



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**

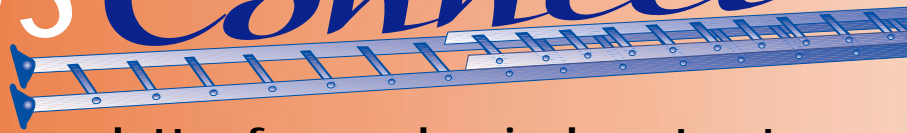
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# News *Connect*



A quarterly newsletter for mechanical contractors

January-March 2003

## Plumbing and Heating Contractors Association to sponsor Feb. 12 mechanical code forum

The Plumbing and Heating Contractors Association is sponsoring a free forum on mechanical-code issues, 4-7 p.m., Wednesday, February 12, at the Multnomah County Board Room, 501 SE Hawthorne, Portland.

AIA members can earn three hours HSW credit for attending, and qualified participants can earn three hours of code-related continuing-education credit from BCD.

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

**Agenda:**

- Presentation on residential oil tank installation guidelines for tri-county.
- Question-and-answer session. ♦

## Free training offered for contractors, officials

The service center offers free training to contractors and building-department personnel. Each class provides two hours of code-related credit that may be approved by the building official. Pre-registration is required.

For more information and an application, call Bob Brown (503) 872-6731.

- **Tankless Gas Water Heaters**, Troutdale City Hall, 104 SE Kibling Street, 7-9 a.m., March 11. Cost: Free. ♦

## Nov. 14 code forum questions and answers

Tri-County building officials have agreed to use the code panel's determinations for inspection standards. If you work in a jurisdiction outside of the tri-county region, please contact the local building official for inspection standards.

Contractors and building-department personnel may send questions for the code panel to Joanie.M.Stevens-Schwenger@state.or.us or fax them to the center, (503) 872-6735. An answer-request form is available on the BCD Web site, [www.oregonbcd.org](http://www.oregonbcd.org). Click on "Tri-County" and then "Code Forum Program."

**Q Can a sealed condensate pump be installed on a garage floor in all tri-county jurisdictions? I know you can use them in Washington and Clackamas counties.**

**A** This question is frequently asked at code forums. The following is an excerpt from the January-March 2002 *News Connect*:

"Condensate pumps, used as an appurtenance to an appliance that generates a glow, spark, or flame, that is capable of igniting gasoline vapors and is located in a garage, shall be installed with burners, burner-ignition devices, or heating

elements and switches at least 18 inches above floor level. Condensate pumps installed on the floor of the garage must be listed and labeled for installation in a Class I, Division 2 location, as specified in the NEC, Article 500. Listed equipment will be marked to show the class, group (division), and operating temperature or temperature range in which the equipment can be used. The identification numbers are marked on the equipment nameplate. A pump installed in a well is an alternate method that must be approved by the local administrative authority."

**Q Can joist bays be used as supply or return ducts or plenums in residential construction?**

**A** Yes. See current dwelling code (mechanical) Section 1901.1.1, item 6, effective 4/1/03, which states: "All heated, cooled, supply or return distribution air enclosures shall be ducted. Building framing cavities, closets, crawl spaces, and chases shall not be used as heated or cooled supply and return air enclosures. Ductwork may be housed or pass through these spaces. Exception: Building cavities used as return air ducts in existing buildings."

Continued ...



Clackamas  
Multnomah  
Washington  
COUNTIES

*News Connect*

2003 Mechanical  
Code Forums

- February 12
- May 14
- September 17
- December 3

For forum times and locations, go to [www.oregonbcd.org](http://www.oregonbcd.org). Click on "Tri-County" and then on "2003 Code Forum Schedule."

**Q** Can silicone sealant be used to seal the joints in a duct system?

**A** Yes, if listed for that use.

**Q** When replacing a gas appliance, must we worry about bonding the existing gas lines?

**A** This is an electrical-code question often asked by mechanical installers. The following issues were previously addressed by the electrical code panel and published in the October-December 2002 *News Flash*:

**Q** When extending gas pipe to non-electrical gas equipment (barbecue, insert), are you required to bond the existing gas pipe connected to an existing gas or electrical appliance?

**A** No, unless the alteration creates the potential to be energized.

**Q** Are you required to bond existing gas pipe when installing a like-for-like change-out?

**A** Yes.

**Q** A contractor is replacing an oil furnace with a gas furnace that has new gas piping, and the disconnect remains in place: Is an HVAC/R-licensed installer permitted to bond the gas pipe, even though it is a new gas-pipe installation?

**A** Yes. This is part of the installation.

**Q** Why are gas appliances like furnaces and water heaters required to be elevated 18 inches above the ground or garage floor, when other appliances such as washing machines, dryers, and freezers are allowed to sit on the garage floor?

**A** The code doesn't regulate portable appliances.

**Q** Under which code are HVAC zone controls regulated? To what standard are they required to be listed? Same question for thermostats.

**A** This is an electrical-code issue and will be taken to the electrical-code forum.

**Q** Could you please clarify the requirement for midpoint support on a vertical PVC vent for a 90-percent furnace?

**A** Section 1309 and Table 1309.4 in the *One- and Two-Family Dwelling Code* require PVC pipe to be supported with a maximum vertical spacing of 4 feet. The OMSC, Table 305.4, also requires a midpoint support on vertical 10-foot-long PVC. The mechanical code panel agrees that in a remodel, when wall covering is not removed and the PVC pipe is fished up through the wall cavity, a midpoint support is not necessary.

**Q** Are treated wood blocks supporting a natural-gas-piping system on a flat roof required to be anchored to the structure?

**A** This question was referred to a statewide code policy committee to develop a recommendation for the panel.

**Q** What are the proper installation standards for above-ground oil tanks?

**A** For standards and a diagram of the installation, see the BCD Web site. Go to [www.oregonbcd.org](http://www.oregonbcd.org), click on "Tri-County," then on "Code Forum Q and A," then on "Mechanical," and check the index for "Residential Oil Tank Installation Guidelines." ♦

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