



Clackamas
Multnomah
Washington
COUNTIES

A BCD field office, the Tri-County Service Center administers the minor label program and coordinates forms, processes, and application of code for building programs in Clackamas, Multnomah, & Washington counties.

Tri-County Service Center

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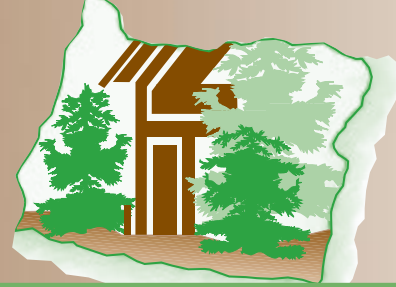
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Building Codes Division

Web site www.oregonbcd.org

News Site



A quarterly newsletter for homebuilders and contractors

November 2003-January 2004

Home Builders Assn. sponsors Nov. 12 forum

The Portland Metropolitan Home Builders Association is sponsoring a free forum on one- and two-family structural code issues, 4-7 p.m., Wednesday, November 12, at the Local 290 Meeting Hall, 20210 SW Teton Avenue, Tualatin.

Qualified participants can earn three hours of code-related continuing-education credit from BCD, three hours of master-builder continuing-education credit, three hours of home-inspector credit from CCB, or three hours of HSW credit.

The purpose of the forum is to discuss regional code applications and reach consensus on standards for the tri-county region. All area contractors, remodelers, architects, and building-department personnel are invited.

Agenda

- Code update
- New interpretations and news from the State Structures Board and Policy Committees
- Questions and answers

Sept. 3 code-forum questions and answers

Local building officials have agreed to use the code panel's determinations for inspection standards in the tri-county region. If you are working beyond the tri-county boundaries, please check with your jurisdiction for its standards.

Contractors and building-department personnel may submit questions to the code forum by sending e-mail to joanie.m.stevens-schwenger@state.or.us or faxing questions to the center, (503) 872-6735.

An answer-request form is available on the BCD Web site, www.oregonbcd.org. Click on "Tri-County" and then "Code Forum Program."

At the forum, Andrea Simmons, BCD's Policy and Technical Services manager, distributed a legislative summary and a copy of SB 906 that, among other things, calls for the establishment of a Low-Rise Residential Board. More information may be found on line at www.oregonbcd.org. Click on "BCD Legislative Summary" on the home page to learn about individual bills affecting the industry.

Q I build spec houses and was recently told by an inspector who's new to the jurisdiction that he won't final my house until I install the deck. The deck is not part of the project, it was not shown on the plans, and I specifically noted on the plans that the deck would be installed later by the homeowners. Currently there's an 18-inch drop outside the sliding glass door, and the inspector wants "permanent" steps to the ground before he'll approve the house for final. He said that because the deck is less than 30 inches above grade and doesn't require a

permit, he'll never know if the deck gets built or not. So he wants permanent steps meeting the requirements of Section R314. Can he do this?

A Yes, the inspector is obligated to require that the code be met for each project. In this case, steps at the door would meet code requirements for egress. The inspector cannot force the building of the deck. An option would be to require the owner/builder to provide some safety means of blocking egress at the door until the deck is built.

Q I'm remodeling my old house and want to put a new bathroom upstairs, but the local building/planning department tells me I can't because of the sloped ceilings. If the room is of adequate size to use the facilities, who cares if there's not exactly 7 feet at the front lip of the toilet? What is the requirement for headroom above a WC?

A Section R305.1 has a general requirement that habitable rooms, hallways, corridors, bathrooms, toilet rooms, laundry rooms, and basements must have a 7-ft. minimum ceiling height. This section also allows three exceptions to that general requirement. Exception 1 allows projections such as beams or girders to project a maximum of six inches below the required ceiling height. Exception 2 pertains to basements. Exception 3 allows ceilings to be sloped for no more than 50 percent of the required floor area. The ceiling-height requirement is not a fire-and-life-safety regulation, but is intended to provide a minimum standard to maintain a healthy interior

Continued...





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Mark your calendars
2004 one-and two-
family code forum
schedule:

- Jan. 21
- April 28
- Sept. 15
- Dec. 15

Forums are 4-7 p.m.
Wednesdays, in the
Board Room of the
Multnomah Building,
501 S.E. Hawthorne
St., Portland. ♦

environment for human comfort. Because each scenario is different, the local jurisdiction must be consulted on any alternative to the code.

Q Does the One- and Two-Family Specialty Code require separation between an attached garage and the crawlspace of a single-family residence? Section 309.2 requires separation from the residence and its attic area, yet fails to mention the crawlspace. This question resulted from a builder's request to take appliance combustion air from the crawlspace and introduce that air into the attached garage. Alternate ruling # 92-5B provides information on garage separations but fails to mention crawlspaces in the discussion or subsequent recommendations.

A The crawlspace should be considered part of the residence; therefore, penetrations are not allowed. Combustion air should be supplied through an external wall. In addition, Section 309.1.1 does not allow any duct openings into the garage.

Q Why do we need to call for separate foundation plate (mudsill) inspections in some jurisdictions and not in others? We are using a

single bottom plate and all of the bolts and plates are visible during the framing inspection.

A A separate mudsill inspection is not necessary if the mudsill (green plate) and bolts are visible at the time of framing inspection.

Q Would an attic access be required for a single-story attached or detached garage?

A Section R807.1 requires attic access in buildings with combustible ceiling or roof construction if the attics exceed 30 sq. ft., and have a vertical height of 30 inches or more. If the ceiling in an attached garage was drywalled and there was free access between the house and garage attics, additional access from the garage side would not be necessary. If the interior ceiling of a detached garage was drywalled and the area exceeded 30 sq. ft. and a height of 30 inches or more, an attic access meeting the requirements of Section R807.1 would be required. ♦

You can find a complete text of Sept. 3 Q and A at www.oregonbcd.org. Click on "Code Programs," then "Code Forums," then "Mechanical."

Code panel member recruitment

BCD's Tri-County Service Center is accepting applications for volunteers with code expertise to serve on the One- and Two-Family Structural Code Forum Panel. Openings include one spot for a homebuilder and one for a home remodeler. Applications are available on the Building Codes Division's Web site, www.oregonbcd.org. Click on "Tri-County Service Center," then "Code Forum

Program, Code Qs & As, Newsletters," then "Code Panel Application." Code forums are held quarterly. Applicants must have knowledge of the code and be solution-oriented. The Tri-County code-consistency committee reviews, approves, and makes all panel-member assignments. For more information, contact Joan Stevens-Schwenger, (503) 872-6731. ♦

440-2737 (11/03/COM)

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