



NEWS **RELEASE**

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NEW BUILDING CODE RULES SPEED PLAN APPROVAL AND APPEALS

(Salem) Builders of residential dwellings and about 130 city and county building departments should soon begin to notice the effects of SB 587's July 1 first-phase implementation.

The bill was passed last legislative session in response to building-industry concerns about such issues as building-code-interpretation inconsistencies and slow plan-review processes.

One effect of SB 587 is that the state has established a definition for "simple residential." Once a builder's plan is determined by a local building department to be simple residential, plan review must occur within 10 days if the city's population is under 300,000; if the population is 300,000 or more the plan review must occur within 15 days.

Building departments are allowed three days in which to make the determination of "simple residential" and let builders know whether or not their applications are complete, which will be made easier by the state's creation of a standard checklist for submitting a plan, another proviso of SB 587.

An added benefit of SB 587's streamlining of the plan-review process is that if a building department cannot meet the new plan-review deadlines, the department is required to supply to the building contractor a list of three independent third-party plan reviewers that can complete plan reviews within the deadline.

Third-party plan reviewers, who have long been required to hold state certification, must be licensed under the second phase of SB 587 implementation, effective October 1, 2000.

Another effect of SB 587 is that the state has created building code chief-inspector positions similar to the chief electrical inspector. The chief electrical inspector position has existed since 1981 and is believed by BCD officials to have contributed to consistency of electrical-code interpretation and resolution of issues. Establishment of additional chief-inspector positions for building codes gives building contractors another avenue for appeals related to building-specialty disagreements with city or county building departments.

Local jurisdictions collecting fees for administration of specialty-code permits are required under SB 587 to use the fees for building inspection programs.

(more)

“The spirit of 587 is to address customer service and the uniformity and consistency of building inspection services statewide,” said Mark Long, manager of BCD’s Policy and Technical Section.

Phase two of SB 587 implementation will establish licensing of third-party plan reviewers. The second phase allows third-party plan reviewers time to submit applications and complete testing by October 1.

Six informational meetings about the implementation of SB 587 have been scheduled by BCD for August. Meetings will be held in Grants Pass, Eugene, Newport, Clackamas, Bend, and Pendleton. The meeting schedule is as follows:

- August 15 **Grants Pass**, 9:30-11:30 a.m.
Ann Basker Auditorium, 604 NW Sixth Street

- August 15 **Eugene**, 2:30-4:30 p.m.
City Council Chambers, 777 Pearl Street

- August 16 **Newport**, 9:30-11:30 a.m.
City Council Chambers, 810 SW Alder Street

- August 17 **Clackamas**, 10 a.m. to noon
Sunnybrook Service Center, 9101 SE Sunnybrook Blvd.

- August 21 **Bend**, 1:30-3:30 p.m.
Deschutes County Administration, Board Hearing Room, 1130 NW Harriman

- August 22 **Pendleton**, 10 a.m. to noon
City Hall Community Room, 501 SW Emigrant Ave.

Copies of the new rules for phase one can be downloaded from the Secretary of State's Web site, www.sos.state.or.us. The phase two rules should be available on the Web in August.

Questions regarding SB 587 may be directed to Long, 503-373-1227, or Louann Rahmig, BCD rules coordinator, 503-373-7438 or sent by e-mail to louann.p.rahmig@state.or.us.

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