

FEMA Releases Study Highlighting Benefits of Higher Building Codes Standards

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WASHINGTON - FEMA released the [“Building Codes Save: A Nationwide Study,”](#) which highlights and uses big data to show the benefits of constructing buildings at a higher building code standard for natural disasters such as wind, floods and seismic activity. In the United States, FEMA found that 18.1 million buildings constructed at a higher building code standard save the nation about \$1.6 billion annually.

This study uses newly available nationwide data on actual buildings and jurisdictional building code adoption. It provides a real-life quantitative understanding of the impact of adopting the International Codes (I-Codes) introduced in 2000. Buildings that adopted the I-Code standards demonstrated reduced damage, resulting in savings to building owners, insurers, the community at large and the nation.

These savings represent the cumulative losses avoided from property damage associated with using the I-Codes or similar building codes during floods, hurricanes and earthquakes. FEMA projects by the year 2040, the annual savings nationwide will grow to nearly \$3.2 billion. This adds up to \$132 billion in total losses avoided from 2000 to 2040.

With projected savings and losses avoided, these dollar values represent considerable financial reasons for communities to proactively adopt and enforce hazard-resistant building codes. The study’s results fully support FEMA’s mission to help people before, during and after disasters, including programs and efforts that promote using hazard-resistant building codes.

A 15-page summary, [Protecting Communities and Saving Money – The Case for Adopting Building Codes](#), as well as the full study detailing the four phases, methodology, results and conclusions of this project are available on FEMA’s [website](#).



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