



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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A quarterly newsletter for electricians and electrical contractors

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Independent Electrical Contractors to sponsor December 9 code-change rule and law session

The Independent Electrical Contractors of Oregon is sponsoring a special free code-change session and forum on electrical code issues, 4-8:30 p.m., Thursday, December 9, in the Board Room of the Multnomah Building, 501 SE Hawthorne Street, Portland. The state's electrical code chief, John Powell, is the speaker.

Qualified participants may earn four hours of continuing-education credit (master builders), four hours

of CCB credit (home inspectors), or four hours of code-change continuing-education credits for electrical licensees from BCD.

The purpose of forums is to discuss code applications and reach consensus on acceptable installation and inspection standards for the tri-county region and for the state. All area electricians, contractors, remodelers, architects, and building-department personnel are invited. ▲

September 9 code forum questions and answers

The state's electrical code chief, John Powell, has approved the following answers for statewide application. Contractors and building-department personnel may submit questions to the code forum by sending e-mail to christie.l.triplett@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."

Q Are fuse holders with a break-away feature suitable for use as the disconnecting means in stand-alone light-pole installations?

A In single light-pole installations that have connections to the light-pole circuit in a location typically accessible only to qualified persons, the use of approved, certified fuse holders should be allowed. When using a fuse holder creates more of a hazard than using a service-rated-and-marked disconnecting means, that means should be used.

Q Are licensed limited-maintenance specialty contractors (LMS) allowed to replace a magnetic ballast with an electronic ballast without additional licensure when they are performing lighting retrofits? Can an LMS contractor work in signs?

A An LMS contractor can upgrade lighting fixtures by changing from magnetic to electronic ballasts. LMS contractors cannot relocate existing fixtures, add new lighting fixtures, or permanently change fixtures from incandescent to fluorescent. Maintenance is restricted to inside the fixture shell and limited to ballasts, lamp holders, and equipment that is part of the lighting fixture. An LMS contractor cannot perform maintenance or repair or replace ballasts or transformers in a sign.

Q Service change on existing homes: Do you need to ground within five feet of the water service?

A When an underground metal water pipe is visible for 10 feet, it is verifiable as an electrode, and must be bonded within five feet of where it enters the building. If the water pipe is not verifiable as an electrode, it must be bonded at any accessible location. A metal water pipe must be supplemented per NEC 250.53(D)(2). To see the Statewide Interpretation on the BCD Web site, go to www.oregonbcd.gov, then click on "Interpretations," and "Electrical."

Q Do you need to arc fault the bedroom circuits on this job?

A No. See the Statewide Interpretation, as above.

Q A room addition has a concrete-encased electrode ground and a new sub-panel. Do you use the concrete-encased electrode ground for the sub-panel?

A Yes. A concrete-encased electrode for the sub-panel is allowed as a supplemental electrode per NEC 250.54. The equipment-grounding conductor in the feeder is the main ground for that sub-panel.

Q My locksmith company wants to offer electronic access control to customers. As a licensed general contractor through CCB, can we hire other companies to do the wiring if we don't have an electrician with a low-voltage license on staff? If so, can we advertise the fact that we can do this type of work for our customers?

A In order to advertise that your company does electrical work, you must be a licensed electrical

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Clackamas
Multnomah
Washington
COUNTIES

News flash

Mark your calendars for the 2005 Electrical Code Forums

February 3

June 23 (Wednesday)

September 15

December 8

February 3, June 23, and September 15 are 4-hour code-change training sessions.

4-8 p.m.
Multnomah County Board Room
501 SE Hawthorne

contractor. Your company may, however, hire other (electrical) companies to do the electrical work.

Q Do the minor label rules allow you to reconnect an electric furnace, over 30 AMPs, with a minor label?

A Yes. See OAR 918-309-0220(2)(e)

Q If the serving utility de-energizes a service so a siding contractor can side behind a meter base and mast, is a city/county permit and inspection required before the utility can reconnect the service?

A ORS 479.540 requires either an inspection or letter of reconnect from a signing supervisor.

Q Can we extend an existing ungrounded circuit to feed an attic exhaust fan if we GFCI-protect it?

A Yes. Refer to NEC 250.130C.

Q Office/dens and bonus rooms with closets and egress window are considered bedrooms and require smoke alarms and arc fault protection. At what point are they not considered bedrooms? Example: an office/den has dedicated circuits for computers and fax and copy machines. A bonus room has a wet bar with dedicated circuits for refrigerator, wine cooler, disposal, dishwasher, and entertainment center.

A If the room is labeled as a den on the plan, the room may be wired for a den, not a bedroom.

Q Are we going to be allowed to use the new "smart boxes" with internal mounting screws at the front of the box? They are UL listed.

A The panel agreed that the boxes could be used because they are listed.

Q There was much discussion about the following, from the April code forum: When counting the total degree of bends in a conduit run that can be installed before a pull/junction device is required, should you take into account the flex and the 90-degree flex connector at the end of the run that goes to the motor (hot tub circuit)? Common sense dictates that the flex and connector will be removed if new wiring has to be installed.

A Refer to the Policy Committee for consideration of intent of Article 348.26 of the 2002 NEC. The panel asked the state code chief to reconsider.

Q Could a minor label be used when installing a new circuit for an AC unit and extending a circuit for the required servicing receptacle (per NEC 210.63)?

A No.

Q When a water service is changed to plastic piping, could a minor label be used to establish a new grounding electrode?

A The panel agreed that regulations call for an inspection of each grounding electrode. However, there were differing views on whether, in this case, one was establishing an electrode or replacing one. State Electrical Chief John Powell noted that a rule language change would be required to allow this.

Q Is a multi-family building such as a four-plex treated as a site allowing only one minor label? Can we use a minor label to work in all the apartments (with separate addresses)?

A A multi-family building is not treated as a site allowing only one minor label. Each address is a separate jobsite and a minor label can be used at each address. The rules allow one label per project per jobsite. ▲

440-2725 (12/04/COM)

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