

INSPECTIONS & ZONING UPDATE

Volume 3 Issue 4

Fall 2008

BUILDING CODE & ZONING NEWS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY THROUGHOUT CATAWBA COUNTY

BUILDING CODE NEWS

Energy Code Training:



Governor Easley invites your district to participate in a statewide energy code training program for residential and commercial construction. North Carolina recently secured a grant from the National Governor's Association to drive energy efficiency by supporting energy code education. The governor sees this as a crucial effort for

the citizens of North Carolina. Our energy code, code officials and contractors are the first line of defense as energy costs rise. Please participate in protecting North Carolina in a changing world.

- Contractors review residential & commercial energy conservation methods
- Inspectors, Architects meet your continuing education credits
- Help North Carolina by getting up to date on energy standards

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ELECTRICAL CODE NEWS

National Electrical Code:

When it comes to ground fault protection in the 2008 National Electrical Code, one turns to Article 210.8, “Ground-Fault Circuit-Interrupter Protection for Personnel” for all the answers to the locations GFCI protection is required. 210.8 states for buildings other than dwelling units, all 125-volt, single-phase, 15- and 20-ampere receptacles installed in bathrooms, kitchens, rooftops, and outdoors, shall have GFCI protection for personnel. That’s it, no mention of any other area, but if you plug in a vending machine anywhere not listed in 210.8, GFCI protection becomes an issue.

Article 422.51 of the 2008 NEC requires all cord-and-plug-connected vending machines manufactured or re-manufactured on or after January 1, 2005, to include a Ground Fault Circuit Interrupter (GFCI) as an integral part of the attachment plug or be located within 12 inches of the attachment plug.

Older vending machines manufactured or re-manufactured prior to January 1, 2005, shall be connected to a GFCI-protected outlet.

It’s fair to say there are a large number of vending machines manufactured before 2005 still in operation and being relocated on a daily basis. Vendors are probably not telling their customers of this GFCI requirement therefore putting patrons at risk for personal injury or electrocution.

Vending machines are not the only appliance required to be GFCI protected in the 2008 NEC. Article 422.52 requires that electric drinking fountains be protected with GFCI protection. This makes perfect sense. Electricity and water have never got along.

GFCI protection is smart, it’s simple and saves lives. They are here to stay protecting us from the things we take for granted every day. The next time you go for a snack and a drink just think, am I protected from electric shock from a GFCI? I sure hope so.



COUNTY LAND DEVELOPMENT NEWS

UNIFIED DEVELOPMENT ORDINANCE AMENDMENTS:



Catawba County adopted a comprehensive re-write of its land use regulations (zoning, subdivision and abandoned vehicles) on February 5, 2007. This document is known as the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO). When the UDO was adopted by the Board of Commissioners, staff indicated that it would reevaluate the ordinance and identify areas which justified modifications based upon practical application over the course of approximately one-year. Using input received from the Southeastern Chamber of Commerce, the Chamber of Commerce Land Use Development Committee, developers and citizens, staff compiled a list of approximately 40 items recommended to be amended. The amendments were presented

to the Board of Commissioners who adopted the amendments on October 20, 2008, which went into effect immediately. The amendments remove several ambiguous terms and standards, provide clarity, afford more flexibility and options to the developer, streamline the review and approval process, and allow alternative landscaping design based upon environmental concerns.

Following is a brief overview of changes to the UDO that relate to zoning permits and projects:

Increase height limitations in all zoning districts as follows:

- Residential – 45 feet
- Office/institutional – 45 feet
- Rural commercial – 45 feet
- Highway commercial – 70 feet
- Industrial – 70 feet

Reduce number of plantings and allow more flexibility in landscaping standards for parking lots, driveways, perimeter buffer, street trees and foundation plantings.

Increase wall signage requirements to 10% of the wall surface or up to a maximum of 75 square feet (from 32 square feet maximum), whichever is less.

Allow Light-Emitting Diodes (LED) signs without a setback requirement.

Allow uses which were previously prohibited in the Mixed-Use Corridor Overlay (MUC-O) subject to standards. Examples of uses now allowed are auto repair, vehicle sales, dry storage and mini-warehouses.

Allow ribbed paneling as accent material on buildings in the MUC-O, comprising no more than 25% of the building face area.

Allow accessory structures (i.e. outbuildings) to have a 5-foot separation from the house instead of a 10-foot-separation.

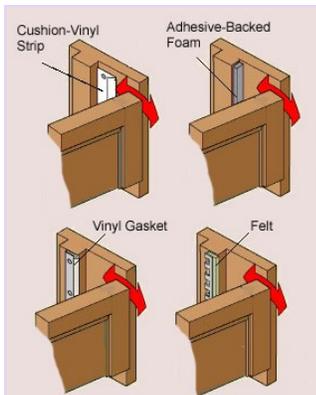
Allow swimming pools to have a 5-foot separation from the house instead of a 10-foot separation.

Decks are no longer considered part of the house in terms of measuring the separation requirement.

For details on the ordinance amendments, you may contact the Planning, Parks & Development Department at (828) 465-8380 or visit the Planning Department's web site at: www.catawbacountync.gov/depts/planning/

PLAN REVIEW NEWS

Smoke and draft control doors:

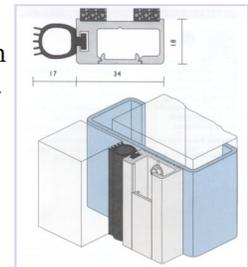


Section 715.3.3 of the NCBC requires that fire door assemblies located in corridors, smoke barriers and smoke partitions meet the requirements for a smoke- and draft-control door assembly tested in accordance with UL 1784. This is in addition to the required 20 minute fire-resistance-rating. This standard is intended to address the movement of smoke through a door located in a fire-resistance-rated assembly. Most doors that are labeled for smoke- and draft-control require a gasketing system to be installed in the field. Installation is to be in compliance with the manufacturer's instructions.

It is important to note that compliance with this standard is not required for all corridors, only those required to be fire-resistance-rated in accordance with Section 1016.1. Smoke barriers and smoke partitions are typically associated with I-2 (hospital) occupancies as specified in section 407 of the NCBC.

Section 715.3.5.3 of the NCBC requires that all smoke and draft control doors be labeled and show the letter "S" on the fire rating label of the door. Per section 715.3.5.1, fire door labels shall show the name of manufacturer, third party inspection agency and fire protection rating. In addition, smoke and draft control doors complying with UL 1784 shall be labeled as such.

Without this label it is difficult to assess in the field whether a door has this feature both for inspectors and future maintenance. Verifying this information in the construction document door schedule would further help to insure compliance in the field.



PLUMBING CODE NEWS

Plumbing Code Workshops

The 2009 plumbing code will be effective on January 1st 2009. There will be a grace period of six months for use of either code on a project during this time frame, however you cannot mix and match the two codes. The North Carolina 2009 plumbing code is based on the 2006 International Plumbing Code with North Carolina amendments. On this note there are several continuing education classes offered in the spring of 2009. These plumbing workshops are approved by the N.C. Plumbing Heating License Board for 6 hours of continuing education credit for license renewal. The workshop locations are as follows:

Feb. 10th 2009 Rocky Mount
 March 12th 2009 Morganton
 April 16th 2009 Wilmington
 May 6th 2009 High Point
 June 8th 2009 Nags Head Beach

For registration and location information please contact Reid Goforth at (828) 312-5709.



COUNTY PERMIT CENTER NEWS



Permits Issued from July 2008 through Sept 2008: The Catawba County Permit Center issued a total of 2,167 permits in the last quarter, with a total cost of construction of \$74,598,485. There were 75 new single-family dwelling permits issued during this same time period. A few of the larger commercial projects were: an addition to Poppelmann Properties USA LLC, Fred T. Foard High School addition, and an addition to Pin Station.

Permit Center Software: The search for a new Permitting and Inspections software system continues. Catawba County originally received eight separate bids from potential vendors. After completing evaluations, demonstrations, and site visits to jurisdictions currently using the software, the list has been narrowed to two vendors. The final decision on the software will be made very soon, and the proposal will then be sent to the Catawba County Board of Commissioners for approval. Upon receiving an approval, the software vendor will begin customizing the software to meet our needs and begin the installation process. Due to the amount of customization, it is expected to take approximately 8 to 10 months to complete the installation. One reason for the extensive customization is due to the requirement that this software be “shared” with all other jurisdictions that Catawba County provides Building Inspections Services too. This will include the Cities of Newton, Hickory, Conover, Claremont, Catawba, Maiden, and Longview. The software will provide a unified system of permitting throughout the county. This unification will help in standardizing many of the processes and tasks for the different departments as well as the general public.

(Building Code News from page 1)

This training is brought to you free of charge by Mathis Consulting Company a building science consulting company in cooperation with Catawba County Building Services and the City of Hickory.

Where: Highland Rec. Center @ Stanford Park
In the Community Room
1451 8th Street Drive NE
Hickory, NC 28601

When: Thursday November 20th, 2008
Registration 12:30 pm
Training 1 pm to 5 pm

For additional information or directions please contact Armin Wallner, Catawba County Building Official at (828) 465-8454 or (828) 217-1091 cell. Please do not contact Highland Recreation Center for directions.

Local Government Contacts

Catawba County Planning & Zoning

Ph. 828-465-8380 / Fax 828-465-8484

Catawba County Building Services Safety Inspections

Ph. 828-466-5130 / Fax 828-322-6814

Catawba County Fire Marshall

Ph. 828-465-8230 / Fax 828-464-4820

Catawba County Environmental Health

Ph. 828-465-8270 / Fax 828-465-8276

Catawba County Erosion Control

Ph. 828-465-8161

Catawba County Permit Centers

Ph. 828-465-8399

Fax 828-465-8962 *Newton* / Fax 828-322-6814 *Hickory*

City of Claremont Zoning

Ph. 828-459-7009 / Fax 828-459-0596

City of Claremont Fire Department

Ph. 828-459-9296

City of Conover Zoning

Ph. 828-464-1191 / Fax 828-465-5177

City of Conover Fire

Ph. 828-464-1295 / Fax 828-464-1253

City of Hickory DAC/Zoning

Ph. 828-323-7556 / Fax 828-323-7474

City of Hickory Fire

Ph. 828-322-7522 / Fax 828-323-7476

City of Newton Zoning

Ph. 828-465-7400 / Fax 828-465-7412

City of Newton Fire

Ph. 828-695-4284 / Fax 828-465-7453

Town of Catawba Zoning

Ph. 828-241-2215 \ Fax 828-241-9968

Town of Catawba Fire Inspections

Contact County Fire Marshal's Office

Town of Longview Zoning

Ph. 828-322-3921 / Fax 828-322-1567

Town of Longview Fire Inspections

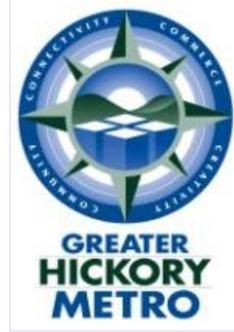
Contact County Fire Marshal's Office

Town of Maiden Zoning

Ph. 828-428-5007 / Fax 828-428-5017

Town of Maiden Fire Inspections

Contact County Fire Marshal's Office



CATAWBA COUNTY GOVERNMENT

Building Services Division

100-A SW Blvd

PO Box 389

Newton, NC 28658-0389

For additional information regarding building codes and services in Catawba County please visit the Catawba County website at <http://www.catawbacountync.gov/depts/u&e/building.asp>

For additional assistance please contact the following personnel:

Armin Wallner, Chief Building Services Official

828.217.1091 or Awallner@catawbacountync.gov

Joel Herman, Assistant Chief Building Services Official

828. 312.5713 or joelh@catawbacountync.gov

Brandon Lewis, Plan Review Supervisor

828.217.0463 or Blewis@catawbacountync.gov

David Smith, Permit Center Supervisor

828.217.3037 or dsmith@catawbacountync.gov

Reid Goforth, Eastern Area Supervisor

828.312.5709 or reid@catawbacountync.gov

Jeff Hinkle, Western Area Supervisor

828.217.1034 or Jhinkle@catawbacountync.gov