

Worksheet Tool for use with 780 CMR Mass State Building Code Chapter 34, Existing Building

By Richard Crosswell, PE, SECB

Projects involving existing buildings now need to comply with the 2009 IEBC (International Existing Building Code) with Massachusetts amendments according to the Eighth Edition of 780 CMR. The IEBC code has three methods of compliance for alterations to existing buildings: Prescriptive, Work Area, and Performance. The selection of an appropriate method is dependent on the complete Project Scope involving all building trades (Architectural, Fire Protection/Prevention, Mechanical and Structural).

Since each compliance method has requirements that impact all members of the design team, consideration has to be given to the impact of each method on the project as a whole to evaluate the best possible solution.

The AEC community has reported that the use of the IEBC with Mass amendments from Chapter 34 is a complicated process. To aid in the selection of the most appropriate Project solution, the Structural Advisory Committee (SAC) to the State Board of Building Regulations and Standards (BBRS) has developed a worksheet that can be used to determine the requirements for each compliance method.

The worksheet is posted on the SEAMASS website (www.SEAMASS.org)

The worksheet has been organized so that it can be presented to a client, architect or building official. Using the actual project information, the team can select the compliance method that is appropriate for the project.

SEAMASS representatives continue to work collaboratively through the SAC to assist the BBRS in developing Massachusetts code provisions. While SEAMASS will do its best to keep engineers informed of these changes, the Structural Advisory Committee and SEAMASS recommend that the engineer verify the current code when using the worksheet.