



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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News *Splash*

A quarterly newsletter for plumbers and plumbing contractors

Winter 2005

PMCA to sponsor December 1 code forum

The Plumbing and Mechanical Contractors Association is sponsoring a free forum on plumbing code issues, 4-7 p.m., Thursday, Dec. 1, at the Sunnybrook Clackamas County Auditorium, 9101 S.E. Sunnybrook Boulevard, Clackamas.

Qualified participants may receive three hours of code-related credit from BCD; three hours of master builder credit, or three hours of home-inspector credit for continuing education from 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

- Interpretation update
- Stormwater systems
- Rainwater harvesting systems
- Minor labels
- Codebook raffle
- Open forum ●

Participate in the codebook raffle

Win a codebook! Submit a question for the Dec. 1 code forum for a chance to win a free plumbing codebook donated by IAPMO. Questions must be submitted by Wednesday, Nov. 30 to qualify for the raffle drawing. Please e-mail your questions directly to Joanie.M.Stevens-Schwenger@state.

or.us or fax them to the center, (503) 872-6735. Questions already addressed by the forum and posted at bcd.oregon.gov or already addressed through BCD interpretation will not be eligible for the codebook raffle. ●

Q&A from September 7 code forum

Q Sec. 609.10.2 on water hammer arrestors says that mechanical devices should be accessible and installed per the manufacturer's installation specifications. If the manufacturer's installation specification says that no access panel is required, is an access panel still required when the water arrestor is installed inside of a wall?

A Yes. Such devices must be accessible.

Q If a hub drain is installed in a building (primed and vented to code), does it require a grate equal to the code for a floor drain?

A No.

Q If an inspector conducts an inspection, must all of the violations be listed on the first trip or can new violations be added with each subsequent failure and reinspection?

A The forum discussed multiple reasons why new violations could be found in subsequent inspections. Sometimes the repair is faulty, and sometimes another inspector finds new violations. In any case, local jurisdiction personnel suggested that if a contractor feels that the violations are not in order or that he or she has been singled out for

negative treatment, the contractor should report the problems to the senior inspector or the local building official.

Q In the plumbing code, Sec. 316.1.1 says that threaded plastic pipe shall be Schedule-80 wall thickness. Does this mean that a PVC water service run in Schedule 40 must use Schedule-80 male adapters?

A No.

Q When installing a double check valve at the meter, what depth should it be buried at, 24 inches below the ground for the frost line or 12 inches below ground so it can be serviced?

A Most jurisdictions in the tri-county region require 24-inch depth. However, tri-county jurisdictions, with prior approval, will accept an insulated box, installed per manufacturer's installation instructions.

Q This question refers to the June 2 forum discussion about requiring two straps for hot water heaters. Some of the four-, six-, or eight-gallon point-of-use tank-type hot water heaters really don't have much room to wrap them with

Continued...



Clackamas
Multnomah
Washington
COUNTIES

News Splash

Over-the-counter plumbing permits for Portland, Beaverton, Washington and Clackamas Counties, Hillsboro, and Milwaukie are available online at BuildingPermits.Oregon.gov.

440-2727 (11/05/COM)

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PT. Some of these tanks are wall-mounted. How can we reconcile the requirement for two straps versus small tank size?

A All new installations of water heaters installed (not replacements) in buildings covered by the 2005 Oregon Residential Specialty Code are required to be strapped in all counties in the state except these: Wasco, Jefferson, Deschutes, Crook, Sherman, Wheeler, Gilliam, Morrow, Grant, Harney, Umatilla, Union, Baker, Malheur, and Wallowa.

All water heaters that are required to be strapped must have at least two straps – one within the upper 1/3 and one within the lower 1/3 of the water heater's vertical dimensions. Plumber's tape or equivalent strapping materials are acceptable. Connectors must have washers to assure the connector does not pull through the strapping. The following connectors are acceptable: #12 wood screw with 1 1/2-inch penetration at each end, 1/2-inch diameter concrete anchor of 1.5-inch minimum length.

While two straps on a small tank seem like overkill, both straps are nevertheless required.

Q What happens when you have steel studs?

A FEMA suggests that plumbers fix plywood or a 2-by-4 across the studs and attach the straps to it.

Q Could, or should, the Oregon Code be amended to require that ground-floor bathtub access holes be sealed against rodent invasion?

Discussion: The 8 x 12-inch plumber's access hole under the drain of a bathtub installed on the ground floor frequently are havens for rodents and insects (the area is warm and damp). Rodent nests smell, and rodents can carry dangerous viruses and could potentially endanger the life or health of plumbers or homeowners remodeling the bathtubs. Insects can worm their way into inner walls. What I'm envisioning is using a piece of 1/8-inch metal screening material, a plastic zip tie around the drain pipe, and a few roofing nails to secure the plumber's access hole under tubs on ground floor installations.

A The model 2006 potential UPC will require rodent-proofing. The current code, Sec. 313.3 requires it for ground floor bathtub with crawl space. The panel notes that one can use wire mesh or a sealed box.

Q Is it always required to have the shut-off valve on the right (as you face it) side of a water heater?

A The shut off valve should be on the cold side, not necessarily on the right side.

Q What happens to jobs that are uncompleted when a contractor's license is revoked?

A The permits are void and the contractor can no longer do business in the state. Another contractor can take over the permits and must work with the jurisdiction to do so.

Q Who can install a building water supply?

A A plumber, or a property owner for his own residence.

Q Who can install a residential irrigation system?

A Only a licensed landscape contractor with an irrigation plus backflow license may install an irrigation system. A plumber can install the double-check system but not the irrigation system. A plumbing license covers installation of the backflow-prevention device.

Q There is still some confusion about whether or not water heaters need stands. Which ones do and which don't?

A Listed flammable-vapor ignition-resistant (FVIR) gas waterheaters do not need to be raised. All electric waterheaters in garages need to be raised.

Q I installed underground piping to six hose bibbs at an equestrian facility. If I pipe up from the slab to the hose bibbs, do I need a backflow-prevention device? Is any protection required?

A An atmospheric vacuum breaker is required on hose bibbs.

Q When inspecting a steam boiler, where would I find the equalizer pipe? How would I be able to identify it? I know that the purpose of an equalizer pipe in a steam boiler is to help to equalize the steam pressure on the supply and return sides of the boiler.

A This is a boiler code question. The forum will refer this to Mike Graham, chief boiler inspector, for an answer.

Q In the 2000 OSPSC and the 2000 IRC, under Definitions and under Building Storm Drain item 2, Exterior Building Storm Drain, the code provided measurement for the minimum and maximum heights for rain drain riser. The two new codebooks deleted that section, and I have searched both codebooks to see if it was relocated elsewhere but I could not find anything. So what are contractors and inspectors to use as guidelines for heights of rain drains?

A Section 1101.1. Specific storm drainage systems are not required under the plumbing code. If a riser is put in place, it should properly serve its purpose. Local jurisdictions have generally adopted standards; if not, they could do so by ordinance. The panel agrees that this is actually a workmanship issue and no specific height of a riser is addressed in the code.

Q The 2000 OSPSC Chapter 11 Section 1106.0 talks about foundation and subsoil drains and backwater valves if subject to backflow. Section 1106.1 talks about tracer wire. Neither of these is in the 2005 OSPSC or in the 2005 ORSC. Are there new guidelines?

A Tracer wire is required only for the sanitary sewer and the storm sewer. The crawl space drain is not required by the plumbing code; it is under the structural code provisions. ●