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Land Use Alert

New Puerto Rico Building Code approved

On December 22, 2010, the Government of Puerto Rico adopted the Puerto Rico Building Code 2011 ("New Building Code"), Regulation No. 7965, designed to provide minimum safeguards for the construction of residential, commercial, industrial or institutional buildings, structures or premises.

The New Building Code supersedes the Puerto Rico Building Code of 1999. In contrast to the 1999 Code, which was based on the Uniform Building Code of 1997, the New Building Code incorporates, with amendments, a new set of safeguard standards developed by the International Code Council ("ICC") and prescribed in the following codes:

- International Building Code
- International Residential Code
- International Mechanical Code
- International Plumbing Code
- International Fire Code
- International Fuel and Gas Code
- International Energy Conservation Code
- International Existing Building Code
- International Private Sewage Disposal Code

The New Building Code incorporates by reference most of the standards contained in the foregoing list of international codes. Some other standards are either amended or not adopted in the New Building Code. As a result, the New Building Code consists of two separate documents that must be used in tandem: the New Building Code and the international codes listed above. Thus, developers, engineers, architects, contractors, government officials, among others, must review and examine the foregoing international codes listed above in conjunction with the New Building Code to determine which standards are applicable in Puerto Rico.

The Puerto Rico Permits Management Office ("OGPe", by its Spanish acronym) and the Office of the Permits Inspector General ("OIGPe", by its Spanish acronym) will be the local agencies in charge of administering and enforcing the Code.

The New Building Code is effective on March 1, 2011, except for the standards contained in the International Residential Code and the International Energy Conservation Code, both as amended, which are effective since January 1, 2011.

If you have any questions or comments, or wish additional information regarding this matter, please contact any of the attorneys listed below, members of our [Environmental, Energy and Land Use Practice Group](#):

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