



Clackamas
Multnomah
Washington
COUNTIES

A BCD field office, the Tri-County Service Center administers the minor label program and coordinates forms, processes, and application of code for building programs in Clackamas, Multnomah, & Washington counties.

Tri-County Service Center

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News *Flash*

A quarterly newsletter for electricians and electrical contractors

January-March 2004

NECA to sponsor January 8 code forum

The National Electrical Contractors Association is sponsoring a free forum on electrical-code issues, 4-7 p.m., Thursday, January 8, in the Board Room of the Multnomah Building, 500 SE Hawthorne Street in Portland.

Qualified participants may earn three hours of HSW credit (architects) for attending, three hours of continuing-education credit (master builders), three hours of CCB credit (home inspectors), or two hours of continuing-education credits from BCD. The Electrical Board has approved tri-county code

forums for continuing-education units under these circumstances: Because Oregon Administrative Rules allow for credit only in four-hour increments, the Electrical Board will allow forum attendance hours to accumulate to four or more hours for CEU credit.

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

November 20 code forum questions & answers

The state's electrical code chief, John Powell, has approved the following answers for statewide application. Contractors and building-department personnel may submit questions to the code forum by sending e-mail to joanie.m.stevens.schwenger@state.or.us or faxing questions to the center, (503) 872-6735. An answer-request form is available on the BCD Web site, www.oregonbcd.org. Click on "Tri-County" and then "Code Forum Program."

Q Can you review the Oregon Administrative Rules and Statutes to determine whether or not there is an option for an electrical contractor to pay an hourly permit fee rather than use the calculation method on the permit applications?

A ORS 479.870 requires the Electrical and Elevator Board to provide by rule a statewide uniform method of calculating permit fees. OAR 918-309 provides the uniform method required by ORS 479.870 and OAR 918-309-0070(8) provides that an hourly rate is only available if the standard method of calculating fees doesn't cover the particular installation. A change in Oregon Administrative Rule is required in order to change the current method.

Q Does the extension of wire under manufactured homes need to be protected by rigid conduit?

A Article 550.15(H) of the 2002 NEC requires physical protection where the 120-volt or higher cable is exposed to weather or physical damage. The methods of physical protection allowed are rigid metal conduit and intermediate metal

conduit. EMT or rigid non-metallic conduit may be used if closely routed against the frame and equipment enclosures. Under the Manufactured Dwellings section, a manufactured dwelling installed on a permanent foundation shall be permitted to have non-metallic sheathed cable installed without additional physical protection if the cable is run either under the belly skin of the dwelling or kept toward the center of the dwelling and run tight against the structure.

Q Section 918-309-0000(3) states that the permit should be posted near the main electrical panel location. Wouldn't it be better to post the permit at the sub-panel that feeds the circuit or equipment? The main panel might be at the other end of a building in a locked room.

A The intent of OAR 918-309-0000(3) is a common location for permit labels that everyone will use. The common location allows the inspector to locate the label during inspection. Communication between a contractor and inspector should alleviate problems and may be as simple as stating on the permit application where the label is located.

Q Is a permit required to replace "jaws" or parts of a meter base? Inspectors cannot inspect after a power company installs a meter.

A Yes, please see ORS 479.5309(9), OAR 918-309-0040 (10), OAR 918-309-0220(1)c. A minor label can be used if a re-connect from the utility is not required.

Continued ...



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News flash

2004 code forums

- January 8
- April 8
- September 9
- December 9

All electrical code forums take place on Thursdays, 4-7 p.m., at the Multnomah Building, 501 S.E. Hawthorne St., Portland. ▲

Q Article 230 does not allow a “service” to be installed in a bathroom. Is it permissible to install a subpanel in a bathroom?

A In commercial buildings, yes. In dwellings and guest rooms of hotels and motels, no. Please see Article 240.24 (E). The key words are “overcurrent devices.”

Q Can we have the minutes of our meetings published in *Code-Link* so everyone can be in the loop on determinations and interpretations?

A Yes.

Q Utility sub-stations for telephone companies have a required ground grid to be installed according to specifications. If this grid is used as the service electrode system, will it require inspection?

A Yes, under OAR 918-271-0040.

Q Pertaining to solar systems: (A) What permits are required? (B) Who can get the permit? (C) What licenses are required?

A (A) Renewable energy permits are required. For 5KVA the fee is \$79; 5.01KVA-15 KVA, \$94; and 15.01KVA-25KVA, \$156. Please see OAR 918-309-0070 (11)(a,b,c). (B) General or subcontractors, property owners, and limited renewable energy contractors. Please see OAR 918-309-0410. (C) At minimum, a limited renewable energy technician license is required.

Q I recently failed a minor label inspection in which I extended two circuits (adding a number of light switches and receptacles) and pulled the mud rings and pull strings for the low voltage that the

homeowner will have installed by another contractor. Does this installation exceed the scope of a minor label installation?

A The scope of work allowed by a minor label is found in OAR 918-309-0220. The quick answer would be “No.” To contest your inspection results, contact the senior inspector or the building official. However, more information is needed than is presented here. In order to answer the question fairly, input from the jurisdiction is needed. Extenuating circumstances could have caused that minor label to be failed.

Q Under an HVAC-R license, can a contractor wire a second switch at the furnace or dedicated outlet after the switch for a condensate pump or electric air cleaner? Does it make a difference if the disconnect is the breaker panel? This is allowed in every jurisdiction we work in, except one.

A This question has been referred to the Electrical Policy Committee for discussion.

Q On power plugs (208VAC, 3-phase) for industrial equipment, are soldered contacts (pins and sockets) rather than crimped, acceptable?

A Yes. Refer to Section 110.14(B) and follow manufacturer’s installation instructions.

Q Do we have to bond the gas line when we put in a gas fireplace insert with a blower motor?

A Yes. Gas appliances that have electrical equipment must be bonded. See NEC 2002, Section 250.104(B); Bonding: Other metal piping. ▲

440-2725 (1/04/COM)

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