



**Oregon**

Tina Kotek, Governor



Department of Consumer  
and Business Services

## Building Codes Structures Board

Meeting agenda

**Meeting date:** May 7, 2025

**Time:** 9:30 a.m.

**Location:** This meeting will be open to the public. **This is a hybrid meeting.**

**Virtual connection and online streaming:** View the live meeting or access the connection information for the Zoom meeting at: [Oregon.gov/bcd/Pages/bcd-video.aspx](https://Oregon.gov/bcd/Pages/bcd-video.aspx)

### I. Board business

- A. Call to order
- B. Roll call
- C. Approval of agenda and order of business
- D. Approval of the draft board meeting minutes of [October 9, 2024](#)
- E. Date of the next scheduled meeting: August 6, 2025

### II. Public comment

The board will hear public testimony, including testimony from individuals who have signed up in advance. Public Comment will be heard by virtual attendance or written testimony only.

### III. Reports and updates

- A. Structural Program update
- B. Energy and Mechanical Program update

### IV. Communications

HAPO Introduction and update  
[2024 Building Codes Division Annual report](#)

### V. Appeals

There are no appeals for this meeting.

### VI. Unfinished business

There is no unfinished business at this time.



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[oregon.gov/bcd](https://oregon.gov/bcd)

## **VII. New business**

[2025 Oregon Structural Specialty Code Single-Exit Stairway Amendment Appendix](#)

## **VIII. Announcements**

The Board Chair or board members can make announcements during this time.

## **IX. Adjournment**

Board meetings are generally adjourned by the Board Chair.

**Interpreter services or auxiliary aids for persons with disabilities are available upon advanced request. For assistance, please contact [Kaydi Milton](#) at 503-428-4169.**



**State of Oregon**  
**Building Codes Structures Board**  
Meeting Minutes  
October 9, 2024

<b>Agenda Item I.D.</b>
---------------------------------

**Members Present:** Eric Schmidt, chair, building official  
Andrew Dykeman, vice-chair, three-plus stories general contractor  
Brenda Hartzog, energy supplier  
Gary Heikkinen, owner/ manager of commercial office building  
Marshall McGrady, building trade representative  
Lora Ratcliff, representative of a fire protection agency  
Shayla Duke, Oregon disabilities commission representative

**Members Absent:** Jean Root, architect  
Vacancy, heavy industry construction contractor

**Staff Present:** Alana Cox, administrator, building codes division  
Todd Smith, manager, Policy and Technical Services (PTS)  
Richard Rogers, chief building official, PTS  
Anthony Rocco, structural program chief, Housing and Building  
Safety Services (HABS)  
Richard Donovan, senior policy advisor, PTS  
Kelly Thomas, technical policy analyst, PTS  
Andy Boulton, senior policy advisor, HABS  
Mark Heizer, mechanical and energy code engineer, PTS  
Eric McMullen, senior building code specialist, HABS  
Jeremy Williams, structural program engineer, HABS  
Pierre Sabagh, policy analyst, PTS  
Debi Barnes- Woods, boards coordinator, PTS  
Kaydi Milton, policy development coordinator, PTS

**Guests Present:** Chris Wong, SEAO  
Jody Orrison, City of Portland  
Kevin Duell, Self  
Adele Schaffeld, Malheur County  
Tom Jaleski, Self

**I. Board business**

- A. **Call to order:** Chair Eric Schmidt called the meeting to order at 9:33 a.m.
- B. **Roll call:** Seven board members were in attendance, with Vice Chair Andrew Dykeman and Lora Ratcliff in person and five members connected by Zoom. Member Jean Root was excused.

C. **Approval of agenda and order of business:** The chair ruled the agenda and order of business approved.

D. **Approval of the draft board meeting minutes:** The chair ruled the May 1, 2024, minutes final.

E. **Date of the next scheduled meeting:** November 6, 2024.

**F. Welcome new member Shayla Duke**

Chair Schmidt welcomed Shayla Duke and stated she was confirmed by the Interim Committee on Rules and Executive Appointments September 24, 2024, to the Building Codes Structures Board in the position representing the Oregon Disabilities Commission. Her term began October 1, 2024, serving a partial four-year term ending June 30, 2028.

Shayla stated she is happy to be here and does have some background in construction administration handling commercial and residential. She is glad to be representing the Oregon Disabilities Commission.

**G. Welcome new member Lora Ratcliff**

Chair Schmidt welcomed Lora Ratcliff and stated she was confirmed by the Interim Committee on Rules and Executive Appointments September 24, 2024, to the Building Codes Structures Board in the position representing the fire protection agency. Her term began October 1, 2024, serving in an unexpired four-year term ending June 30, 2027.

Lora stated she has been with the Albany fire department for thirteen years. Her first career started out as a building plans examiner with Marion County and unfortunately when the economy crashed in 2009, she lost her job and went working with fire. She is very excited for this opportunity and to be a part of this board and offer what she can and glean from everyone.

**II. Public comment**

Michael Andersen, Sightline Institute will be providing testimony on Agenda Item: VII.A The board allowed Mr. Andersen to hold his testimony until the agenda item is being addressed.

**III. Reports and updates**

**A. Structural Program Update**

Chief Rocco, structural program chief, Housing and Building Safety Services manager, wanted to thank the technical review committee that was appointed by this board for the heavy lifting of the OSSC process. The board did an excellent job selecting those members and the members were great. It was a rewarding process to have all different perspectives, expertise, representation from all across the industry and just wanted to take the opportunity to thank them all for their participation for volunteering and all their hard work and input. This is done every three years and we're adopting the next iteration of the OSSC, the 2025 iteration. The anticipated effective date of that code is October 1,

2025, with a six-month grace period with the mandatory implementation statewide date of April 1, 2026.

### **B. Energy Program Update**

Mr. Heizer, mechanical and energy engineer, stated the Mechanical Board will be reviewing the Oregon Mechanical Specialty Code (OMSC) recommendations on October 22, 2024, and the adoption dates will be in alignment with the structural codes as well. January 1, 2025, will be the beginning date of 2024 Oregon Energy Efficiency Specialty Code using ASHRAE Standard 90.1-2022 as the baseline of the code. The Commercial Reach Code process is starting this month and the division is looking to align with incentives to point people towards funds to go above and beyond the base energy code.

### **IV. Communications- None**

### **V. Appeals - None**

### **VI. Unfinished business - None**

### **VII. New business**

#### **A. Board review of public Code amendment Proposal PP-02: Alternative Safety Measures for Small-Footprint Apartments**

Pierre Sabagh, policy analyst, said the division requests board review of the public code amendment [proposal PP-02](#) which was unanimously disapproved by the 2025 Oregon Structural Specialty Code technical review committee. Some background, House Bill 3395 was passed during the 2023 Oregon legislative session, under this bill Section 8 requires the division, through the Building Codes Structures Board, to review and consider updates to the Oregon Structural Specialty Code established under ORS 455.132, to allow a residential occupancy to be served by a single exit, consistent with the appropriate policies of the State. The relevant portions of the bill can be found today in your [Board Memo](#). At the 2025 Oregon Structural Specialty Code technical committee meetings public code amendment proposal PP-02 was proposed by Michael Andersen, during the proposal period for this code, this proposal was centered around no more than 20 dwellings per stairwell to be served with a single exit. The public code amendment proposal would expand the current statewide code allowance from three stories above grade plane, with four dwelling units maximum per story being served by a single exit. The committee reviewed and discussed this proposal during their meetings. All committee members who were present during this discussion unanimously voted to disapprove this public amendment proposal after a lengthy discussion and engagement from the proponent. This agenda item will need a motion.

Michael Andersen, Sightline Institute was given five minutes to provide his public comment about his public code amendment proposal PP-02. Michael stated he had come before the board after House Bill 3395 had passed to serve as a bridge between advocates who see this as an opportunity to allow multifamily building on smaller lots, that's the

fundamental challenge. Trying to make it geometrically possible to allow infill on small lots. House Bill 3395 says it is the policy of the state to try and find such solutions if possible and our argument is let's figure it out, let's find out what is possible. In the proposal PP-02 that went to the code review committee, included a set of branching options in hopes that it would be a way to start a conversation. The proposal was rejected by the code review committee because it wasn't code ready and there were valid points made. The direction they were advised by the staff and committee was to talk further with local jurisdictions about the possibility of advancing local amendments to the code. This building type is only for a handful of cities in this state where you've got unusually low demand for parking and high prices. From a policy perspective we're hoping to find a path to let those handful of cities pursue this if it's deemed feasible by their local officials.

**Motion by member Gary Heikkinen** to approve and uphold the technical review committee's unanimous disapproval of public code amendment proposal PP-02 and to recommend the division to convene a 2025 workgroup to explore the topic further after additional national information becomes available and to possibly develop a recommendation for future consideration by the board- including concepts for a possible prospective local adoption appendix.

**Roll call vote:**

Yea: Lora Ratcliff, Gary Heikkinen, Marshall McGrady, Brenda Hartzog, Vice Chair Andrew Dykeman, Chair Eric Schmidt

Nay: none

**Motion carried unanimously.**

**B. Board review of the provisions of Chapter 1 of the 2025 OSSC**

Pierre Sabagh, policy analyst, said this agenda item is to review the provisions of Chapter 1 of the 2025 OSSC. At this iteration of the code committee meetings, the committee discussed the technical provisions of the selected national model codes, the existing Oregon amendments from current code and technical proposals from the public. While the administrative provisions of Chapter 1 are bifurcated from the technical code review, the chapter in its entirety was reviewed with the committee to identify proposed adjustments. This primarily administrative chapter does contain certain technical considerations, which are the focus of the technical review. This meeting board does serve as the Rulemaking Advisory Committee (RAC) for these adjusted provisions of Chapter 1 of the OSSC. The board and interested members of the public will be acting as members of the RAC and the group must consider the potential fiscal, economical, and racial equity impacts of this rulemaking.

Chief Rocco, structural program chief, Housing and Building Safety Services manager, stated the biggest change is in 105.2, the division wanted to align the gross floor area with the residential code, of limitation of non-occupied accessory structure that is exempt from building permit. This is now at two hundred square feet instead of one hundred and twenty square feet. This is adding more flexibility for storage that is not occupied incidental structures. Trash closures will remain at one hundred and twenty square feet with that being the one exemption.

**Motion by Vice Chair Andrew Dykeman** to approve the adjusted technical provisions of Chapter 1 of the 2025 OSSC and forward to the Administrator for rulemaking and subsequent adoption, with the finding that the added cost, if any, is necessary to the health and safety of the occupants or the public or necessary to conserve scarce resources.

**Roll call vote:**

Yea: Lora Ratcliff, Gary Heikkinen, Brenda Hartzog, Marshall McGrady, Vice Chair Andrew Dykeman, Chair Eric Schmidt.

Nay: none

**Motion carried unanimously.**

**C. Board review and approve the 2025 Oregon Structural Specialty Code (OSSC)**

Pierre Sabagh, policy analyst, said the division requests board review and approve the 2025 OSSC, ORS 455.610 requires that the division, with the approval of the Building Codes Structures Board, adopt minimum standards for construction, reconstruction, alteration and repair of buildings and other structures. The anticipated effective date for the 2025 OSSC is October 1, 2025, with a six month phase-in period to a mandatory date of April 1, 2026. The technical code review committee met five times between August 8, 2024 and September 17, 2024. The board packet includes the 2025 OSSC review committee matrix highlighting the draft changes, amendments and the technical code review committee's recommendations. This meeting does serve as the Rulemaking Advisory Committee (RAC) for the 2025 OSSC.

The board and interested members of the public will be acting as members of the RAC and the group must consider the potential fiscal, economic, and racial equity impacts of this rulemaking. Tony Rocco, structural program chief, Housing and Building Safety Services manager, went through the code review committee [matrix](#) that shows each chapter and section. Each one also identifies if there is any fiscal impact or not for each item.

**Motion by member Vice Chair Andrew Dykeman** to approve the proposed code recommendations and forward to the Administrator for rulemaking and subsequent adoption, with the finding that the added cost, if any, is necessary to the health and safety of the occupants or the public or necessary to conserve scarce resources.

**Roll call vote:**

Yea: Lora Ratcliff, Gary Heikkinen, Marshall McGrady, Shayla Duke, Brenda Hartzog, Vice Chair Andrew Dykeman, Chair Eric Schmidt.

Nay: none

**Motion carried unanimously.**

**VIII. Announcements - None**

**IX. Adjournment**

Chair Schmidt adjourned the meeting at 11:39 a.m.

Respectfully submitted by Kaydi Milton, policy development coordinator.

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# 2024 Annual Report

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Department of Consumer  
and Business Services



Las Adelitas is an affordable housing community designed to add 142 multifamily homes in the Cully neighborhood of northeast Portland, Oregon.

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*Building Codes Division (BCD) staff – from left, Training and Outreach Services Manager Stephen Simms, BCD Administrator Alana Cox, Deputy Administrator Dawn Bass, Policy and Technical Services Manager Todd Smith, and Senior Policy Advisor Andrew Boulton – tour the remodel of the Oregon Capitol in May 2024.*



Building Codes Division staff members tour the remodel of the Oregon Capitol in May 2024.

# Administrator's message

2024 was an exciting year for the Building Codes Division (BCD). This report features several articles about the great work we do at BCD, but I want to highlight just a few of the accomplishments I am most proud of from the year:

- **Oregon Design Criteria Hub:** This innovative tool takes all of the things in the buildings code that vary by location (wind load, snow load, frost depth, etc.), and puts them in one easy-to-use location. We partnered with Oregon State University to develop the tool in which you can enter an address or latitude and longitude and find all of the design criteria for that location, creating efficiency for design professionals, plans examiners, and others in the development community.
- **Building Evaluation Support Agreement (BESA):** This unique, multilateral agreement allows BCD and all of the local governments that sign on to share building official, inspector, and plan review services using the framework in the agreement, without having to execute individual agreements with every local government. In addition to providing mutual aid under the agreement, BCD is connecting municipalities in need of support to building departments with extra capacity to help keep construction moving.

- **Statewide mechanical minor labels:** Minor labels are permits for minor construction work purchased from the state and usable anywhere in Oregon. Instead of each permit requiring an inspection, 1 in 10 is inspected. This expansion of the program includes minor mechanical work, and also allows for the use of photos and videos in lieu of the inspection. After a successful pilot, we are excited to see this program expanded across Oregon.

Beyond the activities noted above, we have been laser focused on addressing the affordable housing crisis by increasing the number of safe, efficient homes in Oregon. We are working hard to stand up the Housing Accountability and Production Office with our colleagues at the Department of Land Conservation and Development, and are already well underway with several housing initiatives, which you will read more about in this report.

At BCD, we are used to change. Codes are always changing, there is always more to learn, and we know we have to be nimble and dynamic to meet the challenges that face our state. This year, I am more optimistic than ever that we are going to harness the momentum behind housing production and make tangible improvements to affordable housing in our communities. BCD is proud to be part of making these improvements possible, and I am proud to be a part of BCD.

– Alana Cox, *Building Codes Division administrator*

# What we do:

## Mission and services

BCD works to ensure the safety of buildings through the administration of the state building code that governs the construction, reconstruction, alteration, and repair of buildings and other structures and the installation of mechanical devices and equipment therein. Our mission is to create the foundation for safe, efficient, affordable buildings in Oregon.

We offer multiple services to the business community by building on the goal of uniform statewide regulations affecting the construction industry. We establish, administer, and regulate uniform performance standards providing reasonable safeguards for health, safety, welfare, comfort, and security of the residents of this state. We also license qualified businesses and individuals working in electrical, plumbing, boiler and pressure vessel, and elevator trades.

How we serve you:

- Adopting building codes with the advice of seven statutory boards to provide the minimum level of safety in all areas of Oregon.
- Testing and licensing trade workers and subcontractors to ensure a knowledgeable and proficient workforce.
- Training and certifying building inspectors and building officials.
- Enforcing laws and rules to ensure safe building practices.
- Providing permitting and inspection services.
- Collaborating with cities and counties to promote efficient building practices and positive economic development.

- Protecting consumers from unnecessary regulatory costs.
- Collaborating with public and private entities and institutions to allow for the use of emerging technology in alternate construction methods and materials.
- Cooperating with other state agencies, including the Construction Contractors Board, Department of the State Fire Marshal, Oregon Department of Energy, and Oregon Health Authority, on crossover issues related to construction standards and licensing.

All BCD sections, teams, and programs work cooperatively toward meeting the division's mission and strategic objectives.

**Licensing and Enforcement** teams are responsible for administering 52 license types across boiler, electrical, elevator, manufactured dwelling, and plumbing trades. They also investigate and prosecute licensing violations for the division's licensing and certification programs.

**Building Inspector Training Program** is responsible for the training and certification of new building officials, plans examiners, and specialty code inspectors, as well as the ongoing code change training for existing certificate holders.

**Oregon ePermitting** provides electronic permit and inspection services for Oregon building departments. Oregon ePermitting services are available to all local building departments that want to use them.

**Statewide Permit and Inspection Services** provides permit and inspection services in areas where a building department would not be feasible at the



local level. This section also oversees inspections for amusement rides.

Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Dwellings/Prefabricated Structures provides oversight of the federal HUD manufactured dwelling program and the statewide prefabricated structures program. These programs enable manufactured dwellings and prefabricated structures to be sited throughout the state.

**Policy and Technical Services** provides support to the seven advisory boards to adopt codes, provide licensing enforcement and policy support, and resolve code appeals.

**Housing and Building Safety** is the division’s newest section, established in 2024. It is focused on ensuring timely housing production and, in coordination with the Department of Land Conservation and Development, it administers the Housing Accountability and Production Office.

From dispute resolution to statewide code interpretation and e-permitting, the uniform standards provide builders with predictability. Moving forward, the state is forming new partnerships to better support businesses across Oregon.

**Board partnerships** between BCD and the seven advisory boards it administers bring together knowledgeable leaders to address issues and adopt well-researched and coordinated codes:

- Board of Boiler Rules
- Building Codes Structures Board
- Construction Industry Energy Board
- Electrical and Elevator Board
- Mechanical Board
- Residential and Manufactured Structures Board
- State Plumbing Board

# Ensuring safe construction with licensed professionals

BCD is responsible for issuing specialty licenses for qualified electricians, plumbers, and boiler and pressure vessel workers to ensure Oregon construction is safe. Through its licensing boards, testing, and training processes, BCD helps ensure that licensed trades workers have undergone rigorous training and education to acquire their licenses.

The seven advisory boards administered by BCD bring together knowledgeable leaders to address issues and adopt well-researched and coordinated codes. Advisory boards and the division must review and approve any changes to the code, bringing together experts to deliver well-reasoned codes that strike the appropriate balance between affordability, safety, durability, and efficiency.

The work of the boards is translated into the code and administrative rules that are the backbone of the division's testing and licensing programs for plumbers and electricians. The division strives to maintain close connections with its industry partners, stakeholders, and national code bodies to implement its testing and licensing programs to ensure safety and efficiency, in a technically feasible and cost-effective way.

Over the past year the division has worked to increase recognition of the mobility of the licensed workforce by expanding electrical license reciprocity with Washington, issuing about 2,700 electrical, plumbing, and boiler licenses a year, and by providing technical assistance to registered apprenticeship programs across the state.

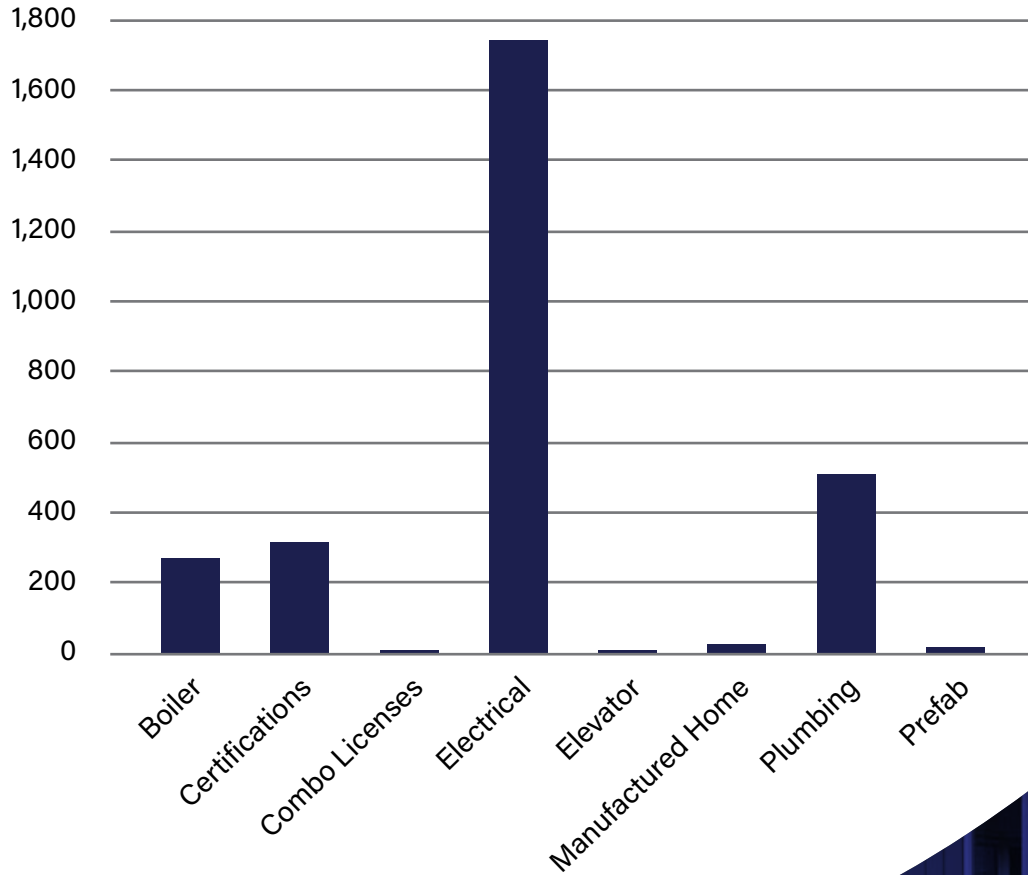


*A building inspector from Washington County meets to discuss construction progress.*



*BCD boiler and pressure vessel inspectors – pictured from left, Bob Graham, Tom Clark, Patrick McGiveron, and Jon Everitt – visit the Port Westward power plant in Columbia County to learn about Portland General Electric's heat recovery steam generator. Also pictured, at right, is Chris Baier, chairperson of the Oregon Board of Boiler Rules.*

# New licenses/certifications in 2024



Example of a license identification provided by BCD

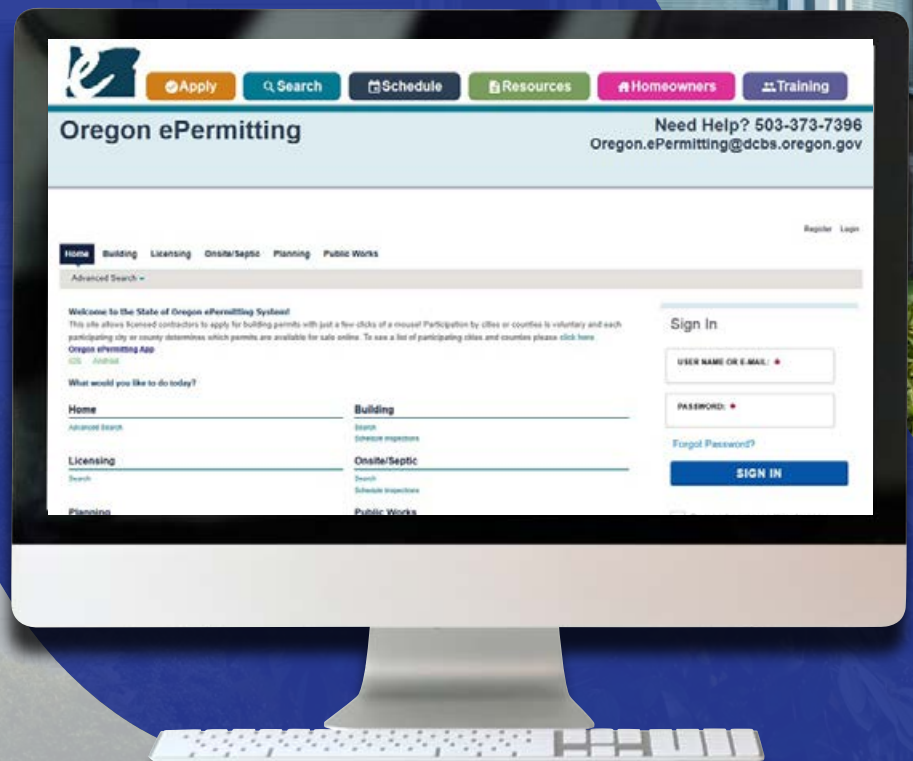
# Oregon ePermitting: BCD helps Oregonians get permits online

Oregon ePermitting was established in 2006. Since that time, it has evolved from providing a simple website for a limited number of jurisdictions and permit application types, to providing full-service electronic application, permitting, inspection and plan review software that is available at no cost to participating cities and counties.

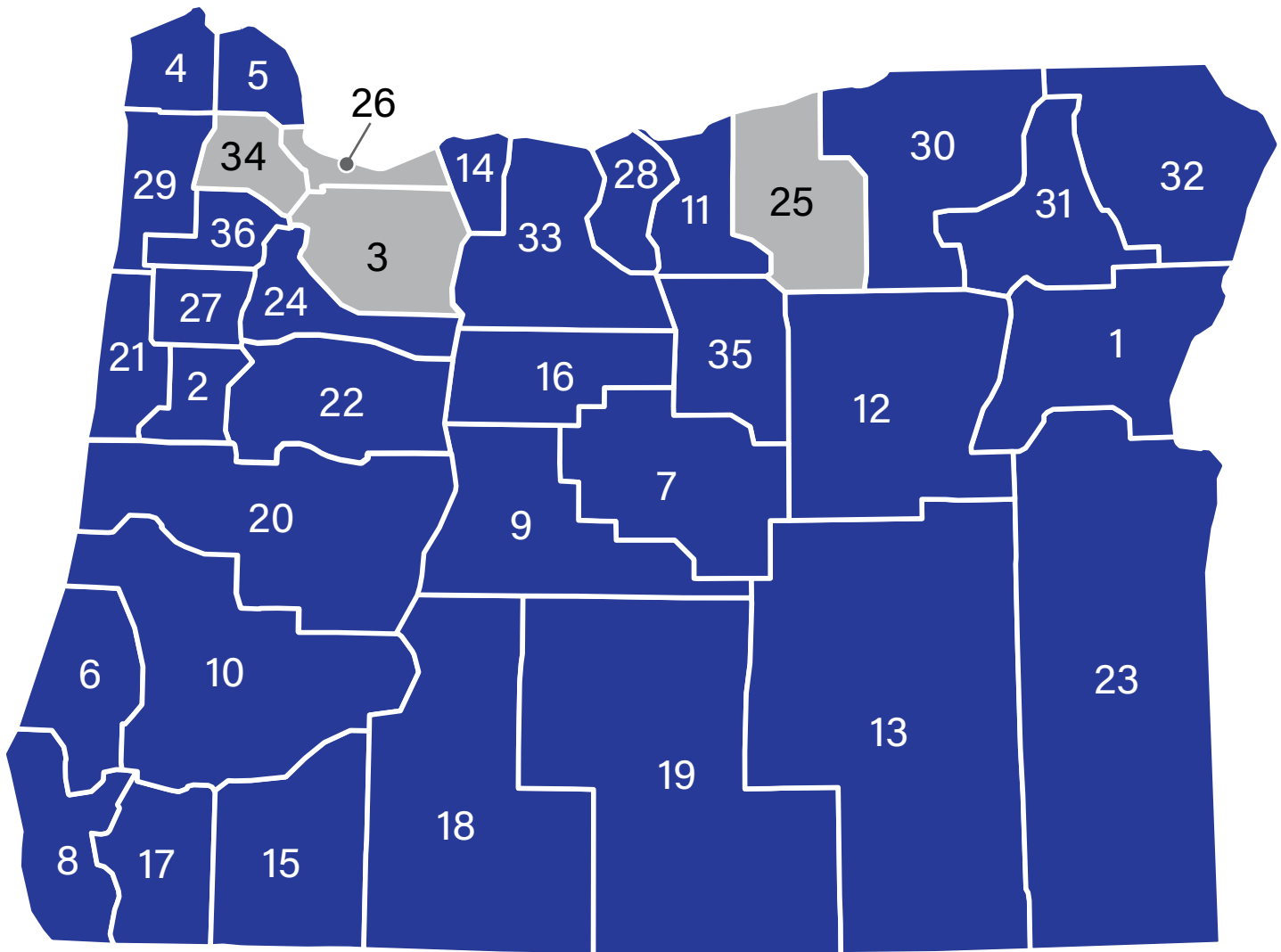
The ePermitting website is now used by building professionals and the general public to search for permit information, apply for permits, make payments, track permits, schedule inspections, and upload documents.

ePermitting also provides mobile apps that allow inspectors and contractors to communicate with each other, upload photographs as part of the inspection process, and participate in live video inspections.

But most importantly, the ePermitting team prioritizes providing help to all its users and participants so that individuals, businesses, and local governments can successfully use technology to streamline the development process.



# Oregon **counties** using ePermitting services



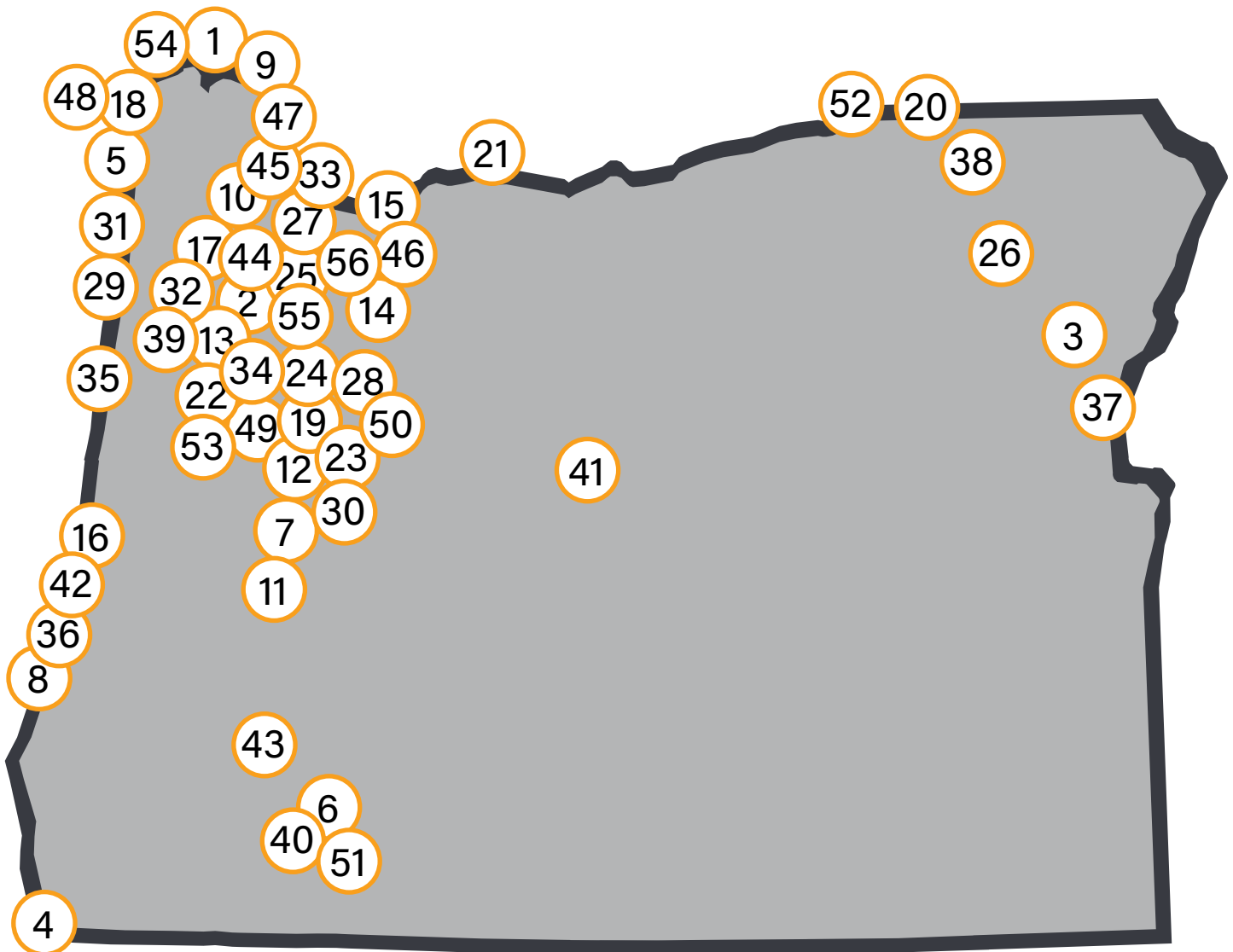
ePermitting

Nonparticipatory

\* Douglas County and Josephine County are On-site/Septic Program only.

- |              |                |               |                |
|--------------|----------------|---------------|----------------|
| 1. Baker     | 10. Douglas*   | 19. Lake      | 28. Sherman    |
| 2. Benton    | 11. Gilliam    | 20. Lane      | 29. Tillamook  |
| 3. Clackamas | 12. Grant      | 21. Lincoln   | 30. Umatilla   |
| 4. Clatsop   | 13. Harney     | 22. Linn      | 31. Union      |
| 5. Columbia  | 14. Hood River | 23. Malheur   | 32. Wallowa    |
| 6. Coos      | 15. Jackson    | 24. Marion    | 33. Wasco      |
| 7. Crook     | 16. Jefferson  | 25. Morrow    | 34. Washington |
| 8. Curry     | 17. Josephine* | 26. Multnomah | 35. Wheeler    |
| 9. Deschutes | 18. Klamath    | 27. Polk      | 36. Yamhill    |

# Oregon **cities** using ePermitting services



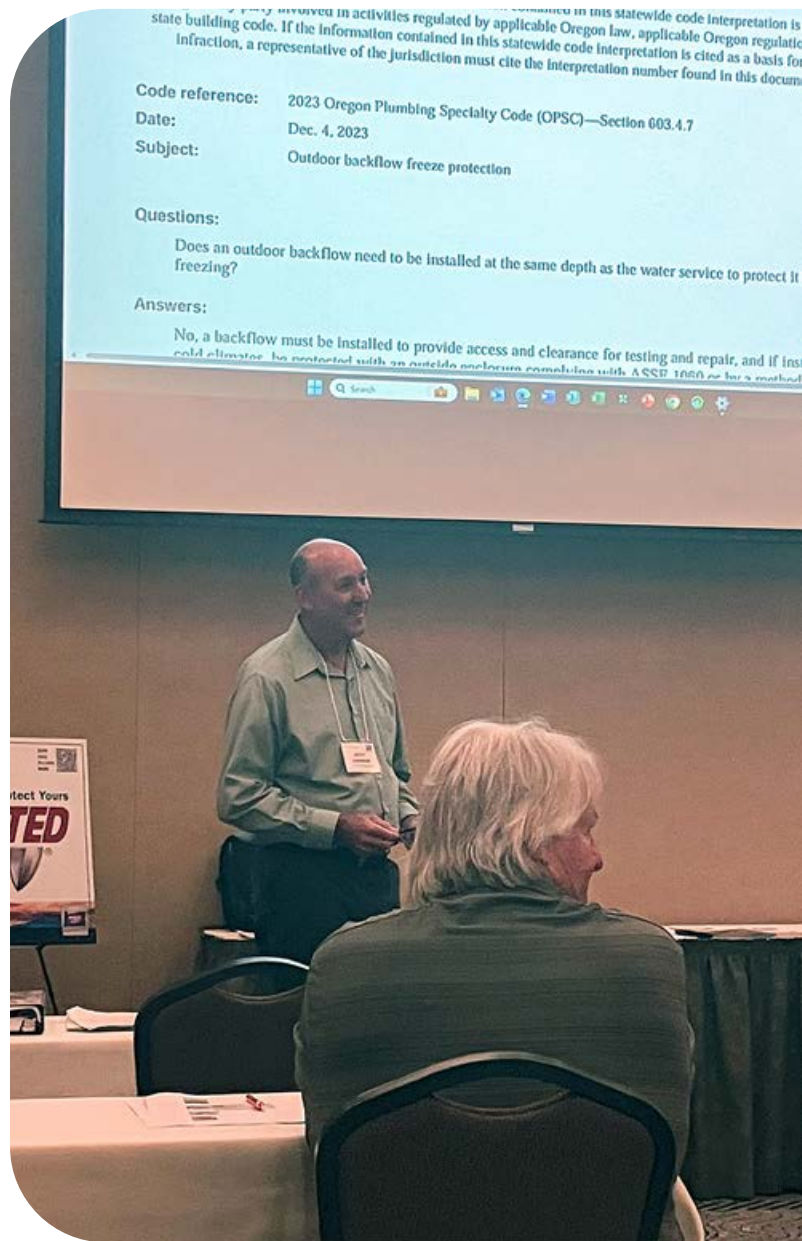
- |                   |                   |                  |                 |
|-------------------|-------------------|------------------|-----------------|
| 1. Astoria        | 14. Estacada      | 29. Lincoln City | 44. Sherwood    |
| 2. Aurora         | 15. Fairview      | 30. Lowell       | 45. St. Helens  |
| 3. Baker City     | 16. Florence      | 31. Manzanita    | 46. Sandy       |
| 4. Brookings      | 17. Forest Grove  | 32. McMinnville  | 47. Scappoose   |
| 5. Cannon Beach   | 18. Gearhart      | 33. Milwaukie    | 48. Seaside     |
| 6. Central Point  | 19. Harrisburg    | 34. Monmouth     | 49. Springfield |
| 7. Coburg         | 20. Hermiston     | 35. Newport      | 50. Sweet Home  |
| 8. Coos Bay       | 21. Hood River    | 36. North Bend   | 51. Talent      |
| 9. Columbia City  | 22. Independence  | 37. Ontario      | 52. Umatilla    |
| 10. Cornelius     | 23. Junction City | 38. Pendleton    | 53. Veneta      |
| 11. Cottage Grove | 24. Keizer        | 39. Philomath    | 54. Warrenton   |
| 12. Creswell      | 25. King City     | 40. Phoenix      | 55. Woodburn    |
| 13. Dallas        | 26. La Grande     | 41. Redmond      | 56. West Linn   |
|                   | 27. Lake Oswego   | 42. Reedsport    |                 |
|                   | 28. Lebanon       | 43. Rogue River  |                 |

# Inspector training program: Evolving to meet industry needs

The Building Inspector Training Program provides certification training to people interested in joining the building inspection industry for the first time or expanding and certifying their existing inspection skills. It is also responsible for coordinating training classes related to specialty code changes for certified building inspectors. The program continues to expand to meet the needs of a changing and expanding industry. It operates year-round and currently offers 11 courses in addition to providing code change training as needed.

The program took a new path after the COVID-19 pandemic required greater innovation in delivering training and certifying Oregon's building officials and inspectors. In May 2020, inspector training moved to a fully remote format. In the short run, this allowed the division to continue to train new inspectors, but the long-term benefit has been that students do not have to travel to Salem and lose valuable time that could be spent in the field. In 2024, all residential code change training was delivered remotely. Students still have the option of attending classes in person at the division's west Salem training center, or online from any location with internet access. Testing is completed online, and instructors are available during business hours to help students who have questions.

Finding new inspectors with the skills to take advantage of new technology and training is also challenging, especially in rural areas. Historically, inspectors have specialized in one particular program area (for example, electrical, plumbing, structural, or mechanical). For local cities and counties, this practice increases inspection costs because building officials must send multiple inspectors to one jobsite.



*BCD Plumbing Programs Chief Andy Skinner gives a presentation about the Oregon Plumbing Specialty Code at the Oregon Plumbing-Heating-Cooling Contractors (PHCC) State Convention in May 2024.*

Complex scheduling and coordination of multiple inspections often reduces customer service.

To address these challenges, the state has developed specialized and cross-training classes to help inspectors expand their skills and certifications.

During 2024, more than 209 students have completed classes designed to broaden their inspection skills, which allows local programs to serve customers more efficiently.

During 2023, the division reintroduced Specialized Electrical and Plumbing Inspector training for noncomplex commercial installations. In addition to continuing to offer these classes, the division added a Commercial Structural Inspector Skills Enhancement course in 2024 to provide currently employed building inspectors a better understanding of the Oregon Structural Specialty Code (OSSC). In the future, the division will develop additional courses to promote cross-training, which will reduce travel and labor costs for local jurisdictions and address new trends in the inspection industry, such as electronic scheduling and video inspection. To view a schedule of upcoming classes or learn more, visit [oregon.gov/bcd](https://oregon.gov/bcd).

Since the program's inception, it has trained industry professionals across the state with a clear understanding of its various codes. The program has trained more than 3,322 people from 2014 through 2024.

In 2014, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics' career growth outlook for construction and building inspectors was 8 percent nationwide through 2024. This number increased to 10 percent in the same report published in 2016. The need for inspectors continues across Oregon today, with an expected 12 percent rise in need projected from 2020 through 2030.

BCD continues to modernize elements of its program in response to the growing demand for online and hybrid training options. Once these efforts have been completed, inspectors will be able to access and complete much of their course work from one centralized program. With no signs of demand slowing for trained inspectors, BCD intends to continue to meet the needs of the industry by providing high-quality training options.



| Example of a home built to the current Oregon Residential Specialty Code.

# Electric vehicle infrastructure training program



| *Electric vehicle charger installed in a parking lot in Oregon.*

Over the past year, the Electrical and Elevator Board certified to the Oregon Legislature that more than 500 Oregon licensed electricians have completed the Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Training Program (EVITP) or equivalent training, as required by Senate Bill (SB) 582 (passed in 2023).

SB 582 requires the board to oversee the implementation of EVITP equivalent training programs, review the costs required to take the course and certification exam, and track the total number of electricians who have completed the course and passed the certification exam or

equivalent programs. SB 582 also requires that electric vehicle charging systems that have received state funding or authorization be installed by contractors who hold an EVITP or equivalent training program certification, and that one or more of these contractors supervise or participate in the installation work for the periods when electric vehicle charging equipment installation work is being performed.

The board will continue to implement additional provisions of the bill that will help develop a talented electric vehicle charging system workforce.

# BCD in the community

The division forms partnerships with other organizations to achieve broader goals in training, outreach, program improvement, and awareness that it cannot achieve on its own. Through its alliance efforts, BCD works collaboratively with other organizations toward specific objectives to help ensure that all Oregonians have the opportunity to live, work, and play in safe, efficient, and affordable buildings supported by a highly trained, diverse workforce.



*BCD Boiler and Pressure Vessels Program Chief Tom Clark inspects a boiler during the Great Oregon Steam-Up.*

*Senior Policy Advisor Andrew Boulton (above) represents BCD at the Oregon Building Officials Association's summer conference in July 2024.*

# Oregon Tradeswomen Career Fair



The Oregon Tradeswomen Career Fair attracts more than 2,000 students, educators, and job-seekers. It features participation from 90 different businesses, unions, government agencies, and educational institutions in the skilled trades and construction industry.

BCD is proud to support this event, showcasing a wide range of career opportunities. In 2024, the division shared a table with Oregon OSHA and the Workers' Compensation Division (WCD) and shared a variety of construction and inspection career knowledge.



BCD partnered with staff members from other divisions of the Department of Consumer and Business Services to support the Oregon Tradeswomen Career Fair in May 2024. BCD Communications Coordinator Travis White (left) is pictured with staff members with the Workers' Compensation Division and Oregon OSHA.

# Great Oregon Steam-Up



The Great Oregon Steam-Up, a riveting spectacle where colossal steam-powered machines come alive, helps tell the tale of Oregon's rich industrial past. BCD's boiler and pressure vessel inspectors work with the Western Steam Friends Association to make sure the annual event is safe for everyone by performing courtesy inspections on a variety of vintage tractors, trucks, steam traction engines, fire engines, construction equipment, and logging equipment.

*Western Steam Friends staff members work with BCD Boiler and Pressure Vessel Inspector Patrick McGiveron (foreground) to inspect boilers for the Great Oregon Steam-Up.*



*Vintage steam engines were inspected by BCD boiler and pressure vessel inspectors at the Great Oregon Steam-Up in July 2024.*



*Pictured above are a pair of vintage tractors that were inspected in the lead-up to the 54th annual Great Oregon Steam-Up held in Brooks.*



*Boiler and Pressure Vessel Inspector Jon Everitt (left) helps members of the Western Steam Friends Association inspect steam engines in July 2024.*

# Chemeketa Community College Brooks campus open house

Chemeketa Community College (CCC) is becoming a national model through its efforts to make career and technical education more available to rural communities. BCD staff members, some of whom were graduates of the Chemeketa Building Inspection Technology Program, were happy to represent the division at the Brooks campus open house to share information about career opportunities in construction and inspection occupations with high school students, school administrators, and guidance counselors.



Chemeketa  
Community  
College -  
Brooks  
Campus  
Open  
House,  
April  
2024.



# Manufactured Homes/ Prefabricated Structures

The division has two programs that regulate off-site construction. These programs use in-plant inspection programs that allow homes, buildings, or components to utilize closed construction in a factory and be shipped to a construction site throughout Oregon. While the two programs are similar, they have different construction codes and regulatory systems.

## Federal Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Manufactured Housing

This program covers manufactured housing that must be constructed to standards approved by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). This is a federal program that BCD administers on HUD's behalf in Oregon.

BCD provides in-plant inspection for factories in Oregon and oversees approved third-party inspectors to ensure these homes are built to the required HUD standards.

Completed homes that pass inspection are affixed with a label showing compliance.

These units are then able to be placed throughout the country without the need for additional local inspections.



*Manufactured home factory tour showing the construction of homes built for Oregon Housing and Community Services.*

## Prefabricated Structures program

The state prefabricated structures (prefab) program allows buildings or components to be built off site with closed construction. All buildings and components are built to the same code and inspection standard as any other site-built structure in Oregon. BCD staff is responsible for the plan review and inspection of these units either through direct inspection or through ensuring a properly certified individual performs the inspection.

Once completed and inspected at the factory, these buildings and components are affixed with a label showing compliance. These products are then able to be shipped throughout Oregon without the need for a local inspection. The prefab program differs from the HUD program not only in the code used, but also in the range of products that can be built. The prefab program allows for the construction of anything from individual dwelling units to large commercial modular buildings or specific components or pieces of buildings. It is a growing industry, using new technology to create efficiency.

# Housing Accountability and Production Office

House Bill (HB) 1537 was signed into law in 2024 and, in part, created the [Housing Accountability and Production Office](#) (HAPO), a joint office between BCD and the Oregon Department of Land Conservation and Development (DLCD). HAPO's mission is to help facilitate housing development and production in the state by identifying and removing barriers to housing production across the state. By creating a "no wrong doors" approach to customer service, HAPO aims to resolve issues and disputes between contractors and local government, and to improve the overall development process statewide.

BCD is excited to help tackle this state priority. The division intends on continuing to lean into what it does best: help people build safe buildings in an efficient and cost-effective manner. The division has created a new Housing and Building Safety section and has reorganized its team to support that effort. The Housing and Building Safety team will be able to take advantage of the division's 50 years of experience conducting this type of dispute resolution, development facilitation, project-specific engagement,

and consultation with local governments. Additionally, HB 1537 granted DLCD new authority as well as a number of new staff positions to support its local government partners and other customers. Together, BCD and DLCD, through HAPO, should be a "one-stop shop" for any housing development challenges that Oregonians encounter locally.

One of the first big projects HAPO will take on is to conduct a major process improvement study that will be the first of its kind for Oregon. The study will review all major aspects of the development process, including land use, building permitting, public works, and engineering. As a part of creating this study the study, HAPO will engage with local governments, industry stakeholders, and members of the public to generate a complete view of the development process. In addition to looking at each of these aspects of the development process, the study will pay special attention to the transfer of responsibility that occurs during the process to identify barriers, and delays that can affect housing development.



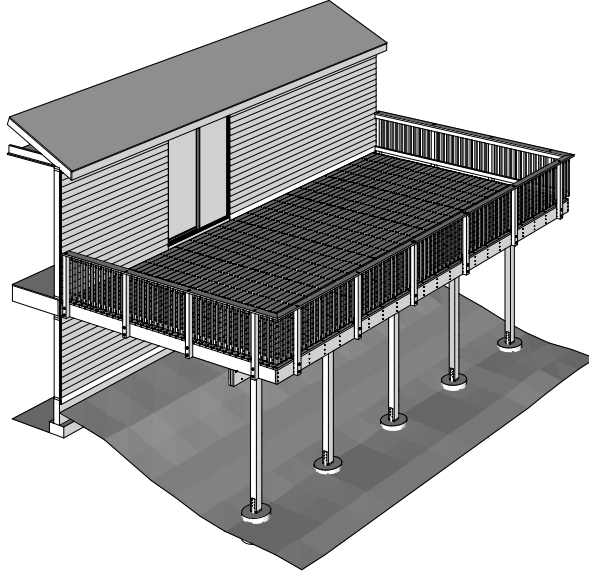


*The Housing Accountability and Production Office (HAPO) is not a physical office. Instead, it is a collaboration between the Oregon Building Codes Division (BCD) and the Department of Land Conservation and Development (DLCD).*

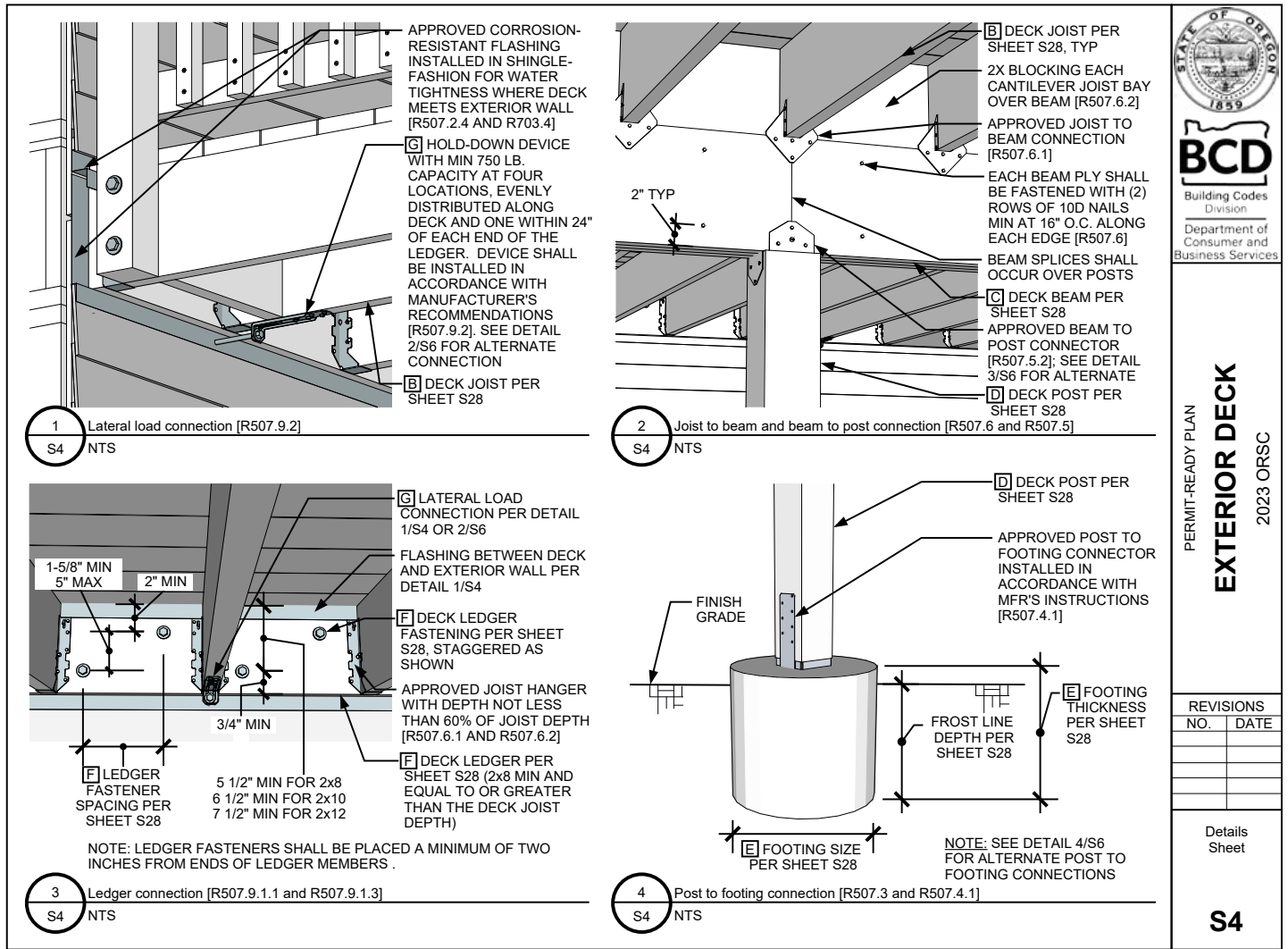
# Permit-ready plans

A permit-ready plan is a set of construction documents provided by the division that describe the design and construction of the elements of a project necessary for permit. These plans are only allowed to be used for structures specifically exempted from laws governing the practice of architecture and laws

requiring engineering registration, as further detailed by Oregon Revised Statute (ORS) 455,062. Generally speaking, this means that permit-ready plans are only possible for smaller and less complex structures, including single-family homes and unoccupied structures. A structure being built with a permit-ready

<p><b>GENERAL NOTES</b></p> <p><b>SCOPE</b> SINGLE-LEVEL EXTERIOR WOOD-FRAMED DECKS ATTACHED TO AN EXTERIOR WALL OF A BUILDING REGULATED BY THE OREGON RESIDENTIAL SPECIALTY CODE.</p> <p><b>PERMIT APPLICATION</b> THE PERMIT APPLICANT SHALL REFERENCE THE PRESCRIBED DETAILS AND TABLES CONTAINED HEREIN TO DEVELOP AND RECORD THEIR PROJECT SPECIFIC DECK DESIGN PARAMETERS (<b>[X]</b>) ON <b>SHEET S28</b> PRIOR TO PERMIT APPLICATION. THE PERMIT APPLICANT IS RESPONSIBLE FOR PRODUCING AND ATTACHING A SITE PLAN IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE LOCAL MUNICIPALITY'S SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS. EXTERIOR DECKS WHERE THE WALKING SURFACE IS NOT MORE THAN 30 INCHES ABOVE ADJACENT GRADE MEASURED AT ANY POINT WITHIN 3 FEET HORIZONTALLY OF THE WALKING SURFACE ARE EXEMPT FROM PERMIT [R105.2].</p> <p><b>APPLICABLE BUILDING CODE</b> 2023 OREGON RESIDENTIAL SPECIALTY CODE (ORSC).</p> <p><b>LIMITATIONS OF USE</b> USE OF AND ANY MODIFICATIONS TO THIS PERMIT-READY PLAN IS SUBJECT TO REVIEW AND APPROVAL BY THE LOCAL MUNICIPALITY.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- SINGLE-SPAN DECK JOISTS WITH OR WITHOUT A CANTILEVER</li> <li>- BASIC DESIGN WIND SPEED: ≤ 120 MPH</li> <li>- WIND EXPOSURE CATEGORY: B, C, OR D</li> <li>- SEISMIC DESIGN CATEGORY: B, C, D<sub>1</sub>, D<sub>2</sub>, OR E RECLASSIFIED TO D<sub>2</sub></li> <li>- DECK DEAD LOAD: ≤ 10 PSF</li> <li>- DECK LIVE LOAD: ≤ 40 PSF</li> <li>- GROUND SNOW LOAD: ≤ 70 PSF</li> <li>- NOT SUPPORTING FINISH MATERIALS, SUCH AS CONCRETE, TILE, ETC., ON TOP OF THE DECKING.</li> <li>- NOT SUPPORTING LARGE CONCENTRATED LOADS SUCH AS HOT TUBS, ETC.</li> <li>- WHERE PROPOSED CONSTRUCTION IS IN A FLOOD HAZARD AREA, AS ESTABLISHED BY THE LOCAL FLOODPLAIN ADMINISTRATOR, THE PERMIT APPLICANT IS RESPONSIBLE FOR MODIFYING THESE PLANS AS NECESSARY FOR COMPLIANCE WITH ORSC SECTIONS R301.2.4 AND R322.</li> <li>- WHERE PROPOSED CONSTRUCTION IS IN AN AREA SUBJECT TO WILDFIRE HAZARD MITIGATION, THE PERMIT APPLICANT IS RESPONSIBLE FOR MODIFYING THESE PLANS AS NECESSARY FOR COMPLIANCE WITH ORSC SECTION R327.</li> </ul> <p><b>LEGEND</b></p> <p><b>[X]</b> = PROJECT SPECIFIC DECK COMPONENT DESIGN PARAMETER TO BE PROVIDED BY THE PERMIT APPLICANT ON <b>SHEET S28</b></p> <p><b>[R###.#]</b> = ORSC SECTION REFERENCE</p> <p><b>APPROVED</b> = ACCEPTABLE TO THE BUILDING OFFICIAL [R202]</p> <p><b>ORSC</b> = OREGON RESIDENTIAL SPECIALTY CODE</p> <p><b>MIN</b> = MINIMUM</p> <p><b>MAX</b> = MAXIMUM</p> <p><b>TYP</b> = TYPICAL</p> <p><b>MFR</b> = MANUFACTURER</p> <p><b>#S#</b> = DETAIL NUMBER ON SHEET NUMBER</p>	<p><b>FOUNDATION</b> FOOTINGS SHALL BEAR ON NATIVE, INORGANIC, UNDISTURBED SOIL BELOW EXISTING GRADE. CONCRETE STRENGTH SHALL BE 3,000 PSI MIN IN MODERATE WEATHERING REGIONS AND 3,500 PSI MIN IN SEVERE WEATHERING REGIONS (SEE SHEET S28) [R301.2 AND R402.2].</p> <p><b>WOOD FRAMING, FASTENERS AND CONNECTORS</b> ALL WOOD SHALL BE IDENTIFIED BY A GRADE MARK OF AN ACCREDITED LUMBER GRADING OR INSPECTION AGENCY AND BE NATURALLY DURABLE OR PRESSURE-PRESERVATIVE-TREATED UNLESS OTHERWISE APPROVED BY THE BUILDING OFFICIAL (R317.1). ALL WOOD IN CONTACT WITH THE GROUND, OR EMBEDDED IN CONCRETE SHALL BE APPROVED PRESSURE-PRESERVATIVE-TREATED WOOD SUITABLE FOR GROUND CONTACT USE (R317.1.2). ANY FIELD CUTS OF PRESSURE-PRESERVATIVE-TREATED WOOD SHALL BE TREATED WITH COPPER NAPHTHENATE (2% COPPER) [R317.1.1]. ALL FASTENERS, ANCHORS, AND CONNECTORS SHALL BE EXTERIOR RATED AND APPROVED FOR STRUCTURAL USE (SEE DETAIL 2/S16 FOR SPECIFICATIONS). MANUFACTURER'S (MFR'S) INSTRUCTIONS FOR APPROVED PROPRIETARY PRODUCTS SHALL BE AVAILABLE ON THE JOB SITE AT THE TIME OF INSPECTION [R106.1.2].</p>	  Building Codes Division Department of Consumer and Business Services															
		PERMIT-READY PLAN <b>EXTERIOR DECK</b> 2023 ORSC															
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REVISIONS	NO.	DATE															
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| Exterior deck permit-ready plan sheet



**| Exterior deck permit-ready details sheet**

plan is able to take advantage of a more streamlined and less costly local permitting process because the plan has been developed to meet the requirements of the state building code and, in many cases, regional climatic and geographic design criteria.

One directive from House Bill 1537 to the Housing Accountability and Production Office is to establish best practices related to permit-ready plans. The division engaged in a robust public process that included a rulemaking advisory committee and a public hearing to develop new rules describing the process that will be used to develop permit-ready plans and implement the permit-ready plans program going forward. The division's goal was to create a process that would result in plans that are usable throughout the many diverse municipalities and geographic areas of the state. These new rules were

adopted and made effective on July 1, 2024.

Ultimately, the division intends to use this new process to develop and publish permit-ready plans for additional building types, including plans for some simple detached one-family residential building types. Division staff members started by updating the existing stock of plans for unoccupied residential accessory structures such as exterior decks, post-frame buildings, detached garages, patio covers, and carports. The division anticipates the initial steps for simple detached dwelling plans will be taken sometime in 2025 and will foster a focus on small dwelling units of an accessory or incidental nature, commonly referred to as accessory dwelling units or ADUs.

# Oregon Design Criteria Hub

The Oregon Design Criteria Hub is a collaboration between the division and Oregon State University (OSU). It was developed to provide site-specific climatic and geographic design criteria for construction projects. This includes all of the following:

- Ground snow load
- Basic design wind speed
- Seismic design category
- Weathering potential
- Frost-line depth
- Decay potential
- Air freezing index

The hub is a streamlined tool that allows users to access data from multiple sources that are referenced by the code. This information helps customers, such as design professionals and local building departments, get efficient site-specific design criteria and to simplify the design and review of structures.

OSU used its explorer mapping tool as the basis to create the hub, providing any customer with the ability to get a climatic and geographic design criteria report. You can access the Oregon Design Criteria Hub and find out more about its use at <https://www.oregon.gov/bcd/codes-stand/Pages/design-criteria.aspx>.



# Promoting efficiency through mutual aid

Local building departments are dynamic workplaces subject to swings in workload and the same difficulties many industries face in developing and retaining a skilled workforce. An expected workforce shortage of certified inspectors and plans examiners presents a major barrier to statewide housing production that, if not addressed, will continue to cause delays in reviewing and approving housing and other projects.

There is no temporary employment agency for building inspectors. BCD strives to provide short-term help to local building departments with inspections or plan reviews, but it is limited by the number of available employees and geography. Many departments enter into multiple mutual aid agreements to assist neighboring departments when possible; however, the negotiation and legal review process can be time consuming and nearby departments may not have excess capacity.

BCD is addressing this problem by creating the Building Evaluation Support Agreement (BESA) and making it available statewide. BESA is a voluntary intergovernmental agreement that will make it easier

for multiple local building departments to share building department services, such as plan review, inspection services, and temporary building official services directly with each other. BESA is an inclusive agreement that contains all terms and conditions typically found in local mutual aid agreements. All Oregon building departments are eligible to become signatories to BESA.

BESA promotes efficiency by eliminating the need to negotiate and execute multiple intergovernmental agreements with neighboring jurisdictions and the state. Being able to offer mutual aid allows local building departments to keep their projects moving, while not having to carry the added expense of unused labor capacity. BCD acts as a connector to help in the administration of the agreement.

BESA was launched in October 2024, and BCD maintains a publicly available list of participating jurisdictions on its website so interested parties may communicate directly with each other. More information about the BESA can be found at <https://www.oregon.gov/bcd/jurisdictions/Pages/besa.aspx>.



| *A contractor working on a jobsite.*

# Code updates

## Code adoptions

### 2024 Oregon Elevator Specialty Code

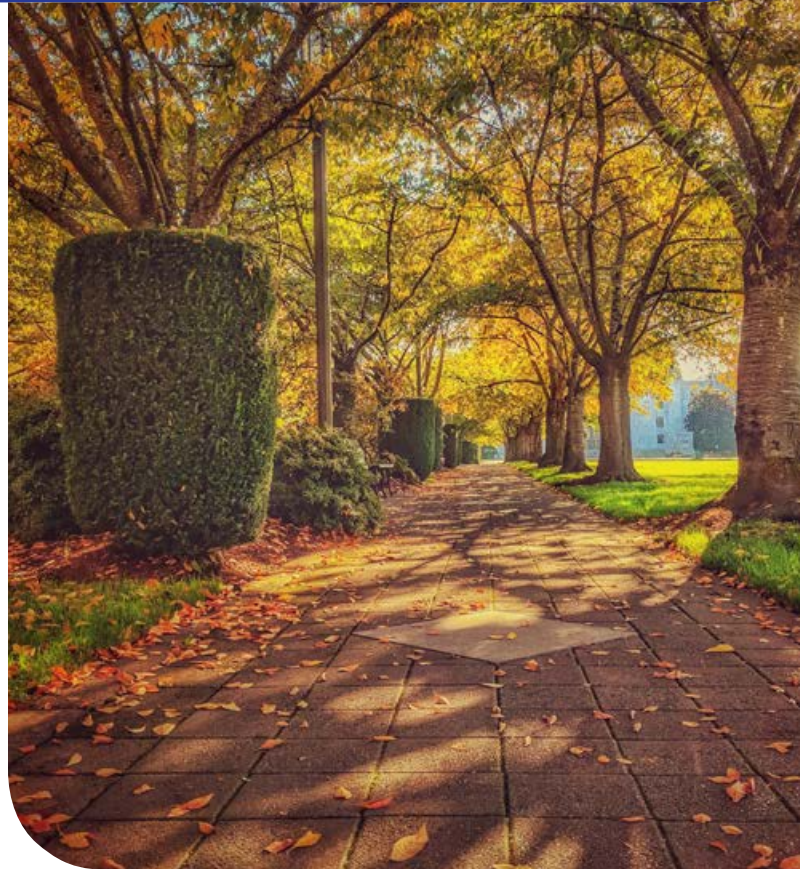
The division and the Electrical and Elevator Board adopted updated minimum safety standards for the safe installation, inspection, and operation of elevators in Oregon. The 2024 Oregon Elevator Specialty Code is based on national model elevator codes and standards for use in Oregon and makes certain Oregon-specific amendments to the model code language.

### 2023 Oregon Residential Reach Code

The division and the Residential and Manufactured Structures Board, in consultation with the Construction Industry Energy Board, adopted the 2023 Oregon Residential Reach Code (ORRC). The ORRC is a set of optional above-code requirements that a builder may use to achieve higher energy efficiency standards than what is required in the 2023 Oregon Residential Specialty Code. The 2023 ORRC was designed to align with incentive programs to help offset the increased cost of the above-code methods and materials.

### 2024 Oregon Boiler and Pressure Vessel Specialty Code

The division and the Board of Boiler Rules adopted the 2024 Oregon Boiler and Pressure Vessel Specialty Code (OBPVSC). The 2024 OBPVSC is based on the 2023 National Boiler Inspection Code and other related updated standards to govern the safe construction, installation, repair, use, and operation of boilers and pressure vessels in Oregon.



## Code development

### 2025 Oregon Energy Efficiency Specialty Code

The division and the Construction Industry Energy Board developed and began the adoption process for the 2025 Oregon Energy Efficiency Specialty Code (OEESC). This code will update the minimum energy code requirements of the Oregon Structural Specialty Code to standards based on ASHRAE 90.1-2022. This is the most up to date national model energy code, and it will be adopted in Oregon pending the availability of COMcheck software developed by the Oregon Department of Energy.



## 2025 Oregon Mechanical Specialty Code

The division and the Mechanical Board began the code review and adoption process of the 2025 Oregon Mechanical Specialty Code (OMSC). The board appointed a review committee to consider changes to the 2024 International Mechanical Code and the 2024 International Fuel Gas Code, which both serve as the base model code for the 2025 OMSC. The committee also reviewed existing Oregon amendments and public proposals. The division anticipates adopting the 2025 OMSC with an Oct. 1, 2025, effective date.

## 2025 Oregon Structural Specialty Code

The division and the Building Codes Structures Board began the code review and adoption process of the 2025 Oregon Structural Specialty Code (OSSC). The board appointed a review committee to consider changes to the 2024 International Build Code, 2024 International Existing Building Code, and new construction provisions of the 2024 International Fire Code, which all serve as the base model code for the 2025 OSSC. The committee also reviewed existing Oregon amendments and public proposals. The division anticipates adopting the 2025 OSSC with an Oct. 1, 2025, effective date.

# Compendium of rules adopted in 2024

Topic	Effective date	Rule(s)
Adopts reach code adoption process	Jan. 1, 2024	Amend: 918-465-0040
Extends the fire hardening grant program to June 2025 and includes 2021 wildfire survivors	Jan. 1, 2024	Amend: 918-001-5000, 918-001-5010, 918-001-5020, 918-001-5030, 918-001-5040, 918-001-5050, 918-001-5060, 918-001-5070
Adopts 2024 Oregon Elevator Specialty Code	Jan. 1, 2024	Adopt: 918-400-0455, 918-400-0458, 918-400-0465; amend: 918-400-0455
Updates the manufactured home ownership document transaction guide	April 1, 2024	Amend: 918-550-0040
Removes the requirement that amusement device operators be at least 18 years old	April 1, 2024	Amend: 918-200-0070
Updates the scope of the specialized plumber inspector certification	July 1, 2024	Amend: 918-098-1570
Amends the mechanical minor label inspection program to allow for statewide implementation	July 1, 2024	Amend: 918-440-0520
Adopts the 2023 Oregon Residential Reach Code	July 1, 2024	Adopt: 918-465-0050
Establishing a process for creating and publishing permit-ready plans	July 1, 2024	Adopt: 918-001-0500, 918-001-0505, 918-001-0510, 918-001-0515, 918-001-0520, 918-001-0525, 918-001-0530
Adopts the 2024 Oregon Boiler and Pressure Vessel Specialty Code	Oct. 1, 2024	Amend: 918-225-0430
Amends 2023 Oregon Residential Specialty Code Section R310.1 reverting language to 2021 ORSC language.	Oct. 1, 2024	Amend: 918-480-0010



*Sequoia Crossing is a 60 unit affordable housing project located in Salem, Oregon. Twenty units include project-based permanent supportive housing.*



Department of Consumer  
and Business Services

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Salem, OR 97304

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[oregon.gov/bcd](http://oregon.gov/bcd)



**Agenda  
Item  
VII**

**State of Oregon**

**Board memo**

**Building Codes Division**

**May 7, 2025**

**To:** Building Codes Structures Board

**From:** Pierre Sabagh, policy analyst, Policy and Technical Services

**Subject:** 2025 Oregon Structural Specialty Code Single-Exit Stairway Amendment Appendix

**Action requested:**

The division requests the board review and approve the proposed amendment appendix to be added to the 2025 OSSC regarding single-exit stairways.

**Background:**

ORS 455.610 requires that the division, with the approval of the Building Codes Structures Board, adopt minimum standards for construction, reconstruction, alteration and repair of buildings and other structures. These standards are adopted as the Oregon Structural Specialty Code (OSSC). The anticipated effective date for the 2025 OSSC is October 1, 2025.

House Bill (HB) 3395 was passed during the 2023 Oregon Legislative session. Under this bill, Section 8 requires the division, through the Building Codes Structures Board, to review and consider updates to the OSSC established under ORS 455.132, to allow a residential occupancy to be served by a single exit, consistent with the appropriate policies of this state.

At the October 9, 2024, BCSB board meeting, the board reviewed Public Proposal 02, or PP-02. PP-02 was proposed by Michael Andersen during the public proposal period for the 2025 OSSC. This proposal centered around alternative safety measures for small-footprint apartment buildings of up to six stories above grade plane and no more than 20 dwellings to be served with a single exit. The board upheld the technical code review committee's disapproval of this public code amendment proposal from inclusion in the 2025 OSSC and recommended the division convene a workgroup to further explore the topic after the related national discussions were concluded. The purpose of the workgroup was to possibly develop a recommendation for future considerations by the board regarding the expansion of single exit stairways, in accordance with further "review and consideration" under HB 3395.

On March 26, 2025, the division hosted a workgroup for the issue, as recommended by the board. Workgroup participants included:

- Michael Andersen, Sightline Institute (Original Proponent)
- Stephen Smith, Center for Building in North America (Original Proponent)
- Greg Rogers, NFPA Regional Representative
- Chase Browning, NFSA
- Tom Jaleski, Jensen Hughes
- Michael Barrett, HBX Studio
- Jody Orrison, City of Portland
- Al Rossi, City of Salem
- Sean Blaire, City of Gresham
- Chad Hawkins, Department of State Fire Marshal
- Clair McGrew, Department of State Fire Marshal
- Shawn Olson, Oregon Fire Marshal's Association
- Anne-Marie Storms, Oregon Fire Marshal's Association
- Brian Stewart, Clackamas County Fire District

At this meeting, the division proposed aligning closely with where the national model code process is headed under the upcoming 2027 IBC; recognizing the same national technical amendment regarding allowable configurations served by a single-exit stairway only in an appendix format intended to serve as a prospective local amendment adoption option. The City of Portland suggested a series of specific, unique amendments to the technical national model provisions proposed. These amendments would exceed the national model code provisions regarding several technical elements such as required minimum stairway width; the minimum required automatic fire sprinkler system designation and standard; and maximum allowable building height, among others.

The initial feedback from the other workgroup participants was to remain aligned with the national model language, but several participants requested additional time to further review the suggestions from City of Portland staff. The feedback received from the majority of workgroup participants, after additional time to review the suggested edits to the national model code, was to remain aligned with the national model proposal technical language. This feedback is attached for the board's reference.

Accordingly, the proposed draft appendix to be added to the 2025 OSSC is based on the national model technical criteria approved for the 2027 IBC – including one correction noted by the City of Portland staff related to *emergency escape and rescue openings*. This appendix is intended to serve as a prospective local amendment option for local municipalities to consider without requiring the municipality to request a local amendment under ORS 455.040 from the division. The appendix must be adopted as it is approved and published, and will require engagement from, and approval of, the local fire service within each municipality considering adoption.

#### **Options:**

- Approve the proposed amendment appendix for inclusion in the 2025 OSSC, with the finding that the added cost, if any, is necessary to the health and safety of the occupants or the public or necessary to conserve scarce resources, and forward to the Administrator for rulemaking.

- Amend and approve the proposed amendment appendix for inclusion in the 2025 OSSC, with the finding that the added cost, if any, is necessary to the health and safety of the occupants or the public or necessary to conserve scarce resources, and forward to the Administrator for rulemaking.
- Disapprove the proposed amendment appendix, which would result in no change to the publishing of the 2025 OSSC, as approved by the board at their October 9, 2024 meeting and already forwarded to the Administrator for subsequent rulemaking.

# Draft code language

## APPENDIX Q Single Exit Provisions for Buildings Containing Group R-2 Dwelling Units

*Appendix Q is not adopted as part of this code and is only enforceable where approved by the local fire service and adopted by the local municipality.*

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*User note: Appendix Q provides provisions that allow a single exit stairway to serve certain Group R-2 occupancies that are multifamily residential structures not greater than four stories above grade plane. The purpose of this appendix is to allow a single exit stairway in residential buildings containing Group R-2 dwelling units exceeding three stories above grade plane under the stated parameters. This appendix provides an alternative single exit stairway design option to those listed in Chapter 10 Section 1006.3.3.*

*The capabilities of and resources available to the responding fire and emergency service agency shall be considered locally prior to adoption of this appendix. Not all agencies have the appropriate aerial apparatus, personnel, operational response capabilities, or water supply necessary to adequately respond to a structure designed using this appendix.*

*Municipal reference or use of NFPA 1300: Standard on Community Risk Assessment and Community Risk Reduction Plan Development, Center for Public Safety Excellence Commission on Fire Accreditation International (CPSE CFAI) Community Risk Assessment: Standard of Cover guide may be determined to be an appropriate means or methodology to measure the local fire and emergency service agency's ability to adequately respond to these types of structures and their occupants during emergent conditions.*

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### SECTION Q101—GENERAL

**Q101.1 Applicability.** Where approved by the local fire service and adopted by the local *municipality*, the provisions of this appendix shall be permitted.

**Q101.2 General.** In addition to the *means of egress* requirements of Chapter 10, buildings containing Group R-2 *dwelling units* shall be permitted to be served by a single exit stairway under the following conditions:

1. The building shall not exceed four stories above grade plane in *building height*.
2. The *net floor area* of each story shall not exceed 4,000 square feet (418.5 m<sup>2</sup>).
3. Not more than four *dwelling units* shall be located on any *story*.
4. Exit access travel distance shall not exceed 125 feet (38 100 mm) feet.
5. Openings to *interior exit stairway* enclosures shall be limited to those required for exit access into the enclosure from normally occupied spaces, those required for egress from the enclosure, and openings to the exterior. Elevators shall not open into the *interior exit stairway* enclosure.
6. *Emergency escape and rescue openings* shall be provided in accordance with Section 1031.
7. A *manual fire alarm system* and *automatic smoke detection system* that activates the occupant notification system in accordance with Section 907.5 shall be provided. Smoke detectors shall be located in common spaces outside of *dwelling units*, including but not limited to; gathering areas, laundry rooms, mechanical equipment rooms, storage rooms, interior corridors, *interior exit stairways*, and *exit passageways*.
8. Regardless of the building or stairway type of construction, *automatic sprinkler* locations in *interior exit stairways* shall comply with the requirements of NFPA 13 for combustible stairways.
9. Electrical receptacles shall not be permitted in *interior exit stairways*.



**Oregon**

Tina Kotek, Governor



Department of Consumer  
and Business Services

## 2025 Oregon Structural Specialty Code Single-Exit Stairway Amendment Appendix Feedback

The initial feedback from the other workgroup participants was to remain aligned with the national model language, but several participants requested additional time to further review the suggestions from the City of Portland staff. The feedback received from the majority of workgroup participants was to remain aligned with the national model proposed technical language.

The proposed draft appendix to be added to the 2025 OSSC is based on the national model technical criteria approved for the 2027 IBC- including one correction noted by the City of Portland staff related to *emergency escape and rescue openings*. This appendix is intended to serve as a prospective local amendment option for local municipalities to consider without requiring the municipality to request a local amendment under ORS 455.040 from the division. The appendix must be adopted as it is approved and published, and will require engagement from and approval of the local fire service within each municipality considering adoption.

### Comments/ Feedback:

Wednesday, March 26 - Stephen Smith

- Wider and wider stairs have become a real sticking point in Canada in particular. I am worried that by conceding a 48" stair at four stories, there will be requests for even wider ones once the topic of six-story buildings is dealt with in the future. 60" stairs have been mentioned before in other jurisdictions.
- See attached for a study from Canada about the impact of wider stair widths on stairwell areas. The issue is that it isn't just 2 ft. (one foot for each flight of the stairs)- with switchback stairs, it's also the landings on both sides that need to increase by 1 ft. each in each dimension, to accommodate the turn. The specifics of this attachment are in metric and not totally in alignment with what we're discussing (they're talking about 1.5m stairs in Canada, if you can believe that), but the general point is to support what I said in the meeting, which is that the area consumed by the stairway increases at a rate that is greater than the width of the stair (since the area of the landings and exterior walls are governed by the Pythagorean theorem, which has an exponential rate of growth). In other words, by increasing the stair width 33% (from 36" to 48"), you are increasing the size of the stairwell by more than 33% (I think the attached diagram actually undersells it slightly, because they measured the area interior to the stairwell, whereas it's actually the exterior area that you want to look at).

I understand that without this in the appendix, Portland Fire and other fire departments may lobby against adoption. My organization's position is that that's a risk worth taking to stick to the model code language and not encourage the double standard that I discussed in the meeting and also not encourage a dynamic in the future where stairs even wider than not only NYC/Seattle's 36", but also wider than a potential 48" stairway width are proposed for buildings that are five or six stories in height.

Wednesday, April 2 - Michael Barrett

As a practicing Architect, I support adopting uniform IBC language as much as possible within local adoptions. I encourage BCD to adopt the 2027 IBC language without modifications as an appendix within the 2025 OSSC adoption process.

Anticipating that the majority of new dwelling units created under this modification will be built within the City of Portland, I appreciate their internal discussions about equivalent risk and means and methods for fire rescue. If BCD desires to incorporate some of their amendments, I do not take exception to the 48" wide stair as we want to encourage more use of stairs than elevators and the added width does not affect the overall net building area.

I do recommend eliminating the maximum height of 40' and not including any height limit, as this may limit ground floor use which typically require larger than 10' ceilings. If concern about the maximum height from the grade plane for emergency escape and rescue openings, then it is reasonable to set a limit to this sill height.

Wednesday, April 2 - Claire McGrew

We met as a group and ultimately, OSFM, OFMA, and OFCA support the following:

1. The Oregon fire service follows International Model Code and supports local adoption of additional requirements. This ensures statewide consistency and the ability for local fire jurisdictions to be able to address any additional requirements that their locale is interested in.
2. The proposed language for the 2027 IBC in appendix form supports both firefighter and resident safety and allows for local to adopt more stringent requirements if necessary.
3. We appreciate for the opportunity to review and for the ability to review the local (Portland) recommendations as well that we also alternate from the 2027 IBC.

Overall, at this time, the identified partners stand behind the language in the 2027 IBC appendix with no additional changes.

Wednesday, April 2 - Michael Andersen

Two points of feedback:

1. If Oregon is not going to consider any options for allowing jurisdictions to go beyond the ICC model code, then it should not be more restrictive than the ICC model code seems likely to become.
2. As Sightline and others have been saying for a couple years now, it makes sense to give some jurisdictions the option to opt out based on whether their fire service has adequate access to a ladder truck etc. But there should be some guidance on how a local jurisdiction or fire service should evaluate this decision. ("Do you have adequate access to equipment that could get people off the fourth story of a building?") One small-town fire official I spoke with last year observed that without any guidance, some fire officials are unlikely to understand the basis on which they're supposed to make such a decision.

I think both of these decisions would be consistent with the statute's mandate that BCD "reduce, to the extent practicable, costs and barriers to the construction of midsize multifamily dwellings, including those offering family-size housing with sprinklers on smaller lots, while maintaining safety, public health and the general welfare with respect to construction and occupancy."

