



# Manufactured Home Update

Oregon Department of Consumer & Business Services ■ Building Codes Division

April 2002

## Code change prevents wet stands

By Albert Endres

One of the changes in the Manufactured Dwelling and Park Code is a guideline for inspectors and installers to reduce the chances of water entering and accumulating under homes.

This problem remains one of the most common and damaging situations we deal with in the field. In most cases, planning, forethought, and preventive measures greatly reduce this problem.

Section 3-8.4.7(I) states: "Where ground water may present a detrimental condition, the authority having jurisdiction may require any or all of the following..." The codes goes on to describe the measures which may be required, including perimeter drainage, a low-point drain, waterproofing of foundation walls, or a sump pump.

Sometimes it is not possible to determine when ground water could be a problem. But most of the home sites that we see with ground-water problems appear to have been questionable from the beginning.

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## Smoke-alarm retrofits may be needed

By Mark Campion

A new requirement in the 2002 edition of the Oregon Manufactured Dwelling & Park Specialty Code concerns smoke detectors: Additional smoke detectors will need to be retrofitted in bedrooms whenever one of the following occurs:

- Homes are relocated to or within a park.
- When a home is altered or remodeled such that a permit is necessary.

- When a home is being installed as a secondary installation.
- When an existing home on private property or in a park is being offered for sale.
- When a home is being offered for rent or lease.
- When a home is being re-manufactured.

*Smoke alarms... continued on Page 2*

# New temporary-storage requirements for display homes

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Effective April 1, there will be new requirements for the temporary blocking of homes put on display or in storage by the manufacturer, dealer, or distributor.

Chapter Three, Section 3-1.2, Temporary Placement or Storage in the 2002 Oregon Manufactured Dwelling and Park Specialty Code states as follows:

“When a manufactured dwelling is placed temporarily on display or in storage by the manufacturer, dealer, or distributor for a period of over thirty (30) days from the date of manufacture, the owner of such home shall protect the home from deterioration according to the following.

- Manufactured dwellings supported on their wheels and at the draw bar (hitch) shall be adequately supported under the perimeter of each floor section at 10 feet (305 cm) on center and under the marriage line at each column support post location. Perimeter supports shall start not more than 5 feet (152 cm) from the end of the home and shall not be located under any window or door opening.
- Manufactured dwellings NOT supported on their wheels and at the draw bar shall be adequately supported under each main frame (I-beam) and under

the perimeter of the floor at 10 feet (305 cm) on center, and under the marriage line at each column support post location. Perimeter and main frame supports shall start not more than 5 feet (152 cm) from the end of the home and shall not be located under any window or door opening.

- Manufactured dwellings shall be sealed at the centerlines and at all other openings to prevent exposure to the elements.
- Manufactured dwellings occupied or intended to be occupied or manufactured dwellings on display in manufactured dwelling parks, mobile home parks, or manufactured subdivisions may not be installed temporarily but shall be installed according to this chapter.

This requirement affects those homes manufactured on or after April 1, 2002; homes already in storage and supported according to the 1997 Oregon Manufactured Dwelling Standards will not be affected. If, during an inspection, a dealer or storage lot reveals an older home not yet supported, it will be required to follow the new requirements.

If you have questions, contact Tom Nicolai, (503) 373-7243. ■

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## Code change... continued from Page 1

The burden is not only on the inspector to meet the requirement but also on the installer, contractor, or skirting installer to determine how to prevent possible accumulation of water under a home.

These preventive measures are far easier and less expensive to prevent than to correct. The geographical location is not necessarily the determining factor, either. I have observed this situation from Burns to Brookings and from Tillamook to Paradise. It is not only rain but also snow buildup that causes water entry. Once water is under a home with no way out, it stays for a long time.

I ask that everyone pay attention and prevent this condition. Factor the work in when you make your bids or just make it a standard feature. It's a problem that needs to be dealt with. Please call me if you have questions, (503) 378-5975. ■

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## Smoke alarms... continued from Page 1

- When Building Codes Division is performing a visual inspection and/or issuing an insignia of compliance.

This requirement does not affect the sale of new manufactured homes; however, dealers who take homes in trade, sell repossessed homes, or act as the agent for homes in parks must ensure that smoke detectors are in all bedrooms.

Smoke detectors need be only of the battery-powered type; hard-wired detectors are not required.

The details of the new requirements are contained in Chapter Nine – Fire and Life Safety, of the new code book. The new code takes effect April 1. ■

# Check skirting installers' certification

By Albert Endres

In any state-regulated industry, disputes occasionally arise between regulators, the regulations, and businesses in the private sector.

Most of these differences are resolved professionally, and work goes on. Occasionally, professionalism doesn't resolve the dispute and the call must go out to others for help.

It has been a few years since many of our calls were from irate contractors who suddenly had to have a special license for installing skirting. It was understandable that we got these calls, as this statute change was a new layer of regulation.

Many contractors just didn't understand why. Many simply didn't like regulation of any sort. But most contractors complied and most ruffled feathers were smoothed out over the years.

A call came in the other day from a contractor who apparently just found out that a specific license was required to install skirting.

The call went first to our licensing specialist. She answered the caller's questions and endured an unusual and unacceptable barrage of criticisms about government, arguments about the validity of the statute, and complaints and opinions on a variety of topics.

When she had had enough, the caller demanded to talk to someone else. He even remarked he wanted to "chew on someone else, too."

Appropriately, I got the call. I also got worked over by this guy. I answered his questions as well as I could. The "conversation" moved on to general remarks about how useless government employees are and how we just want people's money. You know the drill.

It finally ended with his remark that I would just have to catch him in the act, because he was not going to comply.

My point in telling you all this is not to solicit empathy for the occasional bad call we get; my point is to ask all inspectors and licensed contractors for help.

In all likelihood, this contractor will not be caught. He will continue to work, avoid license and tag fees, and have a slight competitive edge on those who are licensed. He'll also avoid the minor hassle of buying tags and reporting tag use.

How do we catch a person who avoids the rules?

Without your help, our chances are slim. The five inspectors in my section cover our entire state (We look at about 200 of the approximately 5,000 installations in Oregon.) and we do inspections in Washington, Idaho, Nevada, Alaska, California, Montana, and Wyoming.

We catch about five contractors a year and ensure that they attend classes and get their licenses.

I'm asking inspectors to check for skirting-installer certification during final inspection and installers who know of someone working without a license to contact me.

We'll do what is necessary to ensure that unlicensed installers achieve compliance. The processes are simple for reporting a violator and for getting a violator licensed once he is identified.

If you have questions about this article or solid information about unlicensed contractors, please give me a call at (503) 378-5975. You may also call Al Rust, (503) 378-8053. ■

## Insignia office's hours shortened

By Irene Lickiss, Insignia Specialist

As you are all aware, there is a slowdown in the manufactured home industry. This slowdown has affected the Building Codes Division. Among other cost-cutting measures, we have reduced staff in many areas, including at the insignia desk.

My position is now part-time. My new hours are on my telephone voice-mail message; this is for those of you who haven't yet called.

I work 20 hours a week: noon to 4 p.m. on Wednesdays and 7 a.m. to 4 p.m. Thursdays and Fridays.

You can still get tags through the mail or in person. If you are planning on picking up tags at the office, it will be a more efficient process if you come to the office on a Thursday or Friday. ■

# Fireplaces can be dangerous — so take care they are installed right

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By Mark Campion

Our industry produces safe and durable homes. Rarely does BCD run across a problem that can potentially harm the occupants. That being said, a fireplace with glass doors is perhaps the most frequently encountered life-threatening problem that we find in the field.

HUD standards and our own Super Good Cents programs result in very tight homes. Although HUD requires the air that feeds a fireplace to come from outside the building envelope (crawl space), the simple fact is that in some instances, the home's furnace and other appliances (range-hood fans, bathroom fans, and whole-house ventilation fans) can singularly or in combination overpower the natural venting of the fireplace, resulting in a dangerous backdrafting condition.

Opening a window alleviates the problem in most cases. Most fireplace operation manuals from the manufacturer will offer this solution in cases of backdrafting.

However, this is not an allowable solution according to the HUD code. All of the home's mechanical ventilation and heating systems must be able to operate without interfering with the fireplace. Manufacturers should work closely with their suppliers to ensure this occurs.

Although code allows for the installation of fireplaces, and customers' demand for them is high, retailers and factories might consider offering wood stoves as alternatives to fireplaces. Wood stoves have sealed-door systems, typically with glass panels to allow homeowners to enjoy looking at the fire.

Backdrafting is rarer in wood stoves — although it can occur when the fire is fed more fuel. In addition, a wood stove serves as a source of heat, unlike a fireplace, which is considered decorative. We encourage manufacturers and retailers to call us for an inspection when their customers encounter a problem. ■

## Educate homeowners about maintenance

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By Dwight West

How many homeowners know what it takes to maintain their houses? How many know how to operate the home's ventilation system? Or how to operate and maintain factory- and dealer-installed appliances? Or what the warranties on those appliances cover or how long they last?

Our investigations in the field reveal that homeowners are not aware of what they need to know about these topics.

It's amazing what the homeowner does not know about routine exterior and interior maintenance of the home. Doing a better job of educating the homeowner and dealer sales staff can dramatically reduce the number of unhappy homeowners and the number of dealer and factory service calls.

Some dealers and factories train their sales staff to educate homeowners about routine maintenance during a walk-through of the new home.

To do this effectively, though, salespeople must be knowledgeable about all aspects of maintenance and be able to effectively teach consumers what must be maintained and how.

One factory service manager with a homeowner-education program said that the program has helped his business. He said that service costs are considerably lower and he has fewer unhappy customers since the program was begun. Educated homeowners do a better job operating and maintaining their homes and are happier with their purchase over the long haul. This is good for the industry. ■

**Visit BCD's Web site: [www.oregonbcd.org](http://www.oregonbcd.org)**

You'll find the latest codes, the newest forms and publications, and updated training schedules.

# New sales models need perimeter piers

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By *Mark Campion*

Most dealers set homes on the lots just as they would for a permanent set — fully supported along the marriage line, I-beams, and perimeter. Since the original 1996 Oregon Manufactured Dwelling Standard took effect, “sidewall sag” has almost disappeared on permanent sets.

Before the 2002 edition of the Oregon Manufactured Dwelling & Park Specialty Code, perimeter piers were optional for stored models, but as of April 1,

perimeter support is required (see Chapter 3-1.2 subpart b, Page 31).

The Building Codes Division is not requiring existing sales models to be upgraded; however, homes with April 2002 build dates will need perimeter piers.

The supports on the perimeter must start no more than five feet from each end, be spaced 10 feet on center, and cannot be located under any window or door. ■

# Home height decides need for tie-downs

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By *Al Rust*

In the new Oregon Manufactured Dwelling and Park Specialty Code under section 3-2.3.3, Wind Resistant Anchoring, the code text does not address tie-down requirements for homes in the high-wind area if the homes are on prefabricated piers.

This is a change from earlier code, and it came about from the findings of the High-Wind Task Force formed in 1998. The task force collected information on manufactured dwellings and the effects of wind on these homes. Oregon State University’s engineering department conducted the tests on homes with concrete masonry units and homes with prefabricated piers.

The task force concluded that over-height concrete masonry units and prefabricated piers react the same in high-wind areas. No matter which kind of pier is supporting the home, it is the height that determines whether the home needs to be tied down.

This is why tying down homes in the high-wind or standard-wind areas will not be required unless the home is overheight or it’s a single-wide home in a high-wind area, in which case neither the height nor the pier material matter: It must be tied down. ■

# Two-story homes present new challenges

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By *Dwight West*

The Oregon manufactured housing industry has continually tried to come up with innovative designs to offer the public. In the last couple of years, several manufacturers have built two-story homes. The manufacturers offer single-stack as well as double-stack homes. Many people do not realize that these homes are available.

With land at a premium in the state, the two-story home may be something consumers will start looking at. Two-story homes allow the consumer to purchase a full-sized home that takes up less land.

The installation of two-story homes is not as complex as you might think. However, if you are a contractor bidding on one of these homes, you can safely

assume that a double-wide stacked home will take roughly twice as long to install as your standard double-wide home.

Something else to keep in mind is that getting the bottom section(s) in place prior to the crane arriving on site will keep costs down. Because there is a lot of work that can be done before the crane arrives, the installer should plan ahead to save on crane charges. Once the crane has set the top section(s) of these homes, it is just a matter of joining the units and doing the mechanical, plumbing, and electrical connections. ■

# Q&A: Losing and replacing HUD labels

By Tom Nicolai

## Q: How does one lose HUD labels?

**A:** Here are a few of the ways in which they can be lost: If you repaint your home, whether you do it yourself or hire it done, in many cases the labels are removed during repainting and then misplaced. Sometimes they are just painted over. If the siding is replaced or another siding is installed over the original siding, labels may be tossed on the trash heap with the old siding or covered by the new. Some people just do not like the appearance of labels on their homes, so they remove them.

## Q: Why do I need HUD labels, anyway?

**A:** Your HUD labels are proof that your manufactured home meets HUD standards. Chances are you'll never need your HUD labels again — unless you decide to sell or refinance your home. Most lending institutions require HUD labels on the home or, in some instances, proof that HUD numbers were originally assigned.

## Q: What do I do if I can't find the labels or their numbers?

**A:** There are two ways to find out original HUD-label numbers issued for your home: Contact the manufacturer of the home or contact this office.

To get the HUD label number, you'll need to know the manufacturer of the home, the month and year it was manufactured, and the serial number.

If you contact BCD, request a lost-label report form. The form includes a cover letter that explains how to fill out the form. Fill it out and return it to BCD with a \$76 fee for each label you need. To expedite the transaction, forms may be faxed back to BCD for processing. Obviously, you will not be able to fax your payment, so we accept credit cards. Our normal method of shipping labels is by mail; if you need them faster, you can request that they be sent by commercial shipping services. You'll pay the cost of shipping.

If you have questions, contact Tom Nicolai, (503) 378-3955 or (503) 373-7243. ■

## Code changes affect floor joinings

By Mark Campion

Starting April 1, when the new Oregon Manufactured Dwelling & Park Specialty Code takes effect, floors at the marriage lines of multi-section homes will not only have to be flush and level, but will also have to be "smooth" (refer to Chapter 3-11.3.3, Page 64, of the code).

What this means is that gaps between the different sections will have to be covered or otherwise floated for a smooth transition if the decking has not come together tightly.

Although the method to achieve a smooth transition is not spelled out by the code, in the field I have seen both thin-gauge metal flashing and a all-purpose compound used. ■

## License a good deal for worker, boss

Not many temporary limited installer licenses are sold, and that should be surprising, because they are a good deal for both the employer and the employee.

A temporary limited installer license costs just \$10, and it's good for 60 days. The license can be issued to almost anyone — the only restriction is that the licensee must work under the direct supervision of a fully licensed MDI or LSI.

With this license, the employer can hire a worker, validate the temporary license and put that employee to work immediately. Another advantage: If the worker doesn't work out, the employer has invested just \$10 in licensing. For the worker, the temporary limited installer license can create a record of work experience for the licensee — and that can be used to qualify for a full license.

Call Marilyn Mohler, (503) 378-3980, to get application forms. ■

# Look to statute for guidance in licensing decisions

By Albert Endres

This issue contains an article that speaks of working without a license and someone's perception that licensing requirements are of no value or significance. Those who feel this way and continue to work without all of the required licenses may be interested in Oregon Revised Statute 446.420.

I encourage anyone thinking of working without a license to read that statute. I will include some of the language here:

"446.420 License Required to Maintain Action. An installer may not file a lien, or bring or maintain in any court of this state a suit or action, for compensation for the performance of any work requiring a license... ."

If you can read, you should be able to understand what this says. It does not mean you only need a Construction Contractors Board license. There are specific licenses for different types of work involved with manufactured homes. If you don't know the requirements for a license, please call (503) 378-5975. We will provide you with the information.

Beyond violating the law by working without a license, you may end up working without any means of collecting payment, and you will be subject to civil penalty. It's a high price to pay, and it's what comes of failure to comply with state law. ■

## Irene's Quizzin' Corner

by Irene Lickiss, Insignia Specialist

We thought you might like a little change of pace. We've used the names of the 25 installers who have ordered and reported the most tags since January 1, 2000, in the block of letters below.

See if you can find them all. Remember: you can go right to left, left to right, bottom up, top down, horizontal, backward, and forward. Have fun!

- |             |            |
|-------------|------------|
| ALLIMAN     | HUMPHREY   |
| BAYLESS     | HURLBERT   |
| BECK        | JERIN      |
| BOND        | LARSEN     |
| BREUER      | MCHARGUE   |
| CHANEY      | NELSON     |
| COOK        | PARR       |
| CULLEY      | REED       |
| DUERST      | SCHAUMBERG |
| EBENSTEINER | SHIMER     |
| FREE        | STINNETT   |
| GARRISON    | ZEPEDA     |
| HUDSON      |            |

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Y	K	R	L	U	I	N	O	U	Q	E	R	I	M	D
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# Good installations recognized

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By Al Rust

On behalf of the manufactured housing industry in Oregon, the Building Codes Division recognizes the following installers and their crews for having installed homes during November, December, and January without nonconformances:

- Dennis Schad, Coos Bay
- James Poetzl, Springfield
- Matthew Chaney, Coos Bay
- Guy Rogers, Bandon.

Names were taken from inspection reports sent to this division from jurisdictions around the state. Thanks to the inspectors participating in this program. ■

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