



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 *Splash*

A quarterly newsletter for plumbers and plumbing contractors

September - November 2001

Center schedules plumbing code forum

Tri-county-area plumbers and plumbing contractors are invited to discuss region-wide code applications at a code forum from 4-7 p.m., Thursday, October 25. The event, sponsored by the Local 290 Training Center, is at the Clackamas County Sunnybrook Service Center, 9101 SE Sunnybrook Boulevard, Clackamas.

The Tri-County Service Center, a field office of the Building Codes Division, is organizing the quarterly plumbing code forums. Winter and spring forums will be January 24 and April 25.

Building departments in the Tri-County region have committed to following the standards provided by the code panels. For more information, answers to code forum questions, and scheduled forum dates, check the Web site, <http://www.oregonbcd.org/tricounty/index.htm>, and click on "Code Forums."

A panel of industry and building department code experts will lead the discussion.

Members:

John Wheeler, Milwaukie, Happy Valley building official
Ken Carlson, Portland, senior inspector
Dana Bruns, Washington County, senior inspector
Neil Nicholas, Gresham, senior inspector
Michael Wynne, Local 290, industry representative
Roy Pierce, Kennedy Plumbing, industry representative
John Gray, Interface Engineering Inc., engineer
Terry Swisher, Building Codes Division code chief (non-voting member)

The panel will address all questions submitted in advance. Anyone with a question concerning inconsistent code practices may call (503) 872-6731, fax the question to (503) 872-6735, or send e-mail to Joanie.M.Stevens-Schwenger@state.or.us. Refreshments will be provided.

Would you like to sponsor a code forum by picking up expenses for refreshments? If so, please contact Marion Peterson, (503) 872-6731. ●

Minor labels ensure easy, inexpensive compliance

Area plumbing contractors: You can purchase minor labels at the Tri-County Service Center that are good for one- and two-family plumbing minor label installations within the tri-county region. Labels are sold in lots of 10 for \$135, which includes all surcharges.

Plumbing work allowed with a one-and two-family minor installation label:

- Repair, replacement, or maintenance of water heaters, including water heater conversions.
- Alteration of parts of an existing plumbing system not exceeding three fixtures, 20 feet of new piping, or both, provided the work is "accessible" to an inspector; or repair or replacement of concealed freeze-damaged or leaking parts of an

existing plumbing system not exceeding three fixtures, 20 feet of new piping, or both.

- Plumbing fixtures include, but are not limited to, bathtubs, bidets, showers, sinks, water closets and water heaters.

Plumbing contractors can submit an application, available on the BCD Web site: <http://www.oregonbcd.org/tricounty/minorlabel/appforms.htm>, or they can call the service center, (503) 872-6731, to request a form. Contractors can buy the labels at the Tri-County Service Center, 123 NE 3rd, Suite 440, or order them by fax, (503) 872-6735. The center accepts check, money order, VISA, MasterCard or cash. ●

Service Board approves rules for public hearing

At its September 12 board meeting, the Tri-County Building Industry Service Board approved for public hearing draft rules expanding the Tri-County plumbing minor label program to include commercial applications. The public hearing will be at 9:30 a.m., Tuesday, November 20, Conference Room A, Building Codes Division, 1535 Edgewater NW, Salem. The proposed rules will allow plumbing contractors working in the tri-county region to use a minor

label instead of a full permit for commercial installations described under the scope of work (see preceding article). This means that a contractor could use a minor label to install water heaters in multi-family dwellings, condos and row houses in addition to one-and two-family dwellings.

If approved by the board at its December 12 meeting, the rules will be effective January 1, 2002. ●



Clackamas
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COUNTIES

News *Splash*

A "Home Fire-Sprinkler Summit" sponsored by BCD, Local 290, Portland Fire and OFDDA, will be held Dec. 6 and 7 at the Portland Hilton Hotel.

Call Ron Murray, Local 290, (503) 612-4947, for details.

Tri-County Plumbing Code Forum Q and A

About 35 industry and local-jurisdiction representatives met at the July 26 plumbing code forum to discuss three questions. Code panel members considered audience comments and observations and issued the following answers:

Q When do I need to pull a permit to replace sinks and toilets? I find that in most jurisdictions there are no permitting requirements if I am changing out a toilet, but in one jurisdiction I am required to pull a permit to replace a toilet if the new fixture is not exactly the same as the old one. Where are you going to find a 1924 toilet? And who wants one anyway? What is right?

A For residential plumbing work, a permit is not required for repairing or replacing toilets and sinks and other fixtures or for repairs such as changing the trap to the sink or changing water stops. This means that a licensed contractor (or a qualified person; see administrative rules that follow) can replace an old toilet with a new water-efficient toilet without a permit as long as it does not involve moving the fixture or altering the plumbing system in any way.

Residential water heater replacement, however, is not exempt. To repair or replace a water heater, plumbers must either use a minor plumbing label or pull a permit. Oregon Administrative Rules are quite clear in exempting ordinary repairs and replacements from permitting requirements for residential plumbing work. OAR 918-780-0120 defines exempt ordinary minor repairs:

(1)(a) Exempt plumbing transactions. The following do not involve any changes or alterations of an existing plumbing system and are designated as "ordinary minor repairs" exempt from permits and inspections:

(A) Repair, replacement or maintenance of existing and accessible, fixtures, parts, appliances, appurtenances, related water supply and drain attachments; or

440-2727 (9/01/COM)

(B) Emergency repair or replacement of freeze-damaged or leaking concealed piping not exceeding three feet of new piping.

(b) "Ordinary plumbing repairs" do not include replacement of water heaters, and except as allowed by section (1) of this rule. Work inside of a wall, ceiling or underfloor; permanently concealed work or work to be permanently concealed.

(2) Scope of the exemption.

(a) "Qualified person." This exemption is only available when the work is done by a licensed and registered plumbing contractor, a licensed plumber in the employ of a registered plumbing contractor or person exempt from licensing.

(b) Permit and inspection. The exemption allows the work to be done without a plumbing permit and inspection.

(c) Code requirements. The plumbing product certification and One-and Two-Family Dwelling Specialty Code plumbing installation requirements remain applicable.

Note: In commercial or multi-family units, a plumbing permit and inspection are required for all work involving fixture replacement, whether the installation is performed by a contractor or not.

Q What method and extent of testing is required for DWV piping on post-and-beam structures or floor-joist systems?

A A separate water test is not required. A visual inspection of the post and beam is required.

Q How is the water test, required by code on a DWV system, verified on new construction?

A The following methods are acceptable:

- Visual observation at vent pipe
- Audio test
- The inspector's discretion to determine water level
- Use of a pressure gauge
- Use of a sight glass ●

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