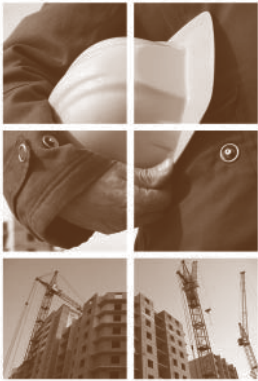


Hammer & Nail

City of Boise Planning & Development Services
Spring 2008 Vol. 14, No. 2



Strong Building Regulations Save Lives



National Building Safety Week is May 5-11.

Spring 2008

2

Building Updates
Neighborhood Reinvestment Grants Awarded

3

EPA Audit Triggers
Erosion Control Changes

4

Fire Updates

5

Blueprint Boise Development Preference Survey
Planning Updates

6

Commercial Cooking Equipment

After more than 17,000 people perished in a massive 1999 earthquake in Turkey, people questioned why so many residential buildings collapsed. BBC News Europe ran the following:

“Cheaply-built, illegal housing lies at the heart of this disaster, said engineering experts. It accounts for why so many houses just crumpled like packs of cards and why older or more solid buildings remained intact.

Turkey’s Chamber of Commerce estimates that some 65 per cent of all buildings are constructed without a permit or with scant attention to building regulations. More than half the population in Istanbul is living in illegal accommodation, it says.”¹

Building construction regulations can be traced through history for more than 4,000 years. Over time, people became increasingly aware of ways to avoid the consequences of building-construction failures and have incorporated these methods into today’s building codes.

Enforcement Can Prevent Disasters

Building safety doesn’t usually receive much attention until a major natural disaster occurs or there is a well-publicized building failure. Because of strong building code enforcement in the United States, the death toll from serious earthquakes and other natural disasters or fires are quite low in comparison to countries that have no building codes or inadequate enforcement.

The safety measures designed by engineers and architects, built by contractors and reviewed and inspected by City reviewers are never really tested until an adverse event occurs. No one ever really knows how many lives are saved because the code was followed. The entire construction industry, including building inspectors, contractors, architects and developers, play a key pre-emptive role in keeping the public safe by using and adhering to building codes.

During National Building Safety Week, the City of Boise will recognize several local building owners who improved the public’s safety during 2007.

Boise Celebrates National Building Safety Week

During National Building Safety Week (May 5-11), the City of Boise will remind citizens and customers about the essential role building safety plays in protecting their lives and properties. PDS will recognize three local building owners who measurably improved the public’s safety with building safety upgrades, the utilization of green construction methods, and enhanced building accessibility during 2007.

We’ll post additional Building Safety Week activities on our website (www.cityofboise.org/pds) in the coming weeks. We thank all of you for your part in making Boise’s buildings safe for everyone.

1. “World: Europe Turkish fury over shoddy housing.” BBC News. 16 November 1999 <<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/423702.stm>>

Building Division Updates



New Residential Retaining Wall Criteria

Concrete, stone and other decorative walls are common residential landscape features. They often serve dual purposes, including creating visual interest and stabilizing a site. Determining when residential landscape walls are mostly decorative versus structural, therefore meriting more safety features and closer scrutiny, remained unaddressed until the latest code addition.

For years, the building code only addressed retaining walls over four feet high and they were not specifically addressed in the residential code. In the **2006 International Residential Code**, a section was added which describes when a wall becomes a “retaining wall” and specific design criteria for retaining walls. The code section is as follows:

2006 IRC, R404.5 Retaining walls that are not laterally supported at the top and that retain in excess of 24 inches of unbalanced fill shall be designed to ensure stability against overturning, sliding, excessive foundation pressure and water uplift. Retaining wall shall be designed for a safety factor of 1.5 against lateral sliding and overturning.

Policy Development Group

PDS recently chartered an internal Policy Development Group which is charged with promoting uniformity of code interpretation and application of building codes in Boise. The Policy Development Group meets weekly and develops policies, reviews requests for alternates and provides technical assistance to the building official.

Two recent policies were reviewed and approved in March:

- **Cable Guard Rails** Establishes the provisions for flexible cable guard rail installations.
- **Foundation & Retaining Walls Including Foundation Anchorage** Modifies the code section and returns the wording to its original intent.

To review these recent policies and future Building Division Policies and Official Code Interpretations, visit our website at www.cityofboise.org/pds.

City Funds Neighborhood Improvement Projects

2008 Neighborhood Reinvestment Grants Total Nearly \$500,000

Twelve Boise neighborhoods will receive grants totaling almost half a million dollars for a wide variety of improvement projects including park facilities, new sidewalks and bike path repairs.

In announcing the recipients of the **2008 Neighborhood Reinvestment Program Grants**, Mayor David Bieter praised the city’s neighborhoods for working actively to enhance the safety and vitality of Boise. “Healthy neighborhoods form the cornerstone of a livable city, and these grants are a way for Boise’s neighborhoods to tell City Hall how they want to guide their future.”

In all, 12 Boise neighborhood associations will receive 19 grants totaling \$499,050. Among the projects selected to receive funding are historic streetlights along Vista and Warm Springs avenues and at Capital Park; pedestrian safety projects along Boise Avenue and Gekeler Lane; park improvements (including playground, picnic shelter, volleyball court, horseshoe pits, restrooms) at Camelsback, Morris Hill,

“Healthy neighborhoods form the cornerstone of a livable city, and these grants are a way for Boise’s neighborhoods to tell City Hall how they want to guide their future.”

Mayor David Bieter

Peppermint and Skyline parks; and gathering space and beautification projects at Trailwind and Washington schools.

Since 1994, the city has allocated more than \$3 million through the Neighborhood Reinvestment Program for a variety of neighborhood projects. Neighborhood associations propose the projects, apply for the grants and, once funded, work with city departments and other agencies to complete the improvements.

EPA Audit Triggers Erosion Control Changes



Last August, the Environmental Protection Agency's National Enforcement and Investigation Center (NEIC) audited the Boise/Garden City Area Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) NPDES permit. As part of this audit, PDS' construction site erosion and sediment control program was reviewed, and auditors conducted "ride-alongs" with City staff.

New Project Ranking

Based on audit feedback, we are making changes to our erosion & sediment control program. In May, we will begin "ranking" all submitted building projects for erosion and sediment control hazards. The rankings are based on several factors, including area of land disturbance, location (distance to the Boise River, irrigation canals or other tributary or wetlands, foothills or non-foothills), and slope percentage. Soil type and depth to ground water will also be considered. The number of City site inspection visits will be based on this ranking.

Projects with land disturbances within 100 feet of the river, canals, or other tributaries (free flowing or intermittent) and wetlands will

be classified as "Environmental Sensitive Areas" (ES). Projects with disturbances on slopes of 10% or greater will also receive an ES ranking.

Additional Inspections Required

All projects will receive a site preparation inspection and a final inspection where erosion and sediment control best management practices will be inspected and verified. Some projects will receive additional inspections due to construction length and environmental sensitivities. To increase inspection coverage, PDS will utilize other inspector workgroups to verify erosion and sediment control throughout the inspection process.

These changes will elevate Boise's level of compliance to the MS4 permit and will help contractors achieve better compliance with Boise's ordinance requirements and the Federal Construction General Permit.

Erosion & Sediment Control Training a Success



"Effective Erosion & Sediment Control: Know Your Options"

The Partners for Clean Water, along with the City of Boise, EPA, AGC and Brown & Caldwell, sponsored two days of comprehensive erosion and sediment control training on March 11-12. The workshop targeted the "boots on the ground" individuals who are involved in on-going construction sites.

Day one's session, titled "Stormwater 101," was offered by Brown & Caldwell. Presenters included Cyndi Grafe (EPA) Steve Burgos (Brown & Caldwell), Steve Webb (City of Boise), and Rex Hansen (American GeoTechnics). Federal and local regulations were emphasized.

Day two took place at the ITD quarry on Ten Mile Creek Rd. A mock construction site was set up and a Stormwater Pollution

Prevention Plan (SWPPP) was prepared for the site by Adam Lyman of American GeoTechnics. Attendees broke into groups and toured the site and listened to the presenters discuss the Best Management Practices used at each station. The appropriate use and installation were also discussed and demonstrated.

With the support of local vendors, suppliers and inspectors, we were able to offer a successful and information-packed workshop. Additional training will be offered in the future. It is imperative that construction industry personnel receive training to ensure compliance with local and federal permit requirements.

Fire Plan Review Division Updates

Cooking Hood Wet Chemical Fire Suppression Systems

All fire-related permits, even permits issued online, must be inspected. Cooking hood wet chemical fire suppression systems are no exception. The City inspects these systems to verify the system design, installation, and functional operation meets listing and code requirements.

Please ensure all the manufacturer's cut sheets and design information are on site at the time of the inspection. The manufacturer's design sheets include all the pre-engineered design options, so be sure to circle the specific piping configuration, nozzles, and other devices which apply to your installation. Because these are pre-engineered systems, one of the listed design options must be followed. No alternative designs can be accepted. Prior to the inspection, installers should double check the piping and nozzles to ensure they are in accordance with the selected design option. This will save you time and money.

Staff Changes

Building Division

Our new Erosion Control Inspectors are **Clint Smith** and **Jim Rogers**.

Mike Timmerman is no longer with PDS.

Planning Division

Front Desk Planner **David Moser** has been promoted to a Planner II.

Secretary **Pam Engelhardt** has transferred to Code Enforcement from our Comprehensive Planning Division. **Pam Baldwin**, who ran our Records Center, is our new Comp. Planning Secretary.

We hired **Hattie James** to run our Record Center.

Two Permit Applications Required

When we review submittal packets for completeness at the front counter, we often find that applicants only provide one copy of the application form. We require at least two copies of the permit application, as well as other plans and required documents.

Your Fire Inspector Would Like To Hear From You!

Did you know you can schedule a "conference" with your fire inspector? Conferences are useful to resolve unexpected field installation problems or other design-related concerns with a fire inspector before the final inspection. Scheduling a conference as soon as an issue becomes apparent saves money and time. Waiting until the final inspection to resolve such issues can be expensive and result in anxious tenants. Use PDS Online at www.cityofboise.org/pds to schedule a conference with a fire inspector.



Inspector Phone Numbers

Structural Inspection

George Slane (305)	794-6239
Jim Storey (301)	794-9490
Tom Arcoraci (408)	794-9368
David Hannah (425)	794-1967
Jim Sly (316)	794-9465
Tony Young (415)	794-9462
Michael Jordan (450)	794-9473

Plumbing Inspection

Lee Rice (309)	794-9486
Daryl Spivey (353)	794-9485
Jim Johnson (360)	794-9476
Bill Vandegrift (330)	794-9372
Eric J. Strole (380)	794-9379

Electrical Inspection

Jim Schmer (324)	794-9423
Jack Frank (315)	794-1930
Mike Kinnear (412)	794-1379
Pat Lass (336)	794-9478
Bob Reichert (370)	794-1923
Bill Thomas (432)	794-9492

Mechanical Inspection

Alan Hauser (350)	794-9453
Dixie Fellows (411)	794-6208
Troy James (435)	794-9461

Fire Inspection

Sam Rogers	395-7809
Forrest France (410)	794-1981
Troy Cobbley (430)	794-9483
Ken Roule	724-2744

Erosion Control

Steve Webb (420)	794-9491
Clint Smith	724-8996
Jim Rogers	724-9463

Code Enforcement

Mike Meloy	794-9488
Scott Brown	794-9484
Dena Gambrel	794-4052
Carol Montgomery	794-9481
Michael Garner	514-9835
Joe Venneman	794-1195

Special Projects

Bob Archibald (325)	794-9459
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Blueprint Boise Comprehensive Plan Update

Blueprint Boise

Development Preference Survey

In late February, the City hosted two public meetings and polled participants about their opinions on future development trends in the City. There were well over 100 participants, and the feedback we received will be crucial as we develop new Comprehensive Plan policies and objectives that reflect the desires of the community.

If you couldn't attend the meetings, please take time to visit the project website at www.blueprintboise.org to take a development preference survey. The development preference survey asks participants to vote on how well the draft Guiding Vision and Principles represent their vision for the City of Boise's future. The survey also provides participants the opportunity to view development types within the city and vote on the appropriateness of development types citywide and within their planning area.



What kind of development do you want in your neighborhood?

Take the development preference survey at www.blueprintboise.org.

Blueprint Boise's next phase entails drafting policies and objectives based on the input received from the public, the Neighborhood Council and the Committee of Champions.

Ordinance Review Committee Update

The Ordinance Review Committee is rolling up their sleeves to review a proposed outline of the new development code. They will begin reviewing new code over the next several months. We will post draft code for public review on the project website.

Planning Division Updates

Electronic Transmittals

Planning & Development Services is making changes to better serve our applicants and commenting agencies. We now transmit all applications to commenting agencies electronically, giving them more time to perform their reviews.

Hearing Agendas Link Directly to Staff Reports

We've also revamped the hearing agendas posted on our website. Each file number listed within the agenda is now a link that automatically opens the project within our PDS Online website. There you'll find staff reports, the original application, site plans, maps and more. This gives applicants, own-

ers and other interested parties the opportunity to review information well ahead of hearings, and without traveling to City Hall. To view the hearing agendas, go to www.cityofboise.org/pds.

These changes provide a more efficient distribution of information and ultimately save the City money by greatly reducing the amount of paper used and money spent on postage.

A New Look for Streets

Ada County Highway District is proposing numerous new cross sections for arterial and collector roadways. The new approach matches the street's cross section with the abutting land uses.

We encourage you to visit ACHD's website to familiarize yourself with the proposed street sections at www.achd.ada.id.us/Departments/PP/TLIP.aspx. Scroll to mid-page and see the heading "documents currently under discussion".

No Commercial Cooking Equipment in Dwellings

The City of Boise is still enforcing the 2003 International Mechanical Code. We've had several inquiries about commercial cooking equipment and residential installations, so we are reprinting this article from our Winter 2003 issue.

Q. Can commercial cooking equipment be installed within a dwelling unit?

A. No. The International Mechanical Code (IMC) Section 917.2 prohibits cooking appliances designed, tested, listed and labeled for use in commercial occupancies from being installed within dwelling units or within any area where domestic cooking operations occur. Standards for commercial appliances consider the user to be a trained operator. Standards for household appliances consider that children will be near the appliance.

IMC Section 917.3 allows cooking appliances listed and labeled as household-type to be used for domestic use in dwelling units.

Commercial cooking appliances may not be installed within dwelling units or within any area where domestic cooking operations occur.

Many homeowners want the look of commercial appliances in their kitchens and several of the major manufacturers are responding by making household-type appliances, which look and operate like commercial appliances.

This article originally appeared in the Fall 2002 edition of "The Code Authority" and is reprinted with the permission of Underwriters Laboratories Inc. Additional information can be found at their website: www.ul.com/auth/tca/index.html



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