



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.

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A quarterly newsletter for mechanical contractors

November 2004-February 2005

PHCC to sponsor forum Tuesday, December 14

The Plumbing, Heating and Cooling Contractors Association will sponsor a free forum on mechanical code issues, 4-7 p.m., Tuesday, December 14, 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

- Q and A
- Code adoption update

September 23 code forum minutes and 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 Christie. L.Triplett@state.or.us or fax them to the center, (503) 872-6735.

New mechanical specialty code: Mike Ewert discussed the new mechanical code that goes into effect October 1. The 2004 Oregon Mechanical Specialty Code (OMSC) is based on the 2003 International Mechanical Code, and 2003 International Fuel Gas Code, and includes Oregon amendments. The 2004 OMSC covers commercial and certain residential mechanical installations. Projects started prior to October 1, 2004, will continue to be regulated under the applicable code to which the permit and plan review were issued.

New codebooks: The OMSC book is now available at all the usual outlets. See "Ordering Codebooks" on BCD's Web site, www.oregonbcd.org, for a list of bookstores carrying the new codebooks.

Classes: There will be several classes on the new OMSC, sponsored by Oregon Mechanical Official Association and Oregon Building Officials Association. Interested parties can contact Bill Cross at (503) 873-1157 for more information.

Panel recommends "poly pipe" change: Due to a technical advisory from ICC, BCD staff asked the forum to revisit the issue of running poly gas piping under exterior slabs. The code prohibits poly gas pipe from being installed "within or under

any building or slab ..." This panel previously recommended allowing installation of sleeved piping up to five feet in length under sidewalks only.

An Oregon code change was submitted to the next edition of the Oregon Residential Specialty Code that would allow poly pipe to be installed under all exterior slabs when sleeved. The ICC advisory stated that there was no reason to prohibit poly pipe from being installed under an exterior slab (patio, driveway, RV parking, etc.), sleeved or not. The advisory clarified that the main concern was poly pipe under a building slab. After some discussion the panel suggested modifying the code change to reflect the ICC's advisory.

Forum Q & A

Q In a recent plan review, the plans examiner noted that we had combined the restroom exhaust with the lunchroom exhaust and commented that they needed to be separate ducts according to the 2002 OMSC, Section 501.2 (the 2004 OMSC has deleted this section). I reviewed the International Mechanical Code Commentary book and it isn't clear. We have combined general and restroom exhaust for years. Please clarify.

A Because the current code doesn't address this issue, the manufacturer's installation instructions should be followed; in lieu of those, contact the manufacturer's technical staff for verification of a particular installation. The length and configuration of an exhaust fan duct can greatly change the output rating (CFM) and effectiveness of the fan. Therefore, when an installation is

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March 23

June 15

September 14

Multnomah County
Board Room
501 SE Hawthorne

questioned, performance testing may be necessary to verify that the minimum CFM is being exhausted in affected areas. As alternatives to performance testing, an engineered design or a multi-port exhaust fan designed for multiple inlet locations would be acceptable.

The connection to the lunchroom exhaust could be somewhat problematic, especially if the lunchroom exhaust fan is used as a means of occupancy ventilation, as required by Chapter 4 of the OMSC. The connection of the two systems should be methodically designed to ensure adequate ventilation of the lunchroom area and no back drafting from the bathroom. At the least, performance testing is necessary to verify the minimum CFM is achieved in affected areas.

Q Does a gas appliance that is connected to the electrical system by a cord and plug and utilizing an existing outlet have to be bonded?

A Yes, it must be bonded.

Q Most manufacturers state clearly in their installation instructions:

“WARNING: Do not use this furnace as a construction heater. Use of this furnace as construction heater exposes the furnace to abnormal conditions, contaminated combustion air and lack of air filters. Failure to follow this warning can lead to premature furnace failure and/or vent failure which could result in a fire hazard and/or bodily harm.” Are there jurisdictional parameters?

A No. This is not a code issue.

Q May an anodeless riser be lengthened on its vertical leg (to bring it above grade) with the addition of ferrous pipe in a sleeve sealed to the

riser or wrapping the ferrous pipe with a protective coating?

A Refer to Chapter 24, in the Dwelling Code. This particular scenario is not identified in the code; however, Section G2413.6.1 regulates the use of an anodeless riser and indicates the need to follow the installation instruction from the manufacturer. When there is any doubt about the proper method of installation, contact the manufacturer for verification. Although the panel found nothing in the code specifically prohibiting the extension of an anodeless riser, caution should be taken to ensure the manufacturer’s warranty is not voided and that other parts of the code are followed.

Q Regarding condensate pumps, is it possible to use the low-point drain in the foundation wall for an approved drain location for an A/C or a furnace drain?

A No.

Q In the OSSC, Chapter 13, Energy Conservation, effective 4/1/04, under what circumstances are economizers required on HVAC systems such as simple systems, complex systems, package systems, central systems, and split systems?

A Because energy provisions are found in the Oregon Structural Specialty Code, and no one at the forum had the appropriate codebooks, this question could not be answered. This subject may be best addressed at the structural code forum. Anyone wanting to see these provisions without buying the structural codebook can visit the Oregon Department of Energy’s Web site, http://www.energy.state.or.us/code/ccm/2003_Ch13-eff040104.pdf. Information on the site concerning economizers is on Pages 140.13-140.20. ♦

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