

Continuing efforts to improve communications

by Sherri West



The Building Codes Division is taking steps to improve communications with all of our audiences. We are making changes to our Web site, listening to our stakeholders, and seeing what new ways we can improve how we get information to you.

In March, we held a focus group meeting to discuss BCD’s methods of communicating. This focus group was made up of members of several trades. We also had representatives of different age groups and people responsible for relaying information to members all over the state. These were all helpful for us in developing ways of communicating that met a diverse set of needs.

The group suggested some wonderful ideas for dispersing our information. BCD has put some of them in practice and is working on many others. When Code Link was brought into the discussion, the group suggested we look at other formats to communicate the division’s news besides this publication. As we wrote about in the last Code Link, there is a small group of people who open the newsletter on the Web site. The focus group suggested that we look at smaller, more frequent publications that are targeted to special groups. We are working on this suggestion and the first Building Department Newsletter went out on July 2. We will send this exciting new piece

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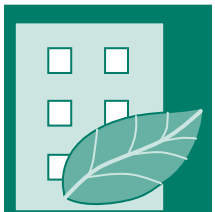
every two weeks and give tidbits of information that connect either with articles or new links on our Web site. This publication will have a place on the Web site, and we will send it directly to building officials, permit technicians, and anyone else who requests a subscription.

The Web site itself has seen some changes. The focus group suggested we make the new codes (residential, electrical, and plumbing) more accessible on our Web site and we have put them on the home page with a link

to where you can order a hard copy. We have also added a “What’s New” section that has the newest additions to the site. We hope to continue these updates and improvements to make the Web site more user friendly.

BCD will be taking more of the ideas given by the focus group to formulate better methods of keeping you informed on what we are doing. We have a lot of exciting things happening and we want you to know about them as they occur. We will keep you posted. ■

Division provides help with green building demand



The Building Codes Division has created the Green Building Services section to meet the growing demand for greater efficiency, renewable energy, and low-impact development in Oregon.

The Green Building Services section will be the centralized point of contact for green building within the state and will work with stakeholders and the various programs within the division (plumbing, electrical, structural, boiler, etc.) to develop standards and streamline processes to position Oregon as a center for innovation within the green building community.

BCD’s team is part of the Governor’s energy efficiency workgroup and many committees to develop climate change-related legislation for action by the 2009 Legislature. In addition, the team is working with partners to develop training/outreach programs and best practices for green building.

The team is also addressing code compliance concerns related to the state’s growing clean tech industry cluster.

BCD’s team recently worked with the plumbing industry to gain approval for statewide alternate methods to the state building code on graywater reuse and rainwater harvesting to support water conservation.

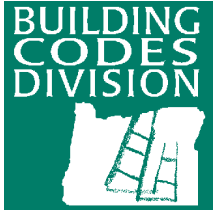
This allows the installation of nationally recognized and approved systems for using wastewater (commonly referred to as gray water) from bathroom sinks, tubs, showers, and washing machines for flushing toilets in single-family residences. The rainwater alternate method allows homeowners to harvest rainwater for non-potable uses such as watering home gardens.

BCD has already been working toward more energy-efficient buildings through upgrading the energy code provisions of the 2008 Oregon Residential Specialty Code.

The upgrades, which took effect April 1, 2008, require certain components be put in a building, including new upgrades to building insulation and an increase in the thermal efficiency rating for windows. Also, there is a new feature in which builders choose at least one of nine energy efficiency options to include in the structure.

For information, contact Andrea Simmons, manager of the Green Building Services section, at 503-373-7235, or Gabrielle Schiffer, sustainability coordinator, at 503-373-7418. ■

Code update



Recently adopted codes in Oregon

The Building Codes Division has adopted three codes, which went into effect April 1, 2008. The new codes incorporate model code changes and a few new amendments.

- The **2008 Oregon Electrical Specialty Code**, based on the 2008 National Electrical Code with Oregon amendments.
- The **2008 Oregon Plumbing Specialty Code**, based on the 2006 Uniform Plumbing Code with Oregon amendments.
- The **2008 Oregon Residential Specialty Code**, based on the 2006 International Residential Code with Oregon amendments. The 2008 ORSC contains structural and mechanical provisions. The plumbing and electrical provisions applicable to residential construction, which were previously printed in the code, will now be in the Specialty Code on which they are based, the OESC and OPSC. The transitional period, which allowed the use of the 2005 ORSC, ended on June 30, 2008.

More information is available on the division's Web site at <http://www.cbs.state.or.us/external/bcd/codeprograms.html>.

Oregon codes currently under review

The Building Codes Division is currently working with the various boards, industries, and interested parties to review, amend, and adopt new editions of the codes listed below. Each of these code change projects are in various stages of the division's standard process that goes through the following steps: code change submittals are received by the division; a code change committee is formed to review the code change submittals; boards review the committee's recommendations,

making their own recommendations to the division; a public hearing is held; and if everything is in order, the amended code is adopted for use in Oregon.

- **Recreational Vehicle Minimum Safety Standards.** We expect the minimum safety standards to become effective Nov. 1, 2008.

For more information, contact Monte Taylor, Recreational Vehicle Program lead worker, at monte.l.taylor@state.or.us or 503-373-7542.

- **The Boiler and Pressure Vessel Safety Code.** We expect the new Boiler and Pressure Vessel Safety Code to become effective Jan. 1, 2009.

For more information, contact Mike Graham, chief boiler inspector, at mike.d.graham@state.or.us or 503-373-7499.

- **The Oregon Elevator Safety Code.** We expect the new edition of the Oregon Elevator Safety Code to become effective Jan. 1, 2009.

For more information, contact Ron Crabtree, chief elevator inspector, at ron.m.crabtree@state.or.us or 503-373-3866.

- **Manufactured Dwelling Installation Code.** We anticipate that once the process resumes, the new code will become effective April 1, 2009.

For more information, please contact Albert Endres, manufactured structures chief inspector, at albert.g.endres@state.or.us or 503-378-5975.

Information on code review committees can be found on the division's Web site at <http://www.cbs.state.or.us/bcd/boards.html>. ■

Reciprocal licensing requirements



There have been changes to Oregon's reciprocal licensing rules since the Spring 2008 edition of Code Link. The rule allows someone who has passed an electrical or plumbing exam in a participating state to obtain a license in Oregon without taking the same exam, so long as the person meets Oregon's criteria. Comments from the public, BCD staff, and the Electrical and Elevator Board were extremely helpful in writing the new rule, which took effect July 1, 2008.

In order to reciprocate, you must have worked under the license in the participating state for at least six months. Also, if you have completed a registered apprenticeship, regardless of location, or qualified for your exam through an alternate verification of work experience, you may be eligible to reciprocate your license if you meet the rule's other criteria.

To reciprocate into Oregon you must provide supporting documentation for the following requirements:

- A current, active license from the reciprocal state with no violations for the past three years. You must include on the application any and all violation history within the past three years;
- Proof of a completed apprenticeship, or equivalent work experience, prior to taking the reciprocal state's licensing exam. (Check 918-030-0020 through 918-030-0040 for details);
- Proof of 75 percent or higher on the exam in the reciprocal state;
- Verified work experience of at least six months (1,000 hours) under the license from the reciprocal state.
- Applicants who have taken and failed Oregon's exam within the last two years are not eligible to reciprocate.

BCD will accept a single official letter from the participating state incorporating all the required information.

Oregon has reciprocal agreements with Arkansas, Idaho, Maine, Massachusetts, Montana, Utah, and Wyoming for journeyman electricians; Arkansas and Utah for supervising electricians; and Montana and Idaho for journeyman plumbers.

For more information, contact Aeron Teverbaugh at 503-373-1354 or aeron.teverbaugh@state.or.us. ■

Mechanical interpretation



Statewide Code Interpretations

Motor and fan requirements for hazardous exhaust systems

Code Section: 2007 OMSC Section 510

Code Edition: 2007 for OMSC

Date: June 15, 2008

Subject: Motor and fan requirements for *Hazardous Exhaust Systems*.

Question:

Where can the minimum requirements for motors and fans be found, as they apply to hazardous exhaust systems in Section 510?

Answer:

Section 503, **Motors and Fans**, has specific requirements applicable to hazardous exhaust systems and must be used in conjunction with Section 510.

Analysis:

The type of motor and fan must be carefully considered when designing an exhaust system that handles hazardous exhaust.

Section 503 sets standards for the types of motor and fan to be used in a hazardous exhaust system governed under Section 510. It's extremely important to apply both sections when designing a hazardous exhaust system.

For example, the equipment involved in operations generating explosive or flammable vapors, fumes, or dusts relies on the ventilation or exhaust equipment for proper removal of these flammable or explosive contaminants from the building. The interlocking requirements found in Section 503.1 will ensure that the equipment involved in operations generating explosive or flammable vapors, fumes, or dusts will not function if there is insufficient ventilation or exhaust to evacuate these contaminants.

Contact:

Micheal D Ewert, mechanical code specialist
mike.d.ewert@state.or.us
503-373-7529 ■

Consumers benefit from new fee and form changes



As a part of the state's effort to simplify the paperwork consumers deal with, the Building Codes Division developed a uniform method for local building departments to calculate permit fees. To streamline the process, BCD created model forms for each permit type (electrical, plumbing, structural, etc.) for building departments to use. The departments can also create their own forms within certain criteria. The beauty of this is that every form in the state will meet these criteria. Departments may add other content to meet local needs, but the basic information and fee calculations will be the same. For contractors, calculating bids in more than one community should get a lot easier.

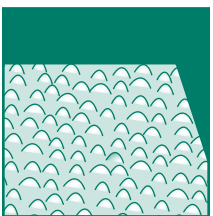
This does not mean that all fees will be the same. Local governments need the ability to set fee schedules that help them ensure good customer service by providing inspections, office support, and making sure buildings

are safe. In some cases, this new method of calculating fees may cause prices of permits to go up or down. Another advantage to these changes in fee calculation is all administrative costs will be combined in the fee. You will no longer have several separate charges tacked on to the end of your permit fee.

Because everyone will be using the same calculations, actually provided by a table designed by the International Code Council (ICC), you may be able to figure fees out before you purchase your permit. The ICC table uses average national construction costs when determining the cost per square foot of a building.

Local building departments are still required to let the public know when permit fees change. So keep your eye out for articles in your local paper. The methods for calculating fees and forms will change by Jan. 1, 2009. ■

Who is responsible for moisture-content measurements in new ORSC?



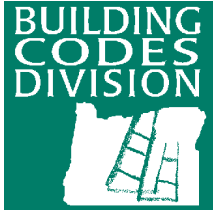
One of the major findings of the Construction Claims Task Force was the problem with moisture intrusion during construction. As a result, the 2008 Oregon Residential Specialty Code (ORSC) includes new provisions regarding moisture. In order to combat the potential health risks associated with mold growth in homes, the 2008 ORSC mandates that moisture-sensitive wood framing used in residential construction have a moisture content of no more than 19 percent at the time of installation of interior finishes like insulation and drywall. This addition to the code requires contractors or homeowners who are issued structural permits to acknowledge that they are aware of this requirement and have taken steps to comply with the code.

The confusion comes into effect when contractors and owners wonder how they

can fulfill the requirements under the code change. This led BCD to adopt a temporary rule for clarification of what needs to be done to comply with the code. The temporary rule requires the general contractor or homeowner who was issued the permit to fill out a BCD-approved form acknowledging that they have taken steps to comply with the code. This form consists of fill-in information about the property, permit, and contractor, and then a statement saying the signer understands and is complying with the code. The building official must receive this acknowledgement form prior to the issuance of an insulation/vapor barrier approval required by the code.

Acknowledgment forms are available on BCD's Web site. For more information, contact Celina Patterson at celina.r.patterson@state.or.us. ■

New fee increase page on BCD Web site



The Building Codes Division has added a new “fee increase” link to its Web site. Whenever a jurisdiction adopts a new building permit fee or increases an existing one, it is required to give notice to the division 45 days before the fee is adopted. Previously, only interested parties who registered with the division received a paper copy of the fee increase information. Now the new Web link allows anyone to browse fee increase notices. The link will give access to current and past notices. Individuals will be able to see which local jurisdictions are changing fees, when and where the public hearings will be held, and the proposed adoption and effective dates (the adoptive date and the effective date are not always the same). Individuals will also be able to view a copy of the notice submitted to the division by the jurisdiction.

The division is developing methods for local jurisdictions to submit their fee change paperwork electronically. The information required for a fee change notice includes:

- What code areas are impacted (for example, plumbing or electrical)
- A description of what the fees will be, how much they are increasing, why they are increasing, when they last changed, and when the new fees become effective
- The date, time, and location of the local public hearing scheduled *prior* to the fee’s adoption for public comment
- The name, title, and phone number of a contact person who can answer questions or direct calls to the right person

Once the division receives notice of a fee change, it has 15 days to get the information to interested parties. The new Web access will speed up the process of publicizing the fee change information.

With the new Consistent Fee Methodology Rules taking effect Jan. 1, 2009, a number of jurisdictions may be changing their fees. Since the division is requiring municipalities to conform to the new methodology, any initial *revenue-neutral* fee changes to meet the requirements of the rules will not require notice to the division. Jurisdictions will still be expected to follow ORS 294.160 requiring opportunity for public comment.

For more information on fee change notices, contact Aeron Teverbaugh, local jurisdiction policy analyst, at 503-373-1354 or aeron.teverbaugh@state.or.us.

BCD training is getting wired



With the wide-open spaces that make Oregon one of the most beautiful states in the country comes the difficult challenge of getting consistent information out to everyone. BCD has introduced Web-based code-change classes for inspectors in an effort to provide convenient training to local building departments.



The pilot project began in April with an Oregon Residential Specialty Code course, which took place in BCD's conference room A and was video-streamed to several parts of the state. BCD provided the participants taking advantage of the convenience of online access to the course with a PowerPoint presentation and the ability to see and hear the instructors live. Participants could even e-mail questions to be answered during the session.

BCD provided an Oregon Electrical Specialty Code course using the video-streaming technology in May, an Oregon Plumbing Specialty Code course using the same system in June, and teamed up with the Department of Human Services (DHS) to create another ORSC course using DHS's virtual classroom technology, which also took place in June. In this course participants have a PowerPoint

presentation on their computer screens; they hear the instructor through the computer's speakers or earphones, along with an instant messaging link to the instructor. The amazing thing is, if participants have a microphone connection, they can "raise their hand" and the instructor will call on them, having a conversation that everyone in the class can hear. The instructor can give the class quizzes during the session and immediately post the results for everyone to see.

BCD plans to expand its exploration of Web-based training with possible offerings from Chemeketa Community College and other Web-oriented training providers.

We will be offering another electrical code-change course in September. If you are interested in this course, contact Sherri West at 503-373-7509 or sherri.d.west@state.or.us to register.



BCD is committed to providing convenient training at no cost to participants and making this opportunity available to all building departments, creating a consistent curriculum on code changes for inspectors throughout the state. ■

