

2024

Division of Building and Fire Regulations Resource Guide



VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING
AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
Partners for Better Communities

Resources

Jack A. Proctor Virginia Building

Code Academy

(804) 371-7180

vbca@dhcd.virginia.gov

Resources:

- Virginia Certification Standards (VCS)
- Online Registration System
- Certification Guide for Code Officials
- CE policy
- CE guide

Levy Permit Portal

vbca@dhcd.virginia.gov

Resources:

- Levy and Permit Portal

Code Development

sbco@dhcd.virginia.gov

Resources:

- cdpVA
- Code Development
- International Code Council Virginia Code Books
- Virginia Building and Fire Regulations

State Building Code

Technical Review Board

sbco@dhcd.virginia.gov

Resources:

- Timeframes
- File an appeal
- FAQs
- Local Building and Fire Prevention Code Boards of Appeal Manual
- Appeal Participant Guide

Manufactured Housing

(804) 371-7150

osc@dhcd.virginia.gov

Resources:

- File a complaint
- Consumer guide
- Licensing and transaction recover fund regulations
- Manufactured home safety regulations

Industrialized Buildings

(804) 371-7150

osc@dhcd.virginia.gov

Resources:

- File a complaint
- Industrialized Building Safety Regulations (IBSR)

Amusement Devices

sbco@dhcd.virginia.gov

Resources:

- Virginia Amusement Device Regulations
- Amusement Device Advisory Committee
- FAQs

Information Documents

<https://www.dhcd.virginia.gov/informational-documents-and-publications>



Scan here to view a digital version with hyperlinks

2023 Year in Review

Industrialized Buildings (IB)

10

Approved Compliance Assurance Agencies (CAAs)

109

IB Plans Reviewed

23

IB Manufactured Plant Audits

7,033

IB Seals Sold



1,294 Residential



5,739 Commercial

\$527,475.00 Revenue Generated from Seals Sold

Manufactured Housing (MH)

30

Dealer Lots Inspected

4

Complaints Resolved

577

Manufactured Housing Licenses

14

Broker

192

Dealer

28

Manufacturer

343

Salesperson

Amusement Devices



6,615

Inspection Seals Issued

Technical Review Board (TRB)



19

Appeals Heard

4

Interpretations Issued

Jack A. Proctor Virginia Building Code Academy



3,655

Individual Participants Served



695

Certifications Issued



564

Continuing Education Applications Processed



5,000

Subject-Matter Expert and Instructor Volunteer Hours



468

Online Training Modules Completed



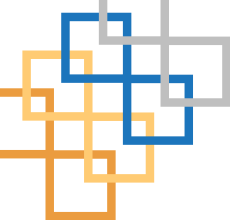
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Offsite Construction Continuing Education Classes Offered



13

Train-the-Trainer Participants Graduated



Levy

The statewide levy imposed on all local permit fees, as per the Virginia Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC), is gathered to support the operations and programs of the Virginia Building Code Academy. This funding facilitates the training and certification of local code enforcement personnel. Local building departments are responsible for collecting a 2% levy on fees associated with building permits and transmitting it to DHCD on a quarterly basis. An online portal has been established to facilitate the payment of the 2% state levy fee and the submission of quarterly permit reports. This portal offers a range of comprehensive features:

- Easy setup of multiple user accounts
- Streamlined communication with DHCD
- Timely payment reminders
- Secure electronic payment options
- Simplified submission of permit activity data and locality-specific permit reports

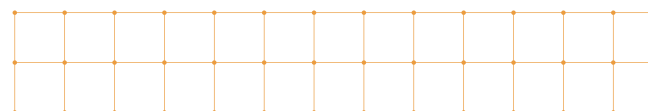


Virginia Building Code Academy

The Jack A. Proctor Virginia Building Code Academy (VBCA) oversees the credentials of code officials in Virginia, including the mandated continuing education programs for certificate holders and the code change training required with the Virginia code adoption cycle. The academy delivers administrative and technical code training programs for mandated certification requirements for over 3,500 statewide professional certifications including code official, inspection and plan review.

Certifications

The state certification is a mandated program for all local governmental code enforcement personnel and independent third-party inspections agents per the Virginia Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC) and Statewide Fire Prevention Code (SFPC). The path to certification consists of two components. All certificate candidates must demonstrate competency of the nationally based code by passing nationally based exams provided by recognized exam providers including ICC and NCPCCI.



In addition, the candidate must attend the required Virginia based classes provided by VBCA, including the prerequisite Core class followed by the required technical or administrative classes. VBCA classes are provided year-round in various locations across the state or in the VBCA virtual classroom.

Continuing Education

- Code enforcement personnel are required to maintain certification by submitting 16 hours of continuing education every two years.
 - Last names starting A-M due May 1 of even years
 - Last names starting N-Z due May 1 of odd years
- Applications are submitted electronically through the Online Registration System
- Continuing education credits are available through the VBCA continuing education classes through attending conferences, code hearings and other training or education opportunities.

VBCA Instructor Team

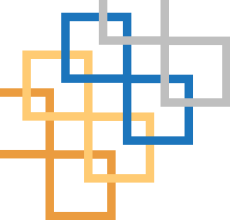
VBCA utilizes a team of volunteer subject-matter experts and instructors to develop and deliver its classes. Our instructors participate in an intensive train-the-trainer program led by the University of Richmond's Robins School of Business Executive Leadership.

The program consists of a three-week learning and guided practice occurring over a three-month period, followed by apprenticeship and mentoring with a VBCA lead instructor. If interested in more information on becoming an instructor, contact the VBCA office.

Building Code Academy Advisory Committee (BCAAC)

The Building Code Academy Advisory Committee (BCAAC), appointed by the Board of Housing and Community Development (BHCD), consists of representatives from various construction industry professions and code enforcement personnel. BCAAC's purpose is to offer guidance to both BHCD and the DHCD director regarding matters concerning the Virginia Building Code Academy, which provides training to building and fire code enforcement personnel.





Code Change Training

In conjunction with Virginia's code adoption cycle, Virginia certification holders must complete the mandated code change training. The training is based on the significant changes to the nationally based codes, as well as Virginia's new building, fire and related codes, and it is required for most certificate holders within one year of the code adoption effective date. Specific training requirements are based on certifications held. The training modules are offered in the VBCA instructor-led, in-person classroom and instructor-led, virtual classroom, as well as self-paced modules through the VBCA Learning Center. Classes are offered at various locations across the state over six to eight months, with the self-paced modules being available online for the duration of the code cycle.

Code Change Training is a separate mandatory requirement from the continuing education requirement, and code change training is required to maintain certifications in active status.

Resources:

- CE policy
- CE guide
- Virginia Certification Standards (VCS)
- Online Registration System
- Certification Guide for Code Officials

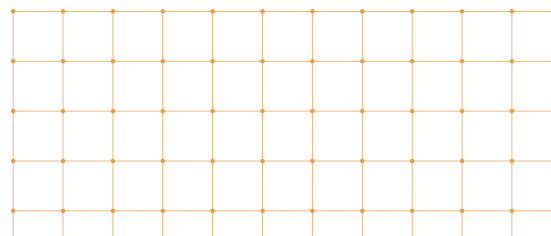
Code Development

The award-winning Virginia code development process allows anyone to participate without having to attend in-person meetings. You can submit a proposed change to the code, comment on a proposal submitted by someone else and obtain all information on workgroup meetings, board meetings and tentative schedules.

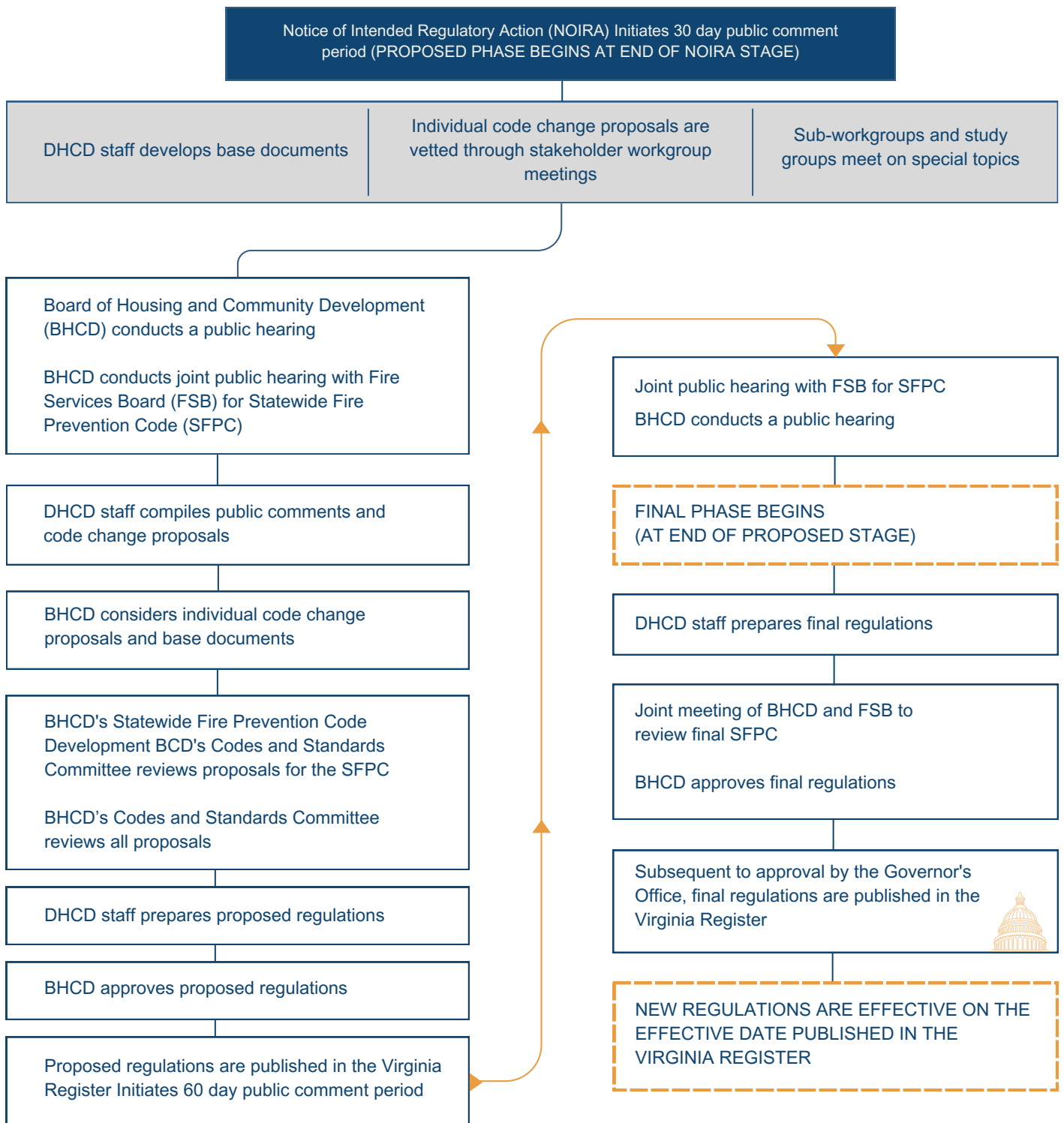
DHCD welcomes public involvement from all sectors, organizing workgroups to enhance stakeholder engagement throughout the code amendment process. This collaboration is crucial for achieving a consensus among all groups involved in the code revision. Information on how you can get involved and upcoming meeting is available at dhcd.virginia.gov.

Resources:

- cdpVA
- Code Development
- International Code Council Virginia Code Books
- Virginia Building and Fire Regulations



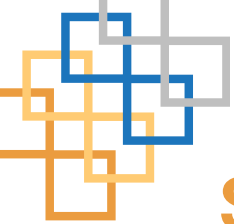
Development of the Virginia Uniform Statewide Building Code, the Virginia Statewide Fire Prevention Code, the Virginia industrialized Building Safety Regulations and the Virginia Amusement Device Regulations



Virginia Regulatory Town Hall

Virginia Register of Regulations

NOTE: This flowchart is only intended to provide the general sequence of included steps in a typical code development cycle



State Technical Review Board

The State Building Code Technical Review Board (TRB) consists of 14 citizens, appointed by the governor to ensure Virginia’s building code is administered fairly and is well-understood by the residents of Virginia. The board’s primary purpose is to hear appeals from enforcement actions under the Virginia Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC), the Virginia Statewide Fire Prevention Code (SFPC), the Virginia Industrialized Building Safety Regulations (IBSR), Virginia Amusement Device Regulations (VADR) and the Virginia Certification Standards (VCS). The board also provides interpretations to the provisions of the USBC and SFPC and makes recommendations to the BHCD for future modifications, amendments or repeals of such provisions.

- Interpretations:
 - Interpretation requests may be submitted by any code enforcement personnel with approval from the corresponding building, maintenance or fire official.
 - If there is an existing appeal pending on the subject of the interpretation, or likely to be an appeal, the review board may not consider the interpretation request.
- Appeals:
 - Applicants for appeals are generally those persons or entities regulated under the building and fire codes and who disagree with an enforcement action.
 - The codes require the filing of an appeal within a certain time period and generally an appeal must first be made to a local government appeals board and then to the TRB if relief is not granted by the local board. Both the building and fire codes contain provisions advising of the right to appeal and directing aggrieved parties to the appropriate appeals board.
- Training:
 - BFR staff provides training to the Local Board of Building Code Appeals (LBBCA), which is one-on-one training with an overview of the structure of the law that governs appeals and provides suggested best practices for local boards to understand the role they play in adjudicating appeals. If your local jurisdiction is interested in a local appeals board training, contact sbco@dhcd.virginia.gov

Resources:

- Timeframes
- File an appeal
- FAQs
- Local Building and Fire Prevention Code Boards of Appeal Manual
- Appeal Participant Guide



Offsite Construction

Manufactured Housing (MH)

DHCD regulates Virginia's manufactured housing industry through the Virginia Manufactured Home Safety Regulations (MHSR) and the Virginia Manufactured Housing Licensing and Transaction Recovery Fund Regulations (MHLTRFR). Through these regulations, DHCD licenses dealers, manufacturers and salespersons, and provides administrative support to the governor-appointed Manufactured Housing Board to hear complaints against licensees.

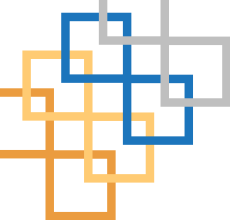
The design, construction, in-plant inspections and certifications of manufactured homes are done under a federal program administered by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). DHCD, as the state administrative agency (SAA) for HUD, handles all consumer complaints for manufactured homes that are manufactured, sold or installed in Virginia. As the SAA, DHCD administers HUD-approved installation and dispute resolution programs for manufactured housing in Virginia.



DHCD also staffs and supports the Virginia Manufactured Housing Board (MHB), which is comprised of nine members appointed by the governor representing different groups who are designated to enable legislation. MHB adopts and, with the assistance of DHCD staff, executes enforcement of MHSR and MHLTRFR. The board is responsible for licensing manufactured home dealers, brokers, manufacturers and salespersons working for those companies. The board is also authorized to receive consumer complaints regarding manufactured homes and make case decisions as necessary to resolve complaints.

Resources:

- File a complaint
- Consumer guide
- Licensing and transaction recover fund regulations
- Manufactured home safety regulations

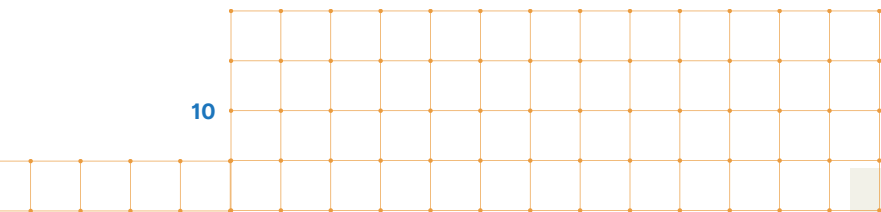


Industrialized Buildings (IB)

Through Virginia's award-winning program, Industrialized Building Safety Regulations (IBSR) help uniformly regulate industrial buildings (IB), often referred to as modular buildings. IBs are built in a factory and contain concealed components such as structural systems, electric, plumbing and mechanical components. IBSR provides for the administration and enforcement of consistent, mandated statewide standards. DHCD is the agency responsible for IBs and accredits third-party compliance assurance agencies (CAAs) to review designs, inspect construction and certify the buildings through the application of the Virginia Registration Seal. DHCD oversees the performance of each CAA. Local building departments are responsible for any site work including foundations and additions.

Resources

- File a complaint
- Industrialized Building Safety Regulations (IBSR)



Amusement Devices

The Virginia Amusement Device Regulations (VADR) are adopted by the Board of Housing and Community Development to oversee amusement devices and passenger tramways. Local building departments are tasked with enforcing these regulations, which cover inspection, accident reporting, inspector certification, operator qualification, and an appeals process.

Amusement Device Technical Advisory Committee

The Amusement Device Technical Advisory Committee (ADTAC) is a committee appointed by BHCD, which assists the board in the administration of the Virginia Amusement Device Regulation. The ADTAC consists of five members: two members represent the code enforcement community, two members represent the amusement park or private sector operators of amusement devices, and one member represents third-party amusement device inspectors. ADTAC recommends standards for the construction, maintenance, operation and inspection of amusement devices, including the qualifications of amusement device operators and the certification of inspectors and otherwise performs advisory functions as BHCD may require.

Resources

- Virginia Amusement Device Regulations
- Amusement Device Advisory Committee
- FAQs





Community and Technical Support

DHCD is committed to providing strong customer service throughout the commonwealth. BFR staff routinely provides technical opinions, guidance, informational bulletins, resources, trainings, attends various meetings to provide state-related information and, in general, listens to the needs of our partners to develop strategies and plans for the future.

Grants

In response to the number of federal grants available specific to code development, trainings and innovation in building, DHCD is identifying available funding to support local building departments, with a focus on disaster-response training and energy codes. More information can be obtained by emailing sbco@dhcd.virginia.gov.

Supplemental Training

DHCD provides training outside of the annual Virginia Building Code Academy schedule for issue-specific needs as requested. Trainings include offsite construction training for the installation of homes constructed in a factory. BFR staff provides training to the Local Board of Building Code Appeals (LBBCA), which is one-on-one training with an overview of the structure of the law that governs appeals and provides suggested best practices for local boards to understand the role they play in adjudicating appeals.



Southwest Virginia

DHCD remains committed to serving and supporting building departments and stakeholders throughout all of Virginia, and we have made a commitment several years ago to increase our focus on areas of Virginia that do not have the population and resources of larger more populated areas, specifically Southwest Virginia. This geographic region encompasses 31 counties that can seem far removed from the rest of the state. BFR has staff located in the region to provide support to local building department professionals. DHCD has received positive feedback on the ability to have staff with local knowledge available to them for technical support, meetings, site visits and other needs as requested. DHCD continues to explore ways to support the building community of the region.

"We consider DHCD staff members an invaluable part of our local team to assist, promote and educate in the effort to protect the health, safety and welfare of the residents of the Commonwealth of Virginia."

Resources:

- 804-371-7150
sbco@dhcd.virginia.gov



2023 Highlights

2021 Code Development Cycle Complete

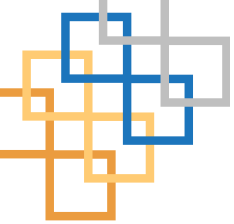
DHCD staff finalized and published the 2021 Virginia building and fire regulations with an effective date of January 18, 2024. DHCD partnered with the International Code Council (ICC) to publish the custom Virginia code books and distribute full sets of books to Building Officials. Additionally, the codes will be translated to Spanish.



Agritourism Technical Advisory Committee (AgTAC)

The General Assembly directed AgTAC to meet and discuss three new requirements for farm buildings and structures that are open to the general public for agritourism activities. [See the full report here](#). The committee met four times and developed guidelines for best practices. [Link to best practices is here](#). The law went into effect on July 1, 2023. The three new requirements are:

- 1** | Portable fire extinguishers for the purpose of fire suppression.
- 2** | A simple, written plan in case of an emergency, but shall not be construed to be interpreted as a fire evacuation plan under the Uniform Statewide Building Code or any local requirements
- 3** | A sign posted in a conspicuous place upon entry to the farm building or structure that states that "This building is EXEMPT from the Uniform Statewide Building Code. Be alert to exits in the event of a fire or other emergencies."



Building Safety Month 2023

As part of the month-long celebration, DHCD hosted a proclamation event to commemorate Building Safety Month and to celebrate fire and building safety professionals. Thank you to Hanover County, and VBCOA for making this event possible, and to our guest speakers, the International Code Council, the Insurance Institute for Business and Home Safety (IBHS), Secretary of Public Safety and Homeland Security and DHCD Director Bryan Horn. A huge thank you to all involved in keeping Virginia's residents, buildings and communities safe. During Building Safety Month, DHCD staff also attended and participated in a number of local events with our partners.

Staff Recognition

Rajan Engh, training and development specialist for DHCD, was awarded the Jack Proctor Meritorious Service Award for Training and Education during the Virginia Building and Code Officials (VBOCA) Conference in Virginia Beach.

DHCD Deputy Director for Building and Fire Regulations Cindy Davis received Viridiant's Visionary Award at their annual Building Sustainability Conference for her work on advancing affordable energy codes.

Off-site Construction Program Receives Award

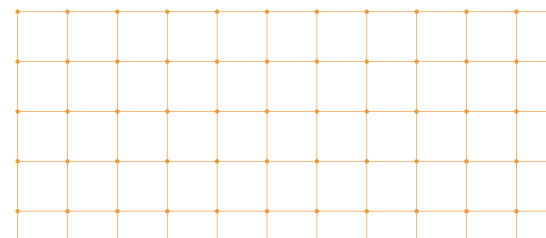
Virginia was presented with the inaugural Modular Administrative Program Award for the state's Industrialized Building Program during the World of Modular Conference and Trade Show. Modular Building Institute Executive Director Tom Hardiman stated, "We want to recognize those programs that we feel are operated efficiently and fair to the industry while still ensuring public safety and code compliance."



Stakeholders and partners celebrated Building Safety Month with a proclamation from Governor Youngkin.



DHCD accepted the Modular Administrative Program Award during the World of Modular Conference.





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