

# TRI-COUNTY SERVICE CENTER



## 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 Line

A quarterly newsletter for commercial builders



December 2004-February 2005

## Associated General Contractors sponsor code forum December 1

A free forum on commercial structural code issues, sponsored by AGC, takes place Wednesday, December 1, 4-7 p.m., at the Multnomah Building, Board Room 100, 501 SE Hawthorne, in Portland.

Forum attendees discuss regional code applications and agree on acceptable standards for the tri-county region. The code panel provides code clarifications and determines common areas of code application. All code-interpretation questions are forwarded to statewide committees through the Building Codes Division. Tri-county-area building departments have committed to following the guidance of the code panels to advance consistent application of code in the region.

Architects and contractors working outside the tri-county region should consult with their local building departments.

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

Contractors and building department personnel may submit questions to the code forum by sending e-mail to [Christie.L.Triplett@state.or.us](mailto:Christie.L.Triplett@state.or.us) or faxing questions to the center, (503) 872-6735.

### Agenda

- Portland's new historic-preservation code
- Newest energy code requirements
- State structures board update
- OSSC update
- High-piled combustible storage
- Open forum

## September 22 forum questions and answers

**Q** When there are several properties under the same ownership, how do you treat property lines?

**A** Contact your local jurisdiction. The answer depends on which jurisdiction you're in and must be judged on a case-by-case basis. Suggestions from the panel included the use of a covenant (not to sell separately) or a lot line adjustment.

### Requirements for bedrooms and dens in high-rise construction.

The floor plans for dwelling units each have an interior room labeled "den." In one unit, the den has a clothes closet. The den in the other unit does not have a closet. Assuming these units are not in a building complying with the requirements of Chapter 4 for a high-rise building, please respond to the following questions:

**Q** Is the den with the clothes closet considered a sleeping room for purposes of applying emergency egress requirements? Is the den that does not have a closet considered a sleeping room for purposes of applying emergency egress requirements?

**A** The applicant is required to label the rooms accurately. If the room has a closet and is labeled "den," building departments should accept the designation and make no assumption that it will be used other than how it is labeled. For example, many living rooms have closets but are not treated as sleeping rooms.

**Q** For purposes of applying the requirements for natural light, will the opening between the den and the entry hallway meet the requirements of Section 1204.1 so the den can be considered a portion of the living/dining area and can borrow natural light from the living/dining area?

**A** Yes, if it meets the qualifications of the opening described in Section 1205.2.1. of the 2004 OSSC.

**Q** Assuming the den is not provided with mechanical ventilation, will the opening between the den and the entry hallway meet the requirements of Section 1204.1 so the den can be considered a portion of the living/dining area and can borrow natural ventilation from the living/dining area?

**A** Yes, if the opening meets the minimum-opening requirements of Section 1203.4.1.1 of the 2004 OSSC.

Continued ...



Clackamas  
Multnomah  
Washington  
COUNTIES

**News *Line***

Mark your  
calendars with the  
2005 Code Forum  
schedule:

March 9  
June 8  
September 7  
December 7

Wednesdays  
Multnomah County  
Board Room,  
501 SE Hawthorne

Entire text of code  
forum Qs and As can be  
found on BCDs Web site:  
[www.oregonbcd.org](http://www.oregonbcd.org)

**Q** Are special fasteners (e.g., stainless or galvanized steel) required when pressure-treated lumber is used in locations subject to moisture?

**Code reference: Section 1108.4.5:** Where food or drink is served for consumption by customers, at counter exceeding 34 inches high, a portion of the main counter, a minimum of 60 inches long shall be provided in compliance with Section 1109.18.

**A** The panel tabled this question pending further research.

**Q** Are there situations in which an accessible table adjacent to a bar counter can be provided instead of a 60-inch-long portion of the bar counter lowered to 34 inches?

**A** Bar counters in restaurants and lounges are usually 36 to 44 inches high for patrons on bar stools. Ice and drink dispensers, coolers, sinks, and other equipment are typically built into the barkeeper's side of the counter. It is common for small restaurants to propose a 6-foot-long to 8-foot long bar.

Section 1108.4.5 eliminates raised bar counters five feet long or less. Bar counters less than 10 feet long are impractical because the remaining raised portion is less than five feet long. This results in the restaurant not having a raised bar, which seems overly restrictive.

Note that The Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines (ADAAG) Section 5.2 allows bar service to be provided at accessible tables within the same area as the raised counter.

**A** Section 1101.6 references ORS 447.250 and allows waivers or modifications if the code section is more restrictive than ADA guidelines or the Fair Housing Act. If the new ADAAG guidelines allow this

alternative, the applicant may be able to appeal to the state. It could also be approved at the local level as an alternate method, but jurisdictions may be hesitant to make this approval without guidance from the state.

It seems that if a table is assigned for use as an "accessible table" and is made available for use when needed, it could fulfill the requirement. However, if the table was in use when needed, patrons would have to be relocated to make room for the physically challenged user.

**Q** Will the text in 302.2.1, which states that assembly spaces accessory to Group E are not required to be considered separate occupancies, be interpreted in Tri-County to mean that there is no occupancy separation required? Table 302.3.2 indicates two-hour separation is required, which seems to conflict with 302.2.1. The spaces we are curious about typically include gymnasiums, school cafeterias, and possibly school libraries.

**A** The code section refers to assembly occupancies accessory to Group E, which means they are not required to be separate. If there was an A occupancy adjacent to the E but under separate control, they would need the appropriate occupancy separation.

**Q** Paragraph 303.1 states that assembly spaces accessory to Group E in accordance with 302.2 are not considered assembly occupancies. Will that be the case for K-12 public school buildings in tri-counties? If yes, are these uses classified as E for the purposes of determining occupant load, egress width, etc.?

**A** Section 302.3.1 states that for non-separated uses, all other code requirements shall apply to each portion of the building based on the use of that space. The exiting requirements for the assembly portions of the building need to meet the requirements based on that use.

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