

Building Safety Code Division

Building Safety Code Division was established on February 2, 1990, when the 6th Legislature passed Public Law 6-45 to create a Building Safety Code for the Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas Islands (CNMI). Initially, the codes adopted were the Uniform Building Code and the CABO Code.

Over the years, these codes became outdated and could no longer meet the modern standards required for effective building safety and resilience. In response to the increasing frequency and severity of super typhoons that caused significant destruction to the islands, the 21st Legislature and Senate passed a new bill, Public Law 21-14. This law aims to update and strengthen the building safety codes to better protect the CNMI from existing challenges and natural disasters.

The Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas Islands (CNMI) will apply the 2018 edition of the International Building Code (IBC). This update is directed by Public Law 21-14, which mandates the Building Safety Official to adopt relevant appendices and updates to the IBC, as well as any new editions that may be released. Additionally, the Building Safety Official has the authority to exclude non-applicable sections as needed to ensure the code is tailored to the specific needs and conditions of the CNMI.

This adoption aims to modernize the building safety standards and ensure that all constructions within the CNMI are resilient against contemporary challenges, particularly the severe weather events that frequently impact the region.

The Building Safety Code Division (BSCD) is dedicated to ensuring the health, safety, and general welfare of the people in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI). This is achieved through professional services in plan review and inspection of all commercial and residential structures constructed and occupied in the Commonwealth. Additionally, BSCD has partial responsibility for enforcing specific laws related to flood management and developer taxes.

Health and Safety Promotion:

- Ensure that all structures meet safety standards to protect occupants and the public.
- Conduct regular inspections to maintain building integrity and compliance with safety codes.

Plan Review Services:

- Provide professional assessment and approval of construction plans for both commercial and residential buildings.
- Ensure that building plans comply with all relevant safety and building codes before construction begins.

Inspection Services:

- Perform thorough inspections of structures during and after construction to ensure they meet all safety and building regulations.
- Conduct annual inspections as part of the Certificate of Compliance renewal process.

Enforcement of Flood Management Insurance Program (PL 8-7):

- Implement and enforce regulations related to flood management to protect properties and occupants from flood-related risks.
- Ensure that structures in flood-prone areas meet necessary safety and insurance requirements.

Enforcement of Developer's Tax (PL 8-23):

- Administer and enforce tax regulations on developers to ensure compliance with CNMI's financial and development policies.
- Monitor and manage the collection of developer's tax to support public infrastructure and services.

The BSC is committed to promoting a safe and secure built environment in the CNMI. Through rigorous plan reviews, inspections, and enforcement of relevant laws, the BSC works to safeguard the health and welfare of the community. By ensuring that all structures are built to code and maintained properly, the BSC helps to create a safe living and working environment for all residents and businesses in the Commonwealth.