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ENGINEERING NEWSLETTER



NC Department of Insurance

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Web Interpretations Posted Since Last Newsletter

The following interpretations have been posted since the last Engineering Newsletter edition. You can find interpretations on the Engineering Website located at

http://www.ncdoi.com/OSFM/Engineering/CodeServices/engineering_codeservices_interpretations_search3.asp

- FYI: Section Numbers preceded by "R" indicate that they are from the Residential Code, not the Rehabilitation Code. For those, select "2009 Residential" from the drop down menu.

Building Code:	Section 1015.2.1	Measuring Remote Exits From Office Suites
Rehab Code:	Section 1.08	Windborne Debris Protection
Rehab Code:	Section 1.02	Applicability of Special Inspections

Heads Up!

This series of articles is intended to address some of the more common issues that the Engineering Division has responded to since the last newsletter.

Requirements for Clothes Dryer Exhaust Duct Materials

NCMC Section 504.6

Clothes dryer exhaust ducts must comply with the following:

- Must be metal.
- Must have a smooth interior surface.
- Minimum nominal size of 4" diameter (must be round).
- May not exceed 45' from the dryer to the terminal unless otherwise instructed by the duct manufacturer specifically for the dryer it will serve.
- Transition ducts between the appliance and the exhaust duct:
 - Must be a single length not exceeding 8'.
 - Must be listed and labeled for the application.
 - Cannot be concealed within the building construction.
 - Must remain entirely within the room where the appliance is installed.

Inactive Permit Extension Act

NC Session Law 2010-177

This Session Law extended Session Law 2009-406 (SB 831) to allow inactive permits issued between 1/1/2008 and 12/31/2011 for an additional 12 months for permits that had no work started and 6 months for permits that had work started.

Click to view [Session Law 2010-177](#)

2011 Legislation of Interest to Code Officials

The following bills and Session Laws were ratified in the 2011 legislative session and may be of interest to code officials. Links are provided to the actual bill for reference.

- [HB648](#): Affidavits for Permits for Unlicensed Owner/Contractor
- [SB683](#): Minimum Housing Inspections
- [HB119](#): Definition of Gray Water
- [SB708](#): Energy Code and Residential Code Offsets
- [HB329](#): Farm Building with Spectator Event Code and Inspections
- [HB168](#): Description of a Farm
- [SL389](#): Pilot Program to House Disabled Inmates in Adult care Homes (HB 678)
- [SL104](#): Respite Care Adult Care Facilities (SB 512)

Effective Dates for the 2012 Codes and 2011 NC Electrical Code Current Status

<u>NC Code</u>	<u>Effective Date</u>	<u>Mandatory Effective Date**</u>
2011 Electrical	Delayed for 2012 Legislative Review	
2012 Building	9/1/2011	3/1/2012
2012 Fire	9/1/2011	3/1/2012
2012 Fuel Gas	9/1/2011	3/1/2012
2012 Mechanical	9/1/2011	3/1/2012
2012 Plumbing	9/1/2011	3/1/2012
2012 Administration	No Technical Changes	
2012 Energy Conservation	1/1/2012	3/1/2012
2012 Residential	1/1/2012	3/1/2012
2012 Rehab	TBD	TBD

** For Code Enforcement Official Certification testing purposes, exams will transition to the 2012 NC State Building Codes and 2011 National Electrical Code on the mandatory effective date for each trade.

2012 NC Energy Conservation Code Update

The NC Legislature recently took action approving [Senate Bill 708](#) that was subsequently signed in to law by Governor Beverly Purdue in late June approving the effective date of the 2012 NC Energy Conservation Code (NCECC) and the 2012 NC Residential Code as January 1, 2012 with a mandatory compliance date of March 1, 2012.

Accordingly, the ongoing energy code training classes for inspectors that are being provided by the Building & Fire Code Academy (BFCA), who are under contract to the Department of Commerce, are being interrupted to allow the updating of the training materials to reflect the requirements of the 2012 NCECC. Following approval of the new materials, the BFCA training classes will begin again and will be based on the 2012 NCECC requirements. The BFCA web site can be monitored for class offerings and registration at: <http://www.bfcacademy.com/catalog/index.php?cPath=145>

The ongoing project for the Code Officials Qualification Board to incorporate the NCECC into the education program's standard classes and testing is also being updated to reflect the 2012 NCECC requirements. Training will include the 2012 NCECC provisions beginning January 1, 2012. Testing will include the 2012 NCECC requirements beginning March 1, 2012.

Lessons Learned:

This series of articles is intended to address complaints concerning code compliance that have been made to the Qualifications Board Staff against inspectors. These same complaints are often also attributed to the fault of designers or contractors. Although resulting from actual investigations, the articles will not include names or locations.

Take One Last Look

Complaints against inspectors are filed for a variety of reasons. Most reasons have nothing to do with actually getting problems fixed. Often, the complainant has already contacted the General Contractor's Licensing Board and filed a complaint against the contractor. Sometimes all of the issues have been resolved but the complainant wants to make sure no one else goes through the same "construction nightmares due to faulty inspections".

An inspection department may even have already spent a good deal of time trying to help the owner to no avail. Unfortunately, too often, the complainant wants to sue the contractor or the jurisdiction and believes that a report from the Q Board against an inspector will help in the law suit. No matter what the reason, when a complaint is filed, the Q Board is required by law to investigate.

What is most often complained about? The answer is simple; everything that can still be seen *after* final inspection. Wall framing, most plumbing and electrical components are covered up. If the home is built on a slab, there is even less to see. What's left is what the homeowner can see as well as what the Home Inspector can see. That's right; the Home Inspector is almost always the first place the owner goes to document all the problems with the home. Based on a change to the General Statutes during the 2009-2010 Session, they can now legally quote appropriate code sections and editions in their reports.

So, what can an inspector do to stay out of the middle of a complaint? Simple. After the usual inspections of the structure throughout construction, but before signing off the final or C.O., *turn around and take one last look for the obvious*. Remember that the owner has the lifetime of the house to discover mistakes made during construction.

Common violations seen over and over during investigations can be identified from the curb before even getting out of the car such as:

1. No site address.
2. No handrails on steps...and if there are rails that look temporary, they probably are, so take a picture to show that it was there at inspection.
3. No guard on porches, decks, etc. over 30 inches... again if it looks temporary, it probably is, so take a picture.
4. Step risers not uniform.
5. Grade is not sloped away from house.
6. Door opens out and there is no landing.
7. Brick veneer – no weep holes.
8. Spaces around penetrations not sealed.
9. No caulking around windows and doors.
10. Not enough foundation vents.

None of these are particularly technical or difficult, yet often missed by all except owners, Home Inspectors and Complaint Investigators. Ten common violations and we have not even looked in or under the house yet. So before you sign your name..... **take one last look**.

New AccessUpdate Newsletter Posted

The Engineering Division produces a newsletter that focuses on Accessibility code requirements and other relevant code information. The latest edition of the AccessUpdate newsletter, [Volume 2 Issue 3](#), is available now. To subscribe, go to:

www.ncdoi.com/OSFM/Engineering/CodeServices/engineering_codeservices_interpretations_accessibility.asp

Previous AccessUpdate newsletters can be found on the same webpage to bring you up to date with the earlier editions. If there are any topics you would like to see addressed in the newsletter, please send an email to Laurel.Wright@ncdoi.gov

Upcoming Building Code Council Meetings

The next scheduled Building Code Council meetings will be held on August 22 and 23. Times and locations are as follows:

8/22/2011 NC Building Code Council Meeting –
9:00AM Council Meeting - Appeal Hearing to Follow Immediately
NC Department of Insurance, 322 Chapanoke Road, Raleigh, NC 27603 - Classroom Downstairs

8/23/2011 NC Building Code Council Meeting –
9:00AM – Appeal Hearing to continue if necessary
NC Department of Insurance, 322 Chapanoke Road, Raleigh, NC 27603 - Classroom Downstairs

Upcoming Code Officials Qualification Board Meetings

The next regularly scheduled Board meeting will be held at the OSFM office on July 26th at 1:00pm in the classroom. The agenda is posted at

http://www.ncdoi.com/OSFM/Engineering/COQB/engineering_coqb_agendas.asp

Reminder: Email Address Request

The staff of the NC Code Official Qualification Board is requesting your email address. We are currently updating our database and will have the opportunity to send communications regarding certification and renewals via email. Besides being quicker, this will enable us to communicate more frequently. We are pleased and excited to offer this additional customer service and are hopeful that you will find it useful.

Please take a moment to visit our website at http://www.ncdoi.com/OSFM/Engineering/COQB/engineering_coqb_home.asp (Q-Board Homepage) and click on the green box in the upper right corner. You will be taken to a screen where you can enter a certificate number and your most useful email address. You only need to do this once, even if you have multiple certificates.