

IBHS issues 2018 edition of Rating the States report, finds little progress in strengthening codes to ensure safety, community resilience



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TAMPA, March 19, 2018 – The Insurance Institute for Business & Home Safety (IBHS) today released the new edition of its preeminent report on the residential building code systems in 18 hurricane-prone states. The 2018 edition of **Rating the States** follows a disastrous year of storms in 2017, and is well timed to inform discussion and action to improve building strength as communities repair or replace homes damaged by hurricanes last year.

“Mother Nature delivered a serious and costly beating to the US and its territories during 2017, with 25 million people impacted by catastrophic hurricanes and many more by other severe weather events,” said Julie Rochman, CEO and President, IBHS. “Bad weather is not new, and will not stop. But what can and must stop is the continued construction, and inevitable destruction, of weak, vulnerable homes built – and too often rebuilt – in questionable locations. We must build stronger, to code standards proven to reduce risk, and stop allowing today’s weather events to become painful, expensive disasters for homeowners, communities, states and the entire nation.”

Like its predecessors, the newest edition of Rating the States assesses the progress of 18 hurricane-prone coastal states along the Gulf of Mexico and the Atlantic coast in strengthening their residential building code systems. IBHS issued prior versions of this landmark report in 2012 and 2015.

Like the 2015 edition, the new report finds that most states with strong building code systems in place at the time of the original 2012 report remain committed to building safety. These states have updated their codes to recent model code editions, or are in the process of doing so, and they have maintained effective enforcement systems.

“States with strong, updated codes saw stunning proof this year in Florida that updated, well-enforced building codes have led to the construction of homes and buildings that can stand up to fierce hurricane winds. It can’t be any clearer: these codes work,” Rochman said. “Unfortunately, many states took no action to improve their code systems, and a few have weaker systems in place now than they had in 2015.”

IBHS believes codes that are poorly enforced, lagging current standards, or simply nonexistent at a statewide level create a regrettable set of circumstances and unnecessary hazards. Benefits of a strong, well-enforced and routinely updated code include:

- Giving residents a sense of security about the safety and soundness of their buildings.
- Offering protection to first responders during and after fires and other disaster events.
- Promoting a level, predictable playing field for designers, builders, and suppliers.
- Reflecting recent design and technology innovation, often incorporating newly identified best practices and cost efficiencies, and

- Reducing the amount of solid waste in landfills produced by homes that have been damaged or destroyed during disasters.

In developing its unique Rating the States report, IBHS looks at 47 important data points to assess the effectiveness of the states' residential building code programs, including code adoption and enforcement; building official training and certification; and licensing requirements for construction trades. The report also offers a clear roadmap with specific details for states to follow as they seek to update and improve their code systems.

The full 2018 Rating the States report with state-specific information and the original 2015 and 2012 Rating the States reports are available on the [IBHS Rating the States web page](#). For additional information about building codes, visit [IBHS' Building Code web page](#).

2018 and 2015 Rating the States Scores

STATE	2018 SCORE (NEW)	2015 SCORE
Florida	95	94
Virginia	94	95
South Carolina	92	92
New Jersey	90	89
Connecticut	89	88
Rhode Island	87	87
North Carolina	83	84
Louisiana	83	82
Massachusetts	81	79

Maryland	78	78
Georgia	68	69
New York	64	56
Maine	54	55
New Hampshire	46	48
Texas	34	36
Mississippi	28	28
Alabama	27	26
Delaware	17	17

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About the Insurance Institute for Business & Home Safety (IBHS)

IBHS' mission is to conduct objective, scientific research to identify and promote effective actions that strengthen homes, businesses, and communities against natural disasters and other causes of loss.