

This mail service is intended to provide the latest information concerning building regulations and our activities with domestic and overseas organizations, which are engaged in technical assessments and research in the building field.

If you no longer wish to receive this mail, please contact us at the following address:

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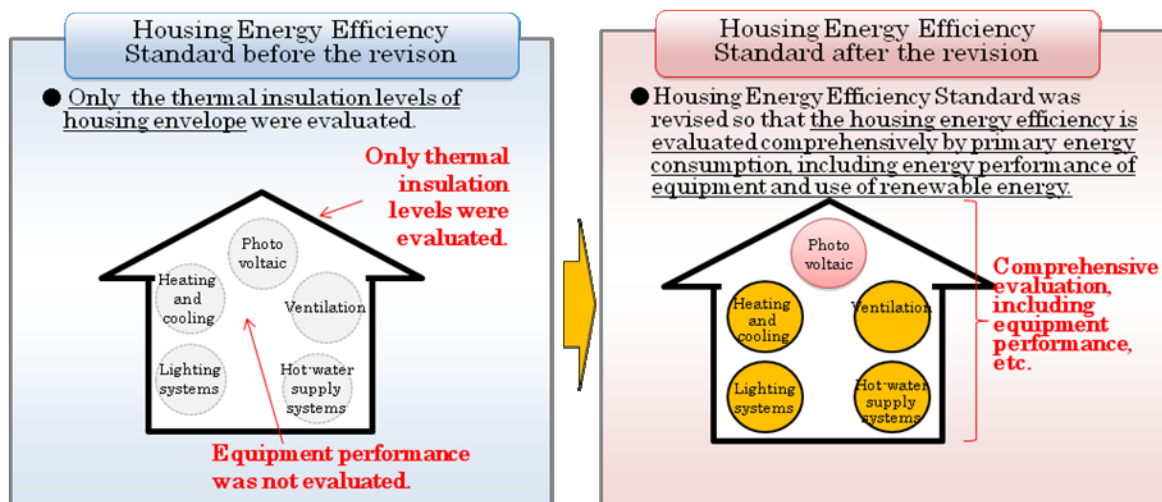
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### § 1 . Recent topics on Buildings and Housing in Japan

#### (1) Promotion of Energy Saving Measures

In January, 2013, the Japanese Energy Efficiency Standard, under the Energy Conservation Law, was revised. It aims for a more effective evaluation of the energy-efficiency performance of buildings and housing and to further promote the construction of energy efficient buildings and housing.



#### Revision of energy-efficiency evaluation methods for new housing construction

By this revision, comprehensive energy-efficiency evaluation by primary-energy consumption, including energy saving through use of renewable energy, such as photovoltaic, was introduced into this standard. Also, the energy efficiency of equipment can be evaluated for both buildings and housing. Before the revision, energy efficiency of equipment was only evaluated for buildings, not for housing. However, as a part of the revision, energy efficiency of equipment was introduced into the evaluation for housing, for which only thermal insulation levels of envelopes were previously evaluated.

This Standard was published as a Notification by the government, and came into enforcement on April 1, 2013, for buildings, and will be enforced on October 1, 2013 for housing. The Standard is to be a mandatory standard by 2020 through a step-by-step process.

Before this revision (December 2012), a new certification system was established that aimed at reducing carbon emissions from buildings and housing. In order to be certified under this system, a reduction in primary-energy consumption of more than 10% (compared with the Energy Efficiency Standard of Energy Conservation Law), is required for buildings and housing, and some measures must be taken to contribute to low-carbonization. Tax incentives can be received for certified buildings and housing.

## (2) Promotion of Seismic Retrofitting of old buildings

The current seismic design method was introduced into the Japanese building codes in 1981. When the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake hit Kobe city and its surrounding regions in 1995, most of the collapsed buildings were constructed before 1981, which was the year in which the Law for Promotion of Seismic Retrofit of Building was enacted. The number of buildings that do not comply with the seismic building codes have been decreasing since 1995, through reconstruction and seismic retrofitting. In 2008, about eighty percent of existing buildings and housing meet the current seismic building codes.

The Great East-Japan Earthquake occurred on March 11, 2011, causing huge damages over a wide area. About 18,800 people were killed or have not been accounted for as a result of the disaster. Government Cabinet panels have stated the possibilities of the middle- and west areas of the Pacific coast of Japan being hit by powerful earthquakes (M9 quake or higher) and that Tokyo could be hit by an M7 quake in the not too distant future. In response to this, promotion of seismic retrofitting of buildings and housing stock is one of the most urgent issues, under disaster preventive town planning. This issue is now being discussed in order to reduce the potential damages from powerful earthquakes.

In order to promote retrofitting of buildings and housing, an amendment of the Law for Promotion of Seismic Retrofit of Building is being made. The amendment includes the expansion and strengthening of the subsidy program and the tax reduction system, as well as an obligation to make an effort to have all buildings and housing undergo seismic evaluation, and the obligation to have large buildings to which there is public access undergo seismic evaluation, and other measures.

## § 2. Report on International Conference

### a) The 22<sup>nd</sup> Japan-France Building Colloquium

BCJ, BRI\* and CSTB\*\* held the 22<sup>nd</sup> Japan-France Building Colloquium from Dec. 11-13, 2012 in Paris. We had an information-exchange session among the three organizations on day one, a joint meeting with the Japanese and French governments on day two, and a technical visit to a redevelopment district of old warehouses on day three.



Representatives of BCJ, CSTB, and BRI at CSTB in Paris

BRI has a long- and close relationship with CSTB, as do BCJ and CSTB. BRI contributed to technical information exchanges and discussions for this colloquium.

After updates presented by members of the participating organizations, the following presentations were made on day one:

- Wooden Construction: follow up of the Wood Forum in Japan (Patrick MOLINIER, FCBA)
- The Role of Wooden Buildings in the Revitalization of Forests and the Forest Industry in Japan (Shiro NAKAJIMA, BRI)
- Assessment of Innovative Construction Products and Systems (Bruno MESUREUR, CSTB)
- Technical Evaluation of Construction Products in Japan (Nanako HOSODA, BCJ)
- Linking SBA Metrics with Construction-Product Manufacturers' BIM e-Catalogue (Souheil SOUBRA, CSTB)
- Detailed Digital Archive of Traditional Japanese Wooden Architecture with 3D CAD and Database (Keita KADO, BRI, JSPS)
- French TR 2012 + Policy and Approach toward Zero Energy Buildings (Jean Christophe VISIER, CSTB)
- The Standard and the Actual Conditions of Thermal Environment in Japan, and the Energy Conservation Performance Evaluating Method for Air-conditioning Equipment, with Consideration for the Thermal Environment (Yasuo KUWASAWA, BRI)

BCJ plans to upload the presentations by the French side onto BCJ's website, both in English and in Japanese.

The next colloquium will be held in Japan in 2014.

BRI\*: Building Research Institute (Japan)

CSTB\*\*: Centre Scientifique et Technique du Batiment

### § 3. Report on International Training Seminar

#### a) JICA Country-Focused Training Course for China

From March 4<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup>, 2013, BCJ conducted a training course on building construction for 26 trainees from China, including building administrators and building engineers of local governments and some related organizations. This seminar was a part of the programs for a Japan-China Technical Cooperation Project, begun in 2009, which aims to increase the number of earthquake-resistant buildings in China. The project was adopted after China suffered huge damage from the 2008 Sichuan Earthquake. It will be completed in May 2013, and the project-result reports will be issued.



The technical visit of construction site

## § 4 . BCJ Publications in English

### a) Introduction to the BSL

This is a document in English that is issued by BCJ that is intended to facilitate the understanding of the Japanese Building Code, the *Building Standard Law* and its related regulations. It was revised in March 2013 and was uploaded onto the BCJ website. This document may be downloaded for free from the following site:

<http://www.bcj.or.jp/en/services/reference.html>

### b) Quick Look at Housing in Japan

This is a document that introduces the housing situation and the housing policy in Japan. BCJ updated both the English and the Japanese editions in February, 2013. This document may be downloaded for free from the following website:

<http://www.bcj.or.jp/en/services/reference.html>

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