



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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Building Codes Division

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News *Splash*

A quarterly newsletter for plumbers and plumbing contractors

January-March 2004

PHCC to sponsor January 21 code forum

The Oregon Association of Plumbing, Heating, and Cooling Contractors will sponsor a free forum on plumbing-code issues, 4-7 p.m., Wednesday, January 21, at the Sunnybrook Clackamas County Auditorium, 9101 SE Sunnybrook Boulevard, Clackamas.

Qualified participants may receive three hours of code-related credit from BCD, three hours of HSW credit from AIA or a certificate for three HSW hours, or three hours of home-inspector continuing-education credit from CCB.

The purpose of the forum is to discuss regional code applications and reach consensus on standards for the tri-county region. All area plumbing

contractors, plumbers, architects, and building-department personnel are invited. Questions are welcome. Please submit questions to the center before each forum.

Tri-county building officials have agreed to use the code panel's determinations for inspection standards.

Contractors and building-department personnel may send questions for the code forum to joanie.m.stevens-schwenger@state.or.us or fax them 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 and A and minutes from Nov. 13 code forum

Minutes

The state's chief plumbing inspector, Terry Swisher, updated attendees on interpretations, new products, and developments.

Interpretation update on whirlpool tubs and pressure sewers, and drainage systems. Swisher said that the Code Interpretation Committee will complete Chapter 78 code interpretations by December 2003. The interpretations will go to the Code Change Committee for consideration in February. Swisher briefed attendees on interpretations concerning whirlpool bath accessibility requirements (Section 415.1) and pressure sewers and drainage systems (Section 710.7). He noted that updates are available at www.oregonbcd.org. Click on "Interpretations," then "Plumbing." All interpretations are listed by code reference and year considered.

New rules on exempt minor repairs: Swisher noted that expansion of exempt minor repairs administrative rules, covered in the last issue of *News Splash*, are effective January 2004, if approved by the board in December.

Ultra-smooth ceramic finishes for plumbing surfaces: The code chief also discussed the new technologies of ultra-smooth ceramic finishes and gave a brief overview of these products. Swisher wrote an article for the next issue of *Code Link* about this new technology. To view *Code Link* online, check the BCD Web page,

www.oregonbcd.org. Then click on "Publications" and "Code Link."

Environmental rating system under consideration by EPA: Swisher explained his concerns about the new environmental rating system being considered by the EPA, including the fact that the system is voluntary and that federal standards from two regulating bodies may conflict.

Questions and answers

Q In a jurisdiction that has more than 100 years' worth of plumbing-inspection records, if a water heater has never been approved or inspected under 117.2 1 & 2 of the code, how can we as inspectors approve a minor label as like for like?

A See Section R102.7.1 of the 2003 Oregon One and Two Family Dwelling Specialty Code. The issue of past permits or recorded inspections is irrelevant. The code does not discuss "like for like" but references currently existing installations. Therefore, replacing existing water heaters that have no documented problems can be done with a minor label. As in any installation, life safety issues must be addressed. Failure of a minor label in such a situation should depend on a life-safety violation. Code language does not allow installations that create conditions dangerous to human life.

Continued...



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News Splash

Mark your calendars

2004 plumbing code forums:

- Jan. 21
- April 15
- Sept. 16
- Nov. 18

Forums are 4-7 p.m. Wednesdays, in the Clackamas County Sunnybrook Auditorium, 9101 S.E. Sunnybrook Blvd., Clackamas.

Q Is there any new information about the ABS/TVC extendable backwater valve?

A The ABS/TVC extendable backwater valve is a three- to four-inch backwater valve and is UPC approved.

Q When a deduct/billing water meter (secondary meter) is installed in the ground on the potable water system after the water purveyor's water meter, at what depth should it be buried — the same depth as the water purveyor's or at 24 inches like the water service?

A The plumbing code requires piping to be protected from freezing. Piping is to be installed 12 inches below frost line, which for the tri-county area is defined in the structural code as 12 inches. Therefore, such an installation should be 24 inches deep. However, if the contractor has an alternate method, such as insulation or heating that would ensure that the pipe would not freeze, he or she should contact the local jurisdiction for approval.

Q This question refers to a residential remodel that calls for a two-inch floor drain in a refurbished laundry room. In order to maintain a seal in this trap, a prime source has to be installed. Does the code specify whether the prime source is a drip or a stream type?

A No, there is no such specification in the code to install a prime source in the trap. When you disagree with the inspector over a code call, the code panel emphatically recommends that you contact the inspector to discuss the specific code reference. If a disagreement still exists, the contractor should contact the senior inspector of that jurisdiction. If disagreement still exists, the building official can be contacted. If there is still no

resolution, the code appeal process can be used. Contact BCD's chief inspector. Contractors may also contact the Tri-County Service Center and ask the office to facilitate a dispute resolution. The phone number is (503) 872-6731.

Q Island sinks: If a cooking school has an island in the center of the instruction room that has two countertops joined by a single low wall, can it have back-to-back sinks connected to a single venting/waste-piping system with an approved fixture-connection fitting, piping system sized according to code (2-inch waste and 1.5-inch foot vent)?

A Yes. Please be aware that an approved double fixture fitting would be required.

Q Are persons who remove plumbing fixtures and piping required to be licensed plumbers?

A The statute (Section 447.010) does not address removal of fixtures and piping in the definition of "plumbing." It addresses only the art of installing plumbing. The panel concluded that a licensed plumber is not required for removal of fixtures or piping. But if the piping needs to be capped, a licensed plumber must install the cap.

Q Are persons who install pipe lining required to be licensed plumbers?

Yes, a licensed plumber is required for any work that involves preparation for opening, final closing of the piping system, and testing. However, hauling materials and machine operation do not require a plumbing license. A plumbing permit is required for water pipe lining. ●

440-2727 (1/04/COM)

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