



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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News Connect

A quarterly newsletter for mechanical contractors

July-September 2005

PMCA to sponsor Wednesday, June 15 forum

The Plumbing and Mechanical Contractors Association will sponsor a free forum on mechanical code issues, 4-7 p.m., Wednesday, June 15, at the Multnomah County Board Room, 501 S.E. Hawthorne, Portland.

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

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:

- Kitchen hoods
 - New requirements/ code application in commercial situations
- Heat pumps and air conditioners
 - Permit requirements
 - New code provisions
 - Minor label requirements
 - Installation and inspection requirements
 - Pictures of installations-good and bad installations
 - Code requirements
- Open forum for your questions

March 24 code forum Q & A

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 local building officials 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.

New Residential Code Started April 1

A 90-day phase-in began April 1, 2005, for implementing the 2005 Oregon Residential Specialty Code (ORSC). ORSC will include scoping provisions for one- and two-family dwellings, row houses, townhouses, and some types of apartment buildings.

A couple of new code changes pertaining to topics discussed at previous tri-county forums:

- Gas heaters listed as flammable vapor resistant and for installation without elevation are no longer required to be elevated 18 inches when installed in a garage.
- It is now permissible to install plastic fuel-gas piping on the owner's side of a meter, under exterior slabs such as driveways, sidewalks, or patio slabs, with-out sleeving the pipe.

Online permit ordering began May 25

Contractors can now apply and pay for multiple permits from multiple jurisdictions on one Internet site. Simple over-the-counter mechanical permits from the cities of Portland, Milwaukie, Hillsboro, and Beaverton and Clackamas and Washington counties can be found online at www.buildingpermits.oregon.gov.

Forum Q & A

Q Will there be a mechanical minor label program that could be used in simple change outs?

A Yes and no. Oregon allows local jurisdictions to develop commercial and industrial mechanical minor label programs under OAR 918-100-0020, but does not mandate them. Portland has such a program, but not all tri-county jurisdictions do. The 2003 legislature passed HB 714 — allowing the state to administer mechanical minor labels. A state goal is to draft and adopt rules this year.

Q Are p-traps required on condensate drains for residential split-system evaporator coils?

A The codes (ORSC or OMSC) have no requirement for p-traps in condensate lines. Condensate lines should be installed according to appliance manufacturer's installation instructions.

Q Are Rigid ProPress G fittings with HNBR yellow O-ring seals recognized for use for natural gas and copper LP gas piping systems? Is the exterior penetration to the meter or regulator required to be rigid iron pipe?

A The answer to the first question is no, these fittings are not identified in the code and have not been approved for gas piping installations. Sections R104.11 (in the ORSC) and 105.2 (in the Oregon Mechanical Specialty Code) allow building officials to approve alternate materials for use in their jurisdictions.

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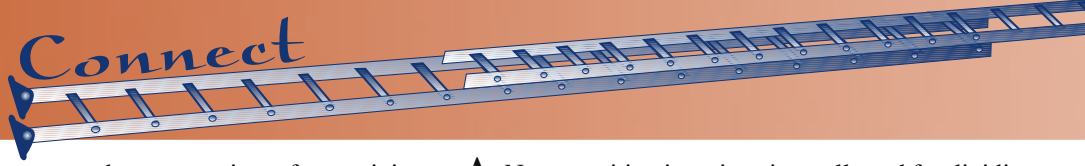


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BuildingPermits.Oregon.gov.

Participating jurisdictions include Portland, Hillsboro, Beaverton, Milwaukie, and Clackamas and Washington counties.



Question 2 concerns the penetration of gas piping at the exterior of the building for connection to the meter set. Neither the ORSC nor OMSC identify a specific material or method of installation for this location. The materials should be adequate to withstand the pressures and tension that may be placed on them from the serving utilities when setting the meter, to prevent damage to the piping system inside the building. NW Natural prefers that the exterior penetrations at the meter or regulator be made of rigid iron pipe, securely fastened and supported, to prevent rotation in the wall cavity. Although the code does not prohibit other materials, the code panel shares the gas company's concerns and encourages contractors to comply with its recommendation.

Q Are MP regulators included in the definition of appliances? ORSC, Section G2403, defines an appliance as any apparatus or equipment that utilizes gas as a fuel or raw material to produce light, heat, power, refrigeration, or air conditioning.

A No, MP regulators are not considered appliances.

Q Section G2419.4 requires that a listed shutoff valve be installed immediately ahead of each MP regulator. Section G2419.1.3 requires shutoff valves to be located so as to provide access for operation and be installed so as to be protected from damage. What access should be provided for MP regulators?

A Access is defined as "that which enables a device, appliance or equipment to be reached by ready access or by a means that first requires the removal or movement of a panel, door or similar obstruction." Section G2419.4, requires MP regulators to have the same access.

Q Section G2421.1.2, in the ORSC states: "connectors shall not be concealed within, or extended through, walls, floors, partitions, ceilings or appliance housings." Sometimes we find gas range connectors passing through cabinet walls. Are cabinet walls considered partitions?

A No, a partition is an interior wall used for dividing rooms from each other or separating different parts of a building.

Q When is a mechanical permit required for the repair or replacement of a gas or oil furnace not exceeding 20 amps or an electrical furnace or air conditioning unit or refrigeration unit?

Problem: An LHR contractor was under the impression that the only permit needed to do a push/pull on a like-for-like electric furnace was an electrical minor label. A local mechanical inspector informed him that a mechanical permit was also required. He has questioned the need for the mechanical permit and has asked for clarification of this issue.

A Electrical minor labels are for certain electrical work only and do not cover mechanical or plumbing. The installation of a furnace is a mechanical installation and requires a mechanical permit.

Q Does a return-air ceiling plenum require R-8 insulation at an exterior wall?

A Yes. This question applies only to structures classified as townhouse, row houses, and apartment complexes and structures regulated by the Oregon Structural Specialty Code and related provisions in the OMSC; using wall or ceiling cavities as plenums is not allowed in one- and two-family dwellings. If the cavity to be used as a plenum extends to the exterior walls of the building, energy-envelope provisions in Chapter 11 of the ORSC and Chapter 13 of the OSSC apply.

Q Does the exception found in Section G2420.5 pertaining to the location of shut-off valves for decorative appliances apply to room heaters also?

A Yes, the appliance must be listed to both standards. The appropriate standard for vented room heaters is ANSI Z21.11.1, and ANSI Z21.60 for Decorative Gas Appliances For Installation In A Vented Fireplace.

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