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April 2006

New Plumbing Rules Exempt Ordinary Minor Plumbing Repairs from Permit Requirements

Q and A:

Q. Who's exempt from permitting for minor plumbing repairs?

- Individuals
- Homeowners
- Residential property owners and their employees
- Commercial property owners and their employees
- Government agencies

Q. What plumbing work is exempt from permitting?

- A. "Ordinary minor repairs" are defined as the repair, replacement or maintenance of existing:
- Plumbing fixtures
 - Appliances
 - Appurtenances
 - And their related water supply and drain attachments

Q. What repair work is not exempt from permitting?

- New construction
- Replacement of water heaters
- Underground plumbing
- Alterations of an existing plumbing system

Q. Anything else?

- A. Yes. The new rules exempt a registered plumbing contractor from permitting requirements in emergencies:
- Repair or replacement of freeze-damaged piping
 - Repair or replacement of leaking piping

(not exceeding five feet of new piping per structure for a period of 180 days)

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New administrative rules, effective April 1, 2006, allow certain minor plumbing repairs to be made without the added expense of acquiring a plumbing permit.

The new rules allow not only licensed plumbers, but also homeowners, and others exempt from plumbing licensing to qualify for the permit exemption. Formerly only licensed journeyman plumbers, in the employ of a registered plumbing business, were allowed the permit exemption.

This exemption means that home and property owners and maintenance workers for school districts, apartments, commercial and industrial facilities may do maintenance and minor repair plumbing work without acquiring plumbing permits or inspections for ordinary minor plumbing repairs. It is expected that the exemption will save time and money for the facilities served.

Ordinary minor repairs include repair, replacement or maintenance of existing plumbing fixtures, appliances, appurtenances and related water supply and drain attachments for the purpose of restoring a plumbing installation to a safe and sanitary operating condition. Simply put, if a toilet leaks or is damaged it can now be replaced by a qualified person without a plumbing permit. A permit is still required when any changes or alteration to the existing plumbing system are made. Also, the permit exemption does not apply to any new construction, water heater replacement or underground piping.

Copies of the new rules can be acquired from the Building Codes Division Web Site at: www.bcd.oregon.gov. From the home page click on "Public Notices" then on "Notice of Permanent/Temporary Rules" then go to "April 1, 2006 Permanent Rule Ordinary Minor Plumbing Repair, OAR 918-780-0035."

