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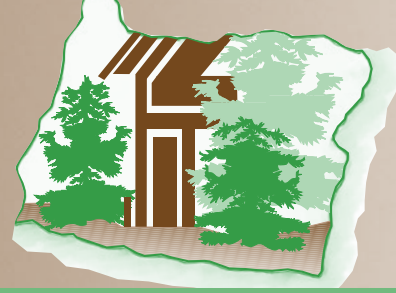
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News Site



A quarterly newsletter for homebuilders and contractors

Winter 2006-2007

HBA to sponsor Dec. 5 code forum

The Home Builders Association is sponsoring a free forum on one- and two-family structural code issues Tuesday, Dec. 5, from 4-7 p.m., at the Oregon State Office Building, 800 NE Oregon St., Room 120C in Portland.

Qualified participants may receive three hours of code-related credit from BCD, three hours of HSW credit from the American Institute of Architects (AIA) or a certificate for three HSW hours, three hours of Master Builder continuing education credit, or three hours of home inspector continuing

education credit from the Construction Contractors Board (CCB).

The purpose of the forum is to discuss regional code applications and reach consensus on standards for the tri-county region. All area contractors, remodelers, architects, and building-department personnel are invited.

Agenda

- Code updates
- Interpretations and alternate rulings
- Open forum

Q&A and minutes from March 2 code forum

Tri-county building officials have agreed to use the code panel's determinations for inspection standards.

Contractors and building-department personnel may send questions for the code forum to joanie.m.stevens-schwenger@state.or.us.

Q Do townhouses have property lines?

A No. There are no property lines required; the jurisdiction considers them single-family dwellings.

Q Is there a maximum number allowed for row houses? Townhouses?

A There is no maximum, but planning regulations change from jurisdiction to jurisdiction. Portland planning regulations, for example, limit row houses to eight. The access per the fire code around the row houses/townhouses needs to be 150 feet. The code allows for a common foundation for row houses, although it does not allow for shared shear. There is no provision in the code for townhouses.

Q Compare the separation assemblies for row houses/townhouses.

A Parapets are required for both row houses and townhouses. Townhouses must use true, listed assembly for a two-hour wall or two one-hour walls. If the two one-hour assembly is used, there are no plumbing or mechanical restrictions. The plumbing or mechanical restrictions are only in the two-hour walls.

There are no property lines for townhouses, although there are property lines for row houses.

Q In designing a guardrail, is there a provision for increasing stress for a 200-pound load?

A The code does not address this issue. The City of Portland has a "detail" that it allows designers to follow, and some other jurisdictions suggest an engineering system. The panel suggests that designers contact the local jurisdiction before submittal.

Q When should slotted washers be used verses round washers?

A The slotted washers are provided for foundation plates in case the bolts are not in the right place to get the washers in more contact with the wood.

Q What is the minimum size of a "closet" in a bedroom? How does the closet impact living space in any room?

A The minimum size of any room is 7 by 7 and 70 square feet total. The "closet" is not defined in the code; therefore, the closet is not a requirement for any room.

Q Is there a minimum or maximum height for bedroom egress in a basement for the window well?

A The code does not address the maximum height or depth of a window well. Anything over 44 inches requires a ladder. Section 310.2.1 requires a ladder be affixed to the well when the vertical depth of the well is greater than 44 inches.

Continued . . .



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For more information about the *Construction Claims Task Force*, check the Web site at <http://oregon.gov/DCBS/CCTF/> and sign up for regular updates.

Q Is there a specific requirement for galvanized connectors (fasteners) used with pressure-treated lumber?

A Code section 319.3 has existed for several code cycles. Three years ago, federal law banned the use of arsenic in pressure-treated material. The new treatments typically use high concentrations of copper, which can cause a corrosive reaction to steel. All fasteners in contact with pressure-treated wood are required to be hot-dipped in galvanized steel, stainless steel, silicone bronze, or copper. BCD has issued a recent statewide code interpretation on this issue.

Q Can you build continuous footing in segments?

A Yes.

Construction Claims Task Force developing recommendations

The 2005 Oregon Legislature created the Construction Claims Task Force to address increasing construction claims and rising contractor liability insurance premiums. The task force is unique in that it addresses issues relating to building codes, construction contractors, insurance, and energy — all in one setting. The Legislature directed the task force to deliver a report of its findings, including recommendations for possible legislation, to the 2007 Oregon Legislature.

The task force has gathered a wealth of information during the past year on construction and insurance issues. More than 30 experts in the construction and insurance fields have addressed the task force and offered recommendations for reducing construction claims and ensuring the availability of affordable liability insurance.

Based on discussion and analysis of more than 70 recommendations, the task force is considering a small number of recommendations for inclusion in the final legislative report. The task force will continue meeting through January to discuss and finalize the list of recommendations to the Legislature.

The following construction recommendations are under consideration:

1. Change building code requirements relating to moisture content, mechanical ventilation, and flashing.
2. Change Construction Contractors Board (CCB) enforcement authority and duties.
3. Establish a recovery fund for consumers.
4. Enhance consumer information and information availability.
5. Change regulations regarding permit issuance.
6. Increase certification and competency standards for contractors working on building envelope.
7. Require envelope design details on plans in order to obtain building permit.

The following insurance issues are under consideration:

1. Adopt a first-party warranty program.
2. Require general liability insurance to cover completed operations.
3. Lower the limit for wrap projects.
4. Require specific data reporting from insurance companies.
5. Encourage voluntary loss-control discounts by insurers.

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