



Oregon

Theodore R. Kulongoski, Governor

Department of Consumer and Business Services
Building Codes Division
1535 Edgewater Street NW
PO Box 14470
Salem, OR 97309-0404
(503) 378-4133
FAX (503) 378-2322
TTY (503) 373-1358
<http://www.oregonbcd.org>

Building Codes Division Statewide Interpretation

PROGRAM: Electrical Program
SUBJECT: Electrical Master Permit Questions and Answers.
SOURCE: Jim Imlah Electrical Inspector/Mr. Gerald McKee, Building Director, City of Hillsboro
REFERENCE: Oregon Administrative Rules 918-309-0100 and Oregon Revised Statute 479.560(3)
DATE OF ISSUE: Re-Issue April 1, 2005
PREPARED BY: John Powell, Chief Electrical Inspector

QUESTIONS and ANSWERS:

Question 1: Is it the intent of the charging statement "shall not exceed the capacity or design of the existing electrical system" mean that a permit for the installation of new feeders, new branch circuits, or for circuits increased in size, be required?

Answer to Question 1: OAR 918-309-0100(4) has two subsections for scope of work allowed, they are as follows:

918-309-0100(4)(a): ORS 479.540 allows the use of the electrical master permit for "repair, alteration or replacement of existing electrical products," an "electrical product replacement" includes installing a product in place of another that does not exceed the capacity or design of the existing electrical system.

918-309-0100(4)(b): The following do not constitute "repair, alteration or replacement of existing electrical products" and require a separate permit and inspection:

(A) Electrical installations in a new building shell, structural retrofits, installation or alteration of load bearing walls, foundations or exit passageways;

(B) Any electrical installation in connection with changing the type of use or occupancy classification of the building or structure;

(C) Any addition which increases the square footage of the building or structure;

(D) Remodeling within an occupied existing shell which results in:

(i) Vacation of more than 25 percent of occupants within a floor or building resulting from remodel;

(ii) Termination of a tenant's usual activities for more than ten working days; or

(iii) Construction that involves more than 25 percent of the contiguous area of any floor.

(E) Electrical installations a part of construction within a covered facility that also involve a plumbing, structural or mechanical permit other than a master permit under ORS 455.190.

Interpretive Ruling No. 97-12, signed 11/20/97, by the Chairman of the Electrical and Elevator Board clearly states that the board did not intend to require a separate permit and inspection for new installations that do not exceed the capacity and design of the existing electrical system and the provisions of OAR 918-309-0100(4) (b), (A) through (E). 918-309-0100(4)(b) clarifies what is meant by “repair, alteration or replacement” in 918-309-0100(4)(a). A cover inspection is still required for work within the scope of the Master Permit, if the work is going to be covered.

Question 2: If the installation does not meet any of the specific items on this list referred to above, then it is assumed to be allowed under the master permit program?

Answer to Question 2: Yes, see 1 above

Question 3: Can any one or any combination of the three, an electrical contractor, owner, or operating manager working under the master permit program, have to perform all of the electrical work for the facility?

Answer to Question 3: Yes, provided the work is performed by properly licensed individuals. See OAR 918-309-0100(5)(a)(b):

918-309-0100(5)(a) A master permit shall only be provided to an electrical contractor, owner or operating manager responsible for all electrical installations in the whole covered facility;

918-309-0100(5)(b) An owner, electrical contractor or operating manager of a covered facility can obtain a permit only if appropriately licensed electricians are to do the work.

Question 4: Can the facility have the option of more than one electrical contractor performing work under the master permit program?

Answer to question 4: Yes, OAR 918-309-0100(6)(b): **If applicant is an owner or operating manager, applicant shall file a roster with the inspecting jurisdiction of all electricians currently employed by applicant showing name, electrical license number and type of electrical license, and all electrical contractors whose work is included under a master permit taken out by the owner or operating manager. The roster must be filed at the same time as the permit application:**

Question 5: Further, if the facility has limited maintenance electricians working under the direct supervision of a Plant Supervisor, are they allowed to make new electrical installations under the master permit program? (Limited maintenance electricians working outside the scope of their electrical license.)

Answer to question 5: No, OAR 918-309-0100(1): **Authority for Rule. This rule is**

authorized by ORS 479.560, only deals with electrical master permits and shall not be interpreted as changing any licensing requirement.

Question 6: Can a facility use multiple contractors working under the master permit program at one time? “Retainer” applied in this context may imply a single contractor.

Answer to question 6: Same as question 4, see OAR 918-309-0100(6)(b)(A): **When an electrical contractor under a continuing retainer ceases to serve the covered facility, notice of termination shall be filed with the inspecting jurisdiction by the permit holder within ten working days of termination;**

Conclusion: The Master Permit Program was designed to allow a facility to engage in electrical repair, maintenance and installations within the guidelines of 918-309-0100(4)(b); less than 25% of an area, no change in use or occupancy, no additional square footage added, no termination of usual activities for more than 10 days, cannot exceed service capacity.

Nothing in 918-309-0100 removes or modifies the requirements of licensing, cover inspections, (when applicable), or the requirement to obtain a separate electrical permit when other trades and permits are involved.

An example of an approved use of the Master Permit is as follows:

A facility has a 1200 amp, 480-volt, three-phase service. A check with the utility company shows that the facility peak load is only 400 amps and further calculation confirms this. The facility wishes, in an existing area, to add a new production line that uses a 100 amp feeder and a separately derived system. This installation falls under the permissible guidelines of the Master Permit Program.

An example of an installation not approved under the Master Permit Program:

A facility has a 800 amp service and a check with the utility company shows a consistent

750 amp peak load and further calculation confirms this. The facility wishes to add a 225 amp-load for a new production line in an existing area. This is clearly outside the realm of the Master Permit Program as the new load exceeds the system capacity (OAR 918-309-0100(4)(a)).

ORS 479.630(3) provides for a Master Permit in lieu of the required inspection permit for electrical installations. Oregon Administrative Rules 918-309-0100 are narrowing the scope of this Statute but are not intended to prevent new electrical installations within the guidelines of these rules.