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M1305.1.3 & M1305.1.4
2011 Oregon Residential Specialty Code
REVISED: April 1, 2011

Code Sections: M1305.1.3, M1305.1.4 & Article 110.26

Code Editions: 2008 Oregon Residential Specialty Code (ORSC)
2011 Oregon Electrical Specialty Code (OESC)

Revision Synopsis: **Update code/standard editions/issue date**

Date: Re-issued April 1st, 2011

Subject: Appliance access – attic & underfloor

Background: Confusion has arisen regarding the work clearance required around residential furnaces. While many jurisdictions apply the mechanical provisions of the ORSC, some have asked whether the workspace requirements for “electrical equipment” under the OESC are also applicable to residential furnace applications.

The two codes include differing requirements for depth and width of work clearance, leading to potential for inconsistency in application and enforcement of the code. **Note:** The headroom requirement in Article 110.26(E) of the OESC has no application to furnaces, because the provision is limited to service equipment switchboards etc.

Question: What are the appropriate codes sections of the ORSC and/or the OESC that would regulate the installation and access, for maintenance and servicing requirements, for mechanical appliances installed in residential attics or crawl spaces?

Answer: Section M1305 in the ORSC contains the appropriate provisions for the installation of mechanical equipment, including furnaces, for dwellings regulated under the ORSC. The OESC workspace requirements in Article 110.26 relating to “electrical equipment” are not applicable.

Specifically, Section M1305.1.3 regulates residential mechanical appliances installed in attics, and Section M1305.1.4 would regulate the installation of mechanical appliances in underfloor applications. In most cases these provisions require a level service space at least 30 inches deep and 30 inches wide on the side of

equipment where access is required.

Analysis: Mechanical equipment/appliance access is regulated under the mechanical provisions of the ORSC, not the OESC, which applies to “electrical equipment.” Although heating and cooling (HVAC) equipment include electrical components, residential furnaces are more appropriately regulated by Section M1305 of the ORSC because that section deals specifically with mechanical appliances such as furnaces.

Underfloor access is identical to attic access except for the length of travel from the access opening to the unit. In an underfloor installation the length of travel is unlimited if there is 6 feet or more of unobstructed headroom along the access path.

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