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IRC celebrates 50th anniversary

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National Research
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Technical Research Committee News



**Canadian
Home Builders'
Association**

Dynamic Performance of Floors

Forintek and the Canadian Wood Council have been doing extensive research for a long time on the performance of residential floors. This has led to revised span tables that appeared in the 1990 edition of the National Building Code. The tables now take into account floor deflection and vibration.

A 5-year project currently underway is trying to develop performance criteria that would directly deal with dynamic floor performance under occupancy loads. The work is presently directed at single and multi family construction.

The project team is looking for examples of bad floors (i.e., those with a big bounce). The work involves administering a questionnaire with the occupants, inspecting the structure, and performing static and dynamic tests to evaluate the floor's performance. Most of the tests done to date have been on relatively good floors. (No one wants to admit to problems?).

Now, the team is looking for more bad examples. If anyone has had problems with bouncy floors, or if you know of someone who does, contact TRC so that they can put you in touch with Forintek people to do an on-site investigation.

IRC celebrates 50th anniversary

Mention history, and except for history buffs, eyes glaze over and a big yawn settles in. However, knowing what has happened in the past can not only be interesting - it can be very valuable. Many problems arise because a fundamental principle has been forgotten, so past errors are repeated.

1997 marked the 50th anniversary of the Institute for Research in Construction. In that time, the IRC has contributed much to our understanding of the way buildings work, by conducting basic building science research, and doing product testing and developing Canada's National Building Codes. (Did you know that before the NRC developed the National Building Code, each municipality in Canada had its own building regulations which were largely developed by trial and error, and not necessarily based on scientific facts?)

It is the research work at the IRC that has put Canada at the forefront of building science research and construction knowledge, on a world wide basis.

As part of its anniversary celebrations, the IRC has published a 16-page booklet describing the

history of the institute. The booklet is well worth taking a look at. It provides an interesting insight into a vital public institution that has had a major impact on this country, and especially on our industry.

The booklet is included in the fall 1997 issue of Construction Innovation newsletter. To get a copy phone 613-993-2607; Fax 613-952-7673

Code Review Task Force

A task force to review the building, plumbing and fire code development process has been formed by the Canadian Commission on Building and Fire Codes (CCBFC) and the Provincial/Territorial Committee on Building Standards (PTCBS). The intent is to establish a coordinated code development and review process. Recommendations of the task force may result in fundamental changes to the code development process in Canada.

Canadian building safety regulations are the responsibility of the provinces and territories. Since 1941, CCBFC (and its predecessors) has produced model building and fire codes. The uniformity of building and fire code requirements has benefited industry. Some jurisdictions, however, have established their own comprehensive provincial and municipal code review processes to consult with their stakeholders and to deal with regional issues.

The CCBFC recognizes that much can be done to improve the model-code development process to reflect the needs of authorities and code users better, and to eliminate the need for overlapping processes, thus reducing the burden these processes can impose on stakeholders.

The types of questions that will be addressed by the Task Group include:

1. How can a uniform code technical development and review process be best achieved? Will there have to be higher profile for provincial/territorial authorities as active participants in the code development process, recognizing they have the jurisdiction over building regulations?

2. Considering geographical and economic realities, how could greater participation in a coordinated national/provincial/territorial code development and review process be achieved? Would this mean more code development originating at the provincial/territorial level?

The Technical Research Committee (TRC) is the industry's forum for the exchange of information on research and development in the housing sector.

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