



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.

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# News *Flash*

A bi-monthly newsletter for electricians and electrical contractors

Sept./Oct./Nov. 2001

## First Tri-County Electrical Code Forum Nov. 15

The Tri-County Building Industry Service Board has initiated a series of code forums to facilitate the consistent application of code in the tri-county region. The first electrical code forum takes place Thursday, November 15, from 4-7 p.m. The event, sponsored by the National Electrical Contractors Association, is open to all electricians, electrical contractors, and electrical apprentices.

The purpose of the code forums is to discover and to discuss inconsistent code applications in the region and to come to consensus about consistent installation and inspection standards. For example, a contractor may find that a certain installation is acceptable in several jurisdictions, but that adjustments need to be made in other jurisdictions. The code panel is interested in discussing such cases. The forums will be held quarterly at the same location, usually on Thursdays. During the next 12 months, electrical code forums will be February 7, May 16, and August 15.

A panel of industry and building department code experts will lead the discussion. The panel invites participants to send questions or observations by fax, (503) 872-6735, or e-mail, [Joanie.M.Stevens-Schwenger@state.or.us](mailto:Joanie.M.Stevens-Schwenger@state.or.us).

**Panel members:**

- Gary Lampella**, City of Tigard, building official
- Jack Ackerman**, City of Portland, senior inspector
- Cody Van Bibber**, City of Beaverton, senior inspector
- Gary Kline**, Washington County, senior inspector
- Bob Gotham**, Rose City Electric, electrical contractor
- Wade Longworth**, ABC Electric Corp., electrical contractor
- William Guy**, Intel, engineer
- John Powell**, Building Codes Division (non voting member), Acting State Code Chief

Interested parties can call Joan Stevens-Schwenger, Tri-County Service Center manager, (503) 872-6731, for more information. ▲

## June 19 Code Forum Questions and Answers

The following questions were addressed at a June 19 public outreach forum and training session conducted by Gary Wilson, state electrical code chief.

**Q Who is a qualified employee?**

**A** ORS 479.540(4)(c) "For the purposes of this subsection, "qualified employee" means an employee who has registered with or graduated from a State of Oregon or federally approved apprenticeship course designed for the work being performed. The supervising electrician signature required under ORS 479.560(1)(b) does not apply to contractors working under this subsection."

**Q What is meant by "electrical installations that are an integral part of the equipment"?**

**A** ORS 479.540(2)(d) "To be made by a public utility, telecommunications carrier as defined in ORS 133.721, or municipality for generation, transmission, or distribution of electricity on property which it owns or manages."

**Q What is the difference between a required signaling circuit and a non-required signaling circuit?**

**A** A required signaling circuit is anything that requires fire safety. A non-required signaling circuit is non-current-carrying.

**Q How do you stop someone who does not have a license?**

**A** Submit a compliance report to BCD. Call Roseanne Nelson, (503) 378-5324 (Salem.)

**Q Does a single installation for garage door openers require a permit?**

**A** Yes. One can use a limited energy permit, restricted energy permit, or a minor label. Commercial door openers require a full permit. They are more complicated, and some use line voltage controls.

**Q Do 125-volt, single phase, 15-, 20-, or 30-ampere-rated receptacles installed in temporary construction services have to provide ground-fault protection for personnel?**

**A** Section 305-6(a) says that you must have GFCI protection for personnel. Portable GFCI cord sets shall be permitted.

**Q Do light switches located in one- and two-family dwellings require grounding?**

Q and A continued . . .



News flash

Electrical  
code forums

Thursdays ⚡

November 15

February 7

May 16

August 15

# Questions & Answers in a flash



**A** Yes. See Section 380-9 NEC.

**Q** How many sets of service-entrance conductors are allowed per building?

**A** “One, with exceptions.” Refer to Section 230-40 NEC. 230-40 Exception Number 1 is modified by OAR 918-305-0150, which states “for the purpose of this exception, the definition of ‘occupancy’ shall be as it appears in the 1998 Oregon Structural Specialty Code.”

**Q** Is a receptacle required on a peninsula? What is defined as a peninsula or an island?

**A** A peninsula extends from the face of the counter. If it is 12 inches wide and more than 24 inches long, a receptacle must be installed. An island is defined as an area more than 24 inches long and wider than 12 inches with a cooking range. On islands, a receptacle is required on both sides. There are no exceptions to this rule.

**Q** If there is a recess light and a shower next to the tub, how far away does the light have to be away from the tub?

**A** As long as it is not a pendant-type fixture, it can be as close as practical to that tub. (687- [g]). A pendant-type light fixture has to be three feet away from the tub.

**Q** Can recessed cans be installed with a minor label?

**A** Yes, 918-309-0220 (1)(a), (b): One circuit, two alterations. One new circuit in new construction or existing alteration of two. Allows for the work to be done and covered when no other permits are being called on the job.

**Q** Can I use a minor label to replace a defective ballast?

**A** Yes, up to five under one label, limited to 120-240V.

**Q** When changing outlets to GFI's on two or more circuits, is a full permit necessary?

**A** No, for one circuit and no, for two circuit-alteration. Yes, for more than two circuits.

**Q** Under “repair of service” can a minor label be used to replace a panel, meter base, stack, or service feeder wire?

**A** Yes, OAR 918-309-0220.

**Q** What is the definition of “device” under the minor label rules?

**A** There are many devices named specifically in the rules (See OAR 918-309-0220(D), including (but not limited to) alarm contacts, smoke detectors, heat detectors, and central vacuum control devices.

**Q** Does one need a full permit to replace a line voltage thermostat?

**A** No, not if you use a minor label according to OAR 918-309-0220(c).

**Q** Sometimes there are multiple permits for one job. When one permit is phoned in for an inspection, the inspector takes out all the permits and performs inspection on permits for which no inspection was requested in addition to the one that was. Staff is concerned that other permits exist that will not be inspected and that the contractor will cover the work. Is this appropriate? Shouldn't all permits be phoned in separately for inspection?

**A** It is not appropriate for inspectors to perform inspections on permits for which no inspection was requested. Yes, all permits should be phoned in separately for inspection. It is not up to the inspector to determine when the work is done; this is the responsibility of the contractor. When a contractor covers work that should be inspected, it's a compliance issue that should be dealt with separately. ▲

440-2725 (10/01/COM)