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News *Splash*

A quarterly newsletter for plumbers and plumbing contractors

Fall 2006

Plumbing-Heating-Cooling Contractors Association to sponsor Sept. 7 code forum

The Oregon State Association of Plumbing-Heating-Cooling Contractors is sponsoring a free forum on plumbing code issues from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m., Thursday, Sept. 7 at the Sunnybrook Clackamas County Auditorium, 9101 S.E. Sunnybrook Blvd., Clackamas.

Continuing education credit — Qualified participants may receive three hours of code-related credit from the Building Codes Division, three hours of master builder credit, or three hours of home-inspector continuing education credit from the Construction Contractors Board (CCB).

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

Agenda

BCD update — new interpretations, rules, and work of the State Plumbing Board

High rises/commercial waste and venting

- Sudsing
- Combination waste & venting systems
- Yolk vents
- Indirect waste piping requirements

Oregon City joins BuildingPermits.Oregon.gov

Oregon City recently joined six tri-county jurisdictions in offering online permitting to area contractors for over-the-counter plumbing, mechanical, and electrical permits. BCD hosts the e-permitting Web site, which also allows contractors to apply and pay for permits in Portland, Hillsboro, Beaverton, and Milwaukie and Clackamas and Washington counties. The Web site, BuildingPermits.Oregon.gov, has a



convenient address locator that directs contractors to the correct jurisdiction and allows them to enter credit card information only once to buy multiple permits from multiple jurisdictions.

Bill streamlines licensing rules

During the 2005 legislative session, the Building Codes Division proposed House Bill 2181 to provide the division, the Electrical and Elevator Board, the Board of Boiler Rules, and the State Plumbing Board the ability to create consistent administrative and procedural requirements for most of the licenses issued by BCD. Each trade had its own procedures and practices, culminating in a host of confusing and sometimes contradictory rules and processes. The bill gave the division a chance to work with boards across all trade programs to create consistent, cohesive, and transparent licensing processes and procedures.

The new rules, which took effect July 1, create standard application, renewal, and continuing education requirements for electrical, elevator, boiler, and plumbing licenses, without changing the scopes of the licenses. Here are some of the changes that will affect plumbing licensees:

License application

- Application and testing fees are due with the application and any reapplication.

Experience verification

- A license from a reciprocating state in which the applicant has tested can be used for verification.
- Previously licensed individuals are not required to requalify unless the license qualifications have significantly changed since the license was issued.
- Applicants submitting equivalent experience must provide verification from a current or previous employer.
 - o If an employer is not available, an individual who supervised the work may verify experience.
 - o If neither an employer nor supervisor is available, a co-worker who was directly involved may verify experience.
- Experience verification forms are no longer required to be notarized.

Renewal

- All electrical, plumbing, elevator, and boiler licenses are transitioning to a three-year renewal cycle.
- New renewal cycles begin Oct. 1, 2006.

Continued...



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News Splash

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Web site:
bcd.Oregon.gov

- **All journeyman plumbing licenses that renew on July 1, 2007 will renew for a four-year period.** This is a one-time exception that will synchronize all journeyman plumber licensees to the same three-year renewal cycle. Formerly, one-half of journeyman plumber licensees renewed every even-numbered year, the other half, every odd-numbered year.

Examination

- Plumbing exams will now be open book, with either 64 or 52 questions; passing score is 75 percent correct or better.

Retesting

- Applicants who fail an exam may reapply by reapplying and paying the application and exam fees.
- All applicants must wait 30 days after each failure before retaking an exam.
- BCD will send a strength/weakness report to all license applicants who fail an exam.
- In-person exam review is eliminated.

Continuing education

- During each three-year license cycle, journeyman plumbers must accrue 24 hours of continuing education credit, and solar heating and cooling system installers must accrue eight hours credit.
- Continuing education requirements will be prorated for individuals who obtain licenses during the three-year license cycle.

License expiration and renewal

- Licensees who fail to renew may obtain a valid license within one year of the license expiration date if the licensee reapplies, pays the application fee, and completes all outstanding continuing education requirements.
- The period for complying with continuing education or license renewal requirements may be extended for hardship or illness or when the licensee is ordered to military duty for 60 days or more.

Printing error corrected

The Oregon Plumbing Specialty Code 2005 Edition and the Oregon Residential Specialty Code 2005 Edition contain a printing error in Sections 511.0 OPSC and P2811.0 ORSC. The sections should read as follows:

Access and Working Space

Every water heater installation shall be accessible for inspection, maintenance, repair, removal or replacement without removing permanent construction. The appliance space shall be provided with an opening or doorway of sufficient size to permit removal of the water heater. In no case shall such opening or doorway be less than twenty-four (24) inches (610 mm) in width. Such access shall be continuous and shall be one or any combination of the following means:

When a water heater is installed in an area, the location of which creates an obstruction to the required access, it shall become the responsibility of the owner or the owner's authorized agent to provide a suitable means of access to such water heater.

Water heaters in an attic shall be accessible by an opening and passageway not less than twenty-four (24) inches (610 mm) square. When the heater is not located immediately adjacent to the ceiling opening:

(1) The passageway to the heater location shall be not less than four (4) feet (1.2 m) in height and shall have continuous flooring not less than twenty-four (24) inches (610 mm) in width.

(2) An unobstructed solidly floored work space not less than thirty (30) inches (762 mm) in depth and thirty-six (36) inches (914.4 mm) in width shall be provided immediately in front of the controls of the heater. A door opening into such space shall not be considered as an obstruction.

Attic and underfloor water heater locations shall be provided with an electric outlet and lighting fixture at or near the water heater. The lighting fixture shall be controlled by a switch located adjacent to the opening or trap door.

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