



Clackamas  
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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.

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# News Line

A quarterly newsletter for commercial builders



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## 2006 code forum schedule announced

Free forums to discuss commercial structural code issues are scheduled 4-7 p.m. on March 15 and Sept. 20, 2006. The 2006 forums take place at a new location: Oregon State Office Building, 800 NE Oregon St., Room 120 C.

### Dec. 7 code forum cancelled

The code forums are designed to allow participants to discuss regional code applications with a panel of local code experts and officials and agree on

acceptable standards for the tri-county region. The code panel provides code clarifications and determines common areas of code application. All questions relating to code interpretation are forwarded to statewide committees through the Building Codes Division. Tri-county area building departments have committed to following the guidance of the code panels to advance consistent application of code in the region. ♦

## June 8 forum Q&A

Local building officials have agreed to use the code panel's determinations for inspection standards in the tri-county region.

If you are working in a jurisdiction outside tri-county boundaries, please check with your jurisdiction for its standards.

**Q The IBC, 502.1 defines "building area" as "The area included within surrounding exterior walls..." In calculating the allowable area, is the area of the exterior walls to be included, or just the interior area exclusive of the exterior walls?**

**A** For the purposes of calculating the allowable area in OSSC section 503, the IBC Commentary says that the allowable area is the inside face of the exterior wall. However, the panel refers this question to the state for interpretation.

**Q Please clarify the definition "walls directly attached to the structure." Do walls that are braced to the structure meet this requirement?**

**A** If the wall is bracing a building, or is relying on the building for its support, it is a part of the structure.

**Q Does the shape of the ceiling tiles – whether they are flat or regular – have a bearing on the grid requirements?**

**A** No.

**Q Can tiles be scribed in at all sides and not affect the deflection of the grid?**

**A** Yes.

**Q If a ceiling grid system has no tiles or lights directly attached to the grid, does it then become an aesthetic system and not need to meet any of the code requirements for ceiling grids?**

**A** Any such grid system must meet the structural code requirements.

**Q In the 1998 Structural Specialty Code (based on the 1997 UBC) Section 1633.2.8.1 Item 5 requires that wood elements of a concrete or masonry wall anchorage system "have a minimum actual net thickness of 2 1/2-inches." Does the current 2004 Structural Specialty Code (based on the 2003 IBC) have an equivalent requirement? If yes, where is the citation requiring 2 1/2-inch (3x) wood elements for the anchorage of concrete or masonry wall systems?**

**A** No. There is nothing in the current code that addresses this issue.

**Q If the 2 1/2-inch net section is still required by the 2004 Structural Specialty Code, does the minimum net section apply to metal plate connected pre-engineered roof trusses used to anchor masonry or concrete walls?**

**A** The prescriptive provisions have been replaced with design provisions.

**Q Do S2 parking structures need to be sprinklered?**

**A** 406.4 and 903.2.9 open, no; enclosed, yes.

Continued ...



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## News *Line*

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**Q What are the new OSSC requirements for firewalls in apartments?**

**A** The new code requires the dwelling unit separation to be one hour, unless the building is sprinkled; then unit separation can be 30 minutes. See also section 708.

**Q Is there a definition for a 30-minute wall?**

**A** Table 721.6.2 of the OSSC assigns a fire-resistive time to various wall components. Using this table, a designer is able to establish an overall fire-resistive time for a given assembly by adding up the times assigned to interior and exterior membranes, the wood frame, and the addition of certain insulations (unique to wood frame construction).

**Q What is the requirement for upper cabinet height? UFAS (Kitchen storage) states that "Max. height shall be 48 inches for at least one shelf of all cabinets and storage shelves mounted above work counters." Does that mean one shelf of each upper cabinet? Or does that mean just one shelf is required to be mounted at 48 inches and the others can be mounted higher?**

**A** UFAS is not the adopted accessibility standard in the State of Oregon. However, OSSC 1109.11.2, which is based on the Americans with Disabilities Act Architectural Guidelines (ADAAG), requires 50 percent of the cabinets to have at least one shelf within the height limitation.

**Q Our current project is the restoration of a fire-damaged school. Would this work be considered a "repair," an "addition," or an "alteration"? While most of the project consists of rebuilding classrooms and does not include adding any new space, the original structure is more than 65 years old and could use some structural updates, as well as the addition of a smoke alarm system. Would such additions change the category of construction?**

**A** The work to restore the fire-damaged area would be considered a repair, even if new trusses must be added to be sufficient to carry the load. The fire code has a retroactive provision that requires smoke alarms in all such buildings. Work with your local building official to discuss details.

**Q For ADA access, the code requires 12 inches adjacent to the "push" side of a door equipped with a closer and a latch. If the latch is panic hardware, is the 12 inches of adjacent space still required?**

**A** Yes. ♦

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