

**STATE OF OREGON  
BUILDING CODES DIVISION**

**PLUMBING CODE INTERPRETATION**

**SUBJECT: REPLACEMENT OF AN EXISTING WATER HEATER**

**CODE SECTION:** Oregon Plumbing Specialty Code (OPSC) **Section 301.1.4**

**CODE EDITION:** 2000

**DATE:** February 1, 2002

**QUESTION:** When replacing a water heater in an existing building, am I required to bring the existing plumbing system up to code?

**ANSWER:** As per section 301.1.4, in existing buildings or premises in which plumbing installations are to be altered, repaired, or renovated, the Administrative Authority has discretionary powers to permit deviation from the provision of the code, provided that such a proposal to deviate is first submitted for proper determination in order that health and safety requirements, as they pertain to plumbing, shall be observed.

**It is the opinion of the Interpretation Committee that the following plumbing code provisions are necessary to consider in existing buildings to protect the health & safety of the public:**

- 1) Raising of water heaters in garages as per section 510.1.**
- 2) Seismic anchoring or strapping as per section 510.5.**
- 3) Relief valve termination as per section 608.5.**
- 4) Thermal expansion protection as per section 608.3.**
- 5) Prohibited locations as per section 509.0.**
- 6) Combustion air as per section 507.1.**

**It is the opinion of the Interpretation Committee that the following plumbing code provisions are not necessary to consider in existing buildings to protect the health & safety of the public:**

- 1) Water pipe sizing as per section 610.0.**
- 2) Water heater drip pan as per section 510.7.**
- 3) Existing water pressure exceeding 80psi as per section 608.2.**

