2006 IECC, will be published this quarter and will be available for adoption this year. SWEEP strongly encourages Mesa to move forward with the adoption of the 2009 IECC now.

Sincerely,

Jeff Schlegel, Jim Meyers, and Ellen Zuckerman
Arizona Staff for the Southwest Energy Efficiency Project (SWEEP)

April 13, 2011

Dear Mayor Smith and Members of the Mesa City Council,

**Re: Item 2f, 11-1076
Energy Code Adoption**

The Southwest Energy Efficiency Project strongly urges you to adopt the 2009 International Energy Conservation Code (“2009 IECC”) for the benefit of residents, businesses, and the City of Mesa. Our recommendation is aligned with the City of Mesa Sustainability and Transportation Council Sub-Committee, which also recommended adoption of the 2009 IECC.

The 2009 IECC represents one of the most cost-effective solutions for Mesa to meet its current and future energy needs and to save citizens and businesses money on their energy bills now and in the future. Homes built under the 2009 IECC are about 15% more energy efficiency than homes built under the 2006 IECC. By ensuring that our homes and buildings are constructed using proven methodologies and technologies that guarantee superior building performance, the 2009 IECC would deliver significant economic and environmental benefits. It would:

- Ensure homes are more affordable and comfortable
- Increase home resale values
- Decrease default and foreclosure risk
- Drive down the short-term and long-term cost of energy
- Create skilled local jobs that cannot be outsourced
- Defer the need to construct costly new energy infrastructure (which Mesa residents and businesses ultimately pay for through higher energy bills)
- Improve air quality, and
- Reduce water consumption

Given that most homes endure for thirty-to-fifty years, energy efficient construction today, guided by the 2009 IECC, would generate decades of benefits for Mesa’s residents and businesses.

While SWEEP acknowledges that the 2009 IECC may slightly increase construction costs upfront, these costs would be repaid within one-to-three years through energy bill savings. In fact, energy efficient homes built to meet the 2009 IECC are *more affordable* than conventional homes, with the monthly energy savings more than paying for any small increase in the monthly mortgage payment.

SWEEP also notes that there are several strategies that could be employed to curb costs significantly. For example, Mesa should partner with the Salt River Project (SRP) to offer training and technical support for the implementation of the 2009 IECC. In addition, the building industry should continue to take advantage of SRP’s PowerWise Homes and PowerWise New Construction Solutions programs, which provide rebates and incentives to builders who construct quality homes and commercial buildings that deliver savings. In fact, a high percentage of new buildings built in Arizona have already leveraged the

incentives offered by SRP and other utilities.

During these times of economic uncertainty the benefits of the 2009 IECC – particularly energy bill savings and reduced foreclosure and default risk – are especially important for Mesa’s residents and businesses. Thus SWEEP recommends Mesa move forward with the adoption and implementation of the 2009 IECC as a means to ensure Mesa’s economic prosperity and as a means to protect Mesa’s businesses and homeowners from shortsighted construction decisions that create long-lasting financial and environmental strains.

Sincerely,

Jeff Schlegel, Jim Meyers, and Ellen Zuckerman
Arizona Staff for the Southwest Energy Efficiency Project (SWEEP)