



North Texas Chapter International Code Council



One-Page Legislative Brief

Speed With Safety: Disaster Rebuilding That Protects the Public

Issue

When disaster strikes, rebuilding must be fast. Policies that bypass permitting and verification can accelerate starts, but can also increase life-safety risk, fraud exposure, and long-term recovery costs if safeguards are weakened.

Guiding principle

Streamline process and add capacity. Do not compromise life-safety verification for the sake of speed.

Why this matters

Safety: failures can surface at occupancy or after resale.

Cost: rework and disputes increase public and private expense.

Fraud: disaster conditions elevate abuse risk.

Trust: inconsistent outcomes erode confidence.

What works: ICC When Disaster Strikes

The ICC When Disaster Strikes model accelerates recovery through organized, scalable verification and standardized documentation, with trained personnel, clear roles, and consistent field evaluation practices.

Policy actions that deliver speed without lowering the bar

Fast-track rebuild lane: eligibility-based expedited permits using pre-approved plan sets and standardized details.

Surge capacity: fund temporary plan review and inspection staffing, mutual aid rosters, and performance targets.

Third-party support with oversight: allow qualified providers under AHJ acceptance standards, audit authority, and record custody.

Phased approvals: start limited scopes early with mandatory inspections at life-safety milestones.

If self-certification is used, require minimum controls

Mandatory registration in the local permitting system and a single project record.

Milestone inspections for structural, fire-resistance, and MEP life-safety elements.

Random audits, meaningful penalties for false certification, and clear stop-work authority.

Bottom line

Disaster recovery can be faster and safer at the same time. The best lever is streamlined workflow plus scalable capacity, grounded in proven models like ICC When Disaster Strikes, not broad preemption without equivalent safeguards.

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