

OREGON
Interpretive Ruling No. 93-18
MASONRY CHIMNEY CLEANOUT
(revised 7-15-99, editorial only)

REQUESTED BY: PPPI Manual Review Committee

QUESTION: Would a cleanout as shown in sketches labeled A, B, C, and D be required, or would a removable vent connector or thimble suffice as an alternate to a cleanout?

APPLICABLE CODE SECTIONS: 1998 Oregon Structural Specialty Code (OSSC), Section 3102.3.7; 1999 Oregon Mechanical Specialty Code (OMSC), Sections 801.14; and One and Two Family Dwelling Specialty Code (Dwelling Code), Sections 1001.13 and Section 2105.3.

BACKGROUND: A 6/13/78 letter to Bob Shingler, then Polk County Building Official, from Tom Briggs, P.E., Code Coordinator of ICBO, says in part: ... "The last sentence of 815(b)(2)E of the 1991 Uniform Mechanical Code provides in part, If 6 inches is not available, a cleanout shall be provided by installing a capped tee in the connector next to the chimney. This provision would allow the omission of the cleanout in the chimney only in existing construction. New construction can be designed with the cleanout below the connector and the provisions would not be applicable in such cases."

"We feel that the details **A**, **B**, **C**, and **D** comply with the Code, but connectors should extend through the wall of the chimney to the interior face of the chimney liner. Also, alternate "**B**" on detail **C** indicates that the cleanout is accessible only from the underfloor crawl space. Since cleanouts are installed so that soot and debris can be removed periodically from the chimney, it is our opinion that the opening in the crawl space should not be considered an acceptable cleanout. Cleanouts should be installed in locations where the owner can reasonably provide the required maintenance. Cleanouts should not be concealed within the construction so that the owner may not even be aware of its existence."

FINDINGS: This interpretation is authorized by ORS 455.060, Rulings on Acceptability of Materials, Designs or Methods of Construction and Attorney General's Opinion OP-5208 issued October 1, 1981, advising that the statute permits authoritative interpretations of existing code requirements.

ICBO's interpretation is still valid. It is appropriate to revise this ruling to include the latest edition of the Oregon One and Two Family Dwelling Specialty Code and incorporate the latest editions of OSSC and OMSC.

DISCUSSION CONCLUSION:

New construction: Except for alternate "B" on drawing C, all drawings comply with the code. Connectors shall extend to the face of the chimney liner. A removable vent connector or thimble is not approved as a cleanout.

Existing construction: If the vent connector enters so there is a 6-inch clearance from the bottom of the connector to the bottom of the chimney, do nothing and install the appliance. If less than 6 inches of clearance from the bottom of the chimney, install a capped tee in the vent connector to the bottom of the chimney as shown in detail E.

(signed July 21, 1993)

John: Talbott, Chairman
Structural Code Advisory Board

The recommendations and findings of the Structural Code Advisory Board are accepted and the conclusions are adopted.

(signed July 30, 1993)

Michele J. Patterson for
Gary J. Wicks, Administrator

RES C I N D E E D