

Curtain Raiser for National Launch of Energy Conservation Building Code (ECBC) by Hon'ble Minister of Power on 27.5.2007

The rapid shift in energy consumption, particularly due to the high growth in commercial building, has been engaging the attention of the Government for some time. Though the overall share of commercial sector in electricity consumption is only about 6.6%, it has been growing at a rate of 12% over the last few years. The need to build in efficiency in its scope in building design is overarching.

Several studies have borne out the fact that our building design does not take into consideration efficiency aspects. As a result, in Commercial Buildings, the Annual energy consumption per sq. m. of the floor area is about 200 kWh or even more. Efficient design alone has the capability to reduce the same to 120-160 kWh. Before 1973, the year of energy crisis, the energy consumption in all the western countries was also of the same order. But now it has been reduced drastically as most of the developed countries have adopted such codes.

Energy Conservation Building Codes (ECBC) set minimum energy performance standards for commercial buildings. Under section 14 (p) of the Energy Conservation Act, 2001, Central Government has powers to prescribe ECBC for commercial buildings (at present having a connected load of 500 KW or more) or building complex for efficient use of energy and its conservation. The state governments have the flexibility to modify ECBC to suit local or regional needs.

ECBC benefits both the individual building owners and the society. Benefits to property owners include reduced energy costs and improved comfort (both thermal and visual). The benefits to society include reduced capital investments in energy supply infrastructure, reduced environmental impacts, improved electricity reliability, and more efficient use of resources.

The proposed Energy Conservation Building Code sets a minimum efficiency standard for commercial buildings in all five climate zones in the country. The estimated reduction in energy use for new buildings range between 25% to 40%.

The Government will put in place appropriate institutional structure to –

- Oversee implementation at National level with involvement of States and other stakeholders.
- Effective awareness and outreach programme to overcome strong first cost bias that usually leads owners to under-invest in energy efficiency during building design and construction.
- Adequate availability of energy efficient equipment / materials in the local marketplace.
- Adequate facilities for equipment testing/certification.
- Transition in energy expertise by training of Designers, architects, builders, etc.
- Building adequate technical capacity in implementing the ECBC at the municipal level
- Effective engagement with state governments and municipalities to integrate ECBC in the city bylaws.

Initially the code will be voluntary. Following implementation experience, the code will be made mandatory. **Mandatory enforcement of ECBC is expected to yield annual saving of 1.7 billion units in the first year itself based on current data.**

The Hon'ble Minister of Power will launch the code on 27th May, 2007 at Hotel Hyatt Regency, Bhikaji Cama Place, New Delhi in the august presence of Member (Energy), Planning Commission. The code will be put on voluntary basis initially.