

Wood County Building Inspection

Contractor's Corner

Winter 2008

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Message From The Chief

2009 is around the corner and we can only hope that it will be a better year for every one involved in the building industry. Permits are at an all time low which means revenue is down for the department approximately 21 percent from last year. On a positive note, when times are slow it provides the opportunity to review operating procedures of the department and make necessary changes to improve our customer service. As I mentioned in my first news letter from April of this year, customer service is my number one priority and I am always looking for areas of improvement. So here are some items proposed for 2009; we have new building permit software being implemented and scheduled to be live January 2, 2009. What does this mean for residents and contractors; online permitting, electronic plan submittals, inspection results emailed directly to contractors, web access to review status of projects and that's just to name a few. Wood County is currently working on accepting credit cards, we have a target date of March 1, 2009, this will also limit the trips to our office enabling us to accept payment for permits and issuing permits with a phone call or via the web. Speaking of using the phone, Wood County has installed a new digital phone system throughout all departments which we are just getting used to. Our office phone number has remained the same but our fax number has been changed to 419-373-6786. We will have an answering system for after hours only with a directory enabling residents/contractors the ability to leave a message with any staff member of the department after business hours. The office hours for the department are 8:00 am to 4:00 pm, except for holidays and weekends. We will consider summer hours again in April of next year. Inspections should be called in before 3:30 pm in order to be scheduled for the next day.

CHANGES TO THE ADMINISTRATIVE CODE EFFECTIVE JANUARY 2009

We have made a few changes to our administrative code. First, we have added some new fees to our fee schedule, noting that we did not increase any residential fees but we have adjusted the commercial fees. One of the new fees for residential/commercial is a re-inspection fee. Re-inspection fees will be assessed on an individual basis. When the inspector arrives on the job site and is unable to perform the inspection because; approved plans are not at the site, unable to access the building/property, not ready for the inspection; a re-inspection fee will be assessed. If the inspector has returned to the job site more than two times for the same corrections, a re-inspection fee will also be assessed. The fees are \$30 first offense, \$60 second offense, and \$90 for the third offense. Inspections for a project will not be scheduled until the re-inspection fee has been received and processed by the department. The purpose of re-inspection fees is to regulate the number of inspections, (trips to the site) and for the contractor/resident to be ready for their inspection at the time of scheduling. We have experienced numerous trips to job sites where we were unable to complete and or perform the inspection.

The second major change is the registration of contractors. Electrical, plumbing, heating, refrigeration and hydronic trades for commercial/residential will require a current State of Ohio Contractors License to register with and do work in Wood County. This is a big change for some contractors but, State law (Senate Bill 424) requires these 5 trades to be licensed to perform work within Ohio. This is an effort to insure the citizens of Wood County will have qualified contractors who take mandatory continuing education and carry the proper credentials. The registration fee is now \$50 for a new registration per each trade. The renewal fees have remained the same (\$25) except each trade will be \$25 per registration. So if you currently have a

plumbing and heating registration it will be \$50 for your annual renewal and if you have all five licenses it will be \$125 per year. This also applies to contractors performing commercial work in Hancock and Henry Counties. Property owners for a single family dwelling can still perform their own work as long as they are doing the work themselves. The last major change is adopting standards for residential accessory post frame buildings. Since post frame construction is not addressed in the 2006 Ohio Residential Building Code we have decided to adopt a standard engineering design for the construction of these buildings. The standards provide a maximum width, height, post/purlin size/spacing, and minimum footing sizes. Once a building exceeds these parameters, engineering will be required. The Administrative Code will be posted on our website January 2, 2009 for review.

CODE NEWS

The 2008 National Electrical Code has been approved by the Board of Building Standards for adoption but with all the opposition and testimony from the Home Builders, the final approval is up to JCARR (Joint Committee on Agency Rule Review) and that meeting is scheduled for Monday, December 8. If JCARR approves without any changes, the NEC 2008 should be effective January 1, 2009. I will keep you posted. The 2006 Energy Code will be effective January 1, 2009 for residential construction. As some may remember, these codes were effective this last January, except the Governor of Ohio repelled the legislation do to the fact of additional cost for construction and it was postponed pending hearings with the Board of Building Standards. The BBS Board recently met in November and approved the adoption of these codes for 2009. Just to highlight the changes, safety receptacles will be required throughout a dwelling along with arc-fault protection for majority of circuits and the prescriptive energy package requires R-19 for side walls, R-38 for attics, R-10 for basements/crawl space walls, R-30 for floors, and heating/cooling ductwork in un-conditioned spaces are required to be R-8.

CODE PROBLEMS IN THE FIELD

Just to note a few problems we are experiencing in the field. Location of smoke detectors for residential; code requires a smoke detector on every floor, one in every bedroom, and one in the vicinity of the bedroom. If the bedroom has vaulted or tray ceilings, the detector needs to be located at the highest point of that room area and all devices need to be on the arc-fault breaker and interconnected. Locations are verified by the electrical inspector during the rough electrical inspection. On the plumbing side, lavatory/sink faucets are required to have a NSF61 (National Sanitation Foundation) approval rating. We have had problems with some non-brand name fixtures made in China; they do not have the NSF61 rating required by the 2007 Ohio Plumbing Code. These are a few items we have experienced in the last few months. Please contact our office if there are any other concerns relating to inspections or code issues.

It's that time of year again, contractor registration renewal. Please fill out the all the information on the new form and update with any changes. Your email address is very important if you want to receive automatic updates on your permits/inspections. This information is very critical for our new permit software. Thank you for your support as your Building Official and I am looking forward to 2009. If you have not had the opportunity to introduce yourself to me, please call me anytime.

General phone number: 419-354-9190.
Fax number: 419-373-6786
Location: One Courthouse Square, Third floor
Bowling Green, Ohio 43402.



Website: <http://wcbinspect.co.wood.oh.us>
Email: buildinginspection@co.wood.oh.us

Michael J. Rudey
Chief Building Official

*This office operates under the Wood County Board of Commissioners,
James F. Carter - Tim W. Brown - Alvin L. Perkins*