
NEW MEXICO PUBLIC REGULATION COMMISSION

FROM THE OFFICE OF DISTRICT 5 COMMISSIONER SANDY JONES

PRESS CONTACT » CARLOS PADILLA » 505-827-4446 » carlos.padilla2@state.nm.us

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 31, 2017

NEWS RELEASE

Chairman Jones Voices Opposition to 6-Month Delay for Fire Code Updates

SANTA FE – Over the course of the last year and a half, the New Mexico Public Regulation Commission (NMPRC), through its State Fire Marshal's Division, and the Construction Industries Division (CID) have been collaborating in an effort to update the NMPRC's fire code by adopting substantial portions of the 2015 International Fire Code. The current Fire Code incorporates the 2003 International Fire Code.

The NMPRC has been coordinating its efforts with CID to ensure that the new fire code, while protecting the safety and health of New Mexico citizens and businesses, is also consistent with CID's building code. Those efforts resulted in the Commission issuing, in December 2016, a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking ("NOPR") that would, in addition to other matters, adopt much of the 2015 International Fire Code.

As part of the rulemaking process, the NMPRC conducted six public comment hearings around the state, including Raton, Las Cruces, Santa Fe, Roswell, Farmington and Rio Rancho.

On Wednesday, March 29, the Commission discussed the status of the rulemaking at its weekly public meeting. After an hour debating various actions available to the Commission, the Commission ultimately decided in a 3-2 split vote to suspend any further action on the adoption of the fire code for a period of six months. Chairman Jones and Commissioner Lovejoy were the two commissioners that voted against the six-month delay.

NMPRC Chairman Sandy Jones expressed frustration with the Commission's decision to delay updating the fire code.

"The 2015 International Fire Code is a document that is over 500 pages in length, contains hundreds of provisions, and addresses a host of fire safety-related issues," Jones stated. "The Commission's decision to postpone taking any action in this rulemaking for six months was based entirely on a procedural technicality regarding just one of those provisions. I fail to understand why that technicality justifies the Commission sitting on this important rulemaking insofar as it could have been easily cured. I can't think of a clearer case of the 'tail wagging the dog.'"

###