

THE PLANS Examiner

Vol. 7, No. 5 City of Portland Office of Planning and Development Review

May 2001

Rainwater harvesting code guide offered

The Office of Planning and Development Review (OPDR), in conjunction with the Green Building Initiative, has created a code guide addressing rainwater harvesting. Adopted in March, the guide clearly outlines requirements for collection, storage and distribution systems that use rainwater for irrigation, hose bibbs, water closets and urinals.

Rainwater is not safe drinking water, but is valuable for use to water gardens and flush toilets, thus conserving drinking water supplies.

The requirements and allowances specified in the code guide are for a Rainwater Harvesting System (RWS), based on a four-occupant home. Here's how a system generally works:

- Rainwater falling on a rooftop is transported to a holding tank (cistern) via downspouts and gutters.
- Screens and a device called a roof washer filter the water before it enters the cistern and the pipe distribution network.
- Pipe networks distribute the water from the cistern to supply the various fixtures.

The guide provides specific requirements for each portion of the system. Screens, the roof washer, cistern and pipe marking are addressed in the guide in detail.

Permits

Installation of a RWS requires a plumbing permit. If pumps are part of the system, an electrical permit is also necessary. A building permit may be needed for cistern footings, foundations, enclosures and roof structures. A grading permit or erosion control may be required for underground cisterns.

Permits are not required for RWS intended only for irrigation, but the systems still must be approved by the Bureau of Environmental Services for stormwater management.

Permit application and plans

When you apply for permits, you'll need to provide: a site or plot plan which shows site elevations; the number of occupants using the system; an isometric drawing of the rainwater harvesting system with piping and section diagrams; the location of domestic potable water systems, including size and dimensions; and the manufacturer's specifications for the cistern and the pump.

- Cisterns to be located on tops of buildings or on sloping sites also require structural engineering diagrams.
- Planning and Zoning will review RWS proposals to determine cistern placement and what, if any, erosion control measures will be necessary.
- Once installed and approved, the RWS must be recorded with Multnomah County as part of the deed to the property, and a copy of the recorded document must be supplied to OPDR.

More information

A copy of the code guide can be obtained in the OPDR Development Services Center, 1900 SW 4th Avenue, at the Trade Permit Counter or from our Web site at <http://www.opdr.ci.portland.or.us>

For additional information contact Lori Graham, 503-823-3448 or grahaml@ci.portland.or.us.

The Office of Planning and Development Review works with the community and other bureaus to preserve and shape safe, vital and well planned urban environments.



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INSIDE the DSC

Credit, debit cards now accepted

On April 2, the Office of Planning and Development Review began accepting VISA, MasterCard and bank debit cards to pay fees in the Development Services Center (DSC). Sorry, no other credit cards are accepted. You may pay fees charged by the Bureaus of Environmental Services, Transportation, Parks, Fire and OPDR, but not Water Bureau fees for new water service and water meters. These must be paid by cash, check or trust account. Of course, you can still pay all fees in these ways.

Here are a few things to remember about our system:

- Debit cards may be used only for face-to-face transactions in the DSC. No “fax back.”
- To protect our customers, credit cards must be pre-registered in person for “fax back” permit service at the Trade Permits Counter in the DSC between 7:30 a.m. and 3:00 p.m.
- Electronic payments cannot be processed by phone or fax, with the exception of pre-registered “fax back” service.
- “Fax back” customers, who come into the DSC, must show their credit card. It’s added protection against unauthorized use.

“Customers no longer have to worry about having the exact amount or a trust account balance, and card holders can feel secure with the “fax back” system, because they don’t need to send their card number over a fax machine,” says Martha Shonya, OPDR VISA/MasterCard project coordinator.

If you have questions, contact Martha, OPDR, **503-823-7822**.

Open House

Code Maintenance 2001

Proposed Report and Recommendations

4:30 - 7:30 p.m. — May 22, 2001

1900 SW 4th Avenue, 4th Floor, Room 4A

Review the proposal and ask questions of the staff. Copies of the report and recommendations are available at the open house, or may be obtained at OPDR’s office on the 4th floor, 1900 SW 4th Avenue or in Neighborhood Coalition offices.

If you have questions, call Douglas Hardy, **503-823-7816**.

Noise Control Task Force forwards recommendations to City Council

The Noise Control Task Force, a citizen’s advisory committee, recommended several changes to the City Code and policy and how they are enforced.

The Noise Review Board held a public hearing on these recommendations on May 2 and now moves on to two work sessions, scheduled for 6:00 p.m., May 9 and 16.

The recommended changes include:

- The Police Bureau being the first-responder on “neighbor-to-neighbor” noise problems, such as loud stereos, parties and vehicle noise;
- The Noise Office focusing on measurable, recurring problems and issuing and monitoring variances along with handling administrative services;
- Setting daytime decibel levels for leafblowers and sweepers and banning nighttime use (10:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m.) of leafblowers on residential properties;
- Setting maximum sound standards for garbage truck noise and establishing a mediation process when the hauler complies with the new standards;
- Setting a new standard for pile driving, including the use of sound shields, with an allowance to exceed the standard between 3:00 and 7:00 p.m.
- Increased penalties for violations and an improved citation process.

The complete recommendations are slated to go before City Council on June 20. For a copy of the recommendations, call Anne Kroma, **503-823-0634**, or visit our Web site, www.opdr.portland.ci.or.us/NOISE/documents/recommendsfinal.pdf

Noise variance needed for longer hours

If you’re planning to work longer to take advantage of the extra light, you may need to notify the neighbors and get a noise variance from the city. Construction before 7:00 a.m., after 6:00 p.m., on Sundays or if noise levels will exceed 85 dB are conditions that require a noise variance. The application is simple, but the process takes about 10 days, so plan ahead.

You must provide the reason for requesting a variance, your planned work schedule, the type of equipment to be used and proof that the neighbors have been contacted. If equipment is new or unique, please note its decibel rating.

Currently, fees for a construction noise variance range from \$300 to \$1,530. The cost doubles if your request is a “rush.”

Variance request forms are available at 1900 SW 4th Ave., 5th floor, or by mail, when you call **503-823-7350**. Sorry, no faxes.

Commercial Sections shift staff

In January, shifts were made within OPDR. Here's what things look like now in the commercial plan review and inspections sections:

- **Suzanne Vara**, Supervisor,
Commercial Fire/Life Safety Plan Review
- **Jim Harris**, Commercial Code interpretation,
appeals, preliminary meetings
- **Glenn Havener**, Sr. Plan Reviewer, 5th floor
- **Irwin Jones**, Sr. Plan Reviewer, 2nd floor
- **Fred Deis**, Supervisor, Special Inspections
- **Phil Burkhart**, Supervisor,
Structural/Mechanical Inspections
- **Hank McDonald**, Sr. Inspector,
Structural/Mechanical Inspections

The Special Inspections Section physically moved from the Inspections Division to space near the Structural Engineering Plan Reviewers, bringing together groups that have always worked closely.

"People are in positions that best utilize their expertise and abilities and our backlog has been trimmed significantly," says Ray Kerridge, commercial inspections manager and acting plan review manager.

As of March 31, 93 percent of commercial checksheets, other than those issued over the counter, were to customers within 20 days. The 15-day turnaround goal for plan review on simple residential dwellings was also on target.

"Green Building" get helps from OPDR

The move towards "Green Building" is happening thanks to reworking existing methods and materials and innovative new products and systems. "Green Building" practices include using recycled building materials and incorporating new energy and water conservation methods.

At times "Green Building" projects have conflicted with existing building, plumbing, mechanical and electrical codes. In January, the City's "Green Building" Ordinance went into effect, requiring all newly constructed or remodeled City facilities to comply with LEED "Green Building" practices. OPDR, the Office of Sustainable Development (OSD) and other bureaus worked with the design community and sustainability advocates to develop criteria and guidelines to implement the ordinance for City facilities.

OPDR will play a leading role in early assistance in the permit process for "Green Building" projects. Jim Harris is the new "Green Building" liaison between OPDR and OSD. Lori Graham will be working with Jim to develop review standards and stay up to date on current technology. They'll meet with designers and OSD to review projects and identify where proposed designs may conflict with current building codes. Designers will be referred to the appropriate bureau for approval of alternative systems.

For more information about OPDR's role in "Green Building," call Jim Harris, **503-823-7541**.

New Face

Sheila Frugoli

Pre-application Conference Coordinator

The Office of Planning and Development Review (OPDR) has a new Pre-application Conference Coordinator. Sheila Frugoli brings 15 years of planning experience to her position. Her last 3½ years were spent as a Planning and Zoning Section Team Leader in the Development Services Center.

Sheila will be responsible for coordinating land use review pre-application conferences. All major land use reviews (Type III), such as subdivisions, zone changes and new development in the Central City's design district, require a pre-application conference before submitting an application.

Pre-application conferences help determine elements of a project that may affect its approval before they become a problem. On average, seven city staff members from various bureaus participate in the conference to discuss the approval criteria. Sheila says the conference presents an excellent opportunity to get information. "Ask questions. If the staff's answers aren't clear, use the conference to get the clarity you need to move ahead. Be persistent."

She also recommends researching potential zoning problems and City service requirements in the Development Services Center before beginning a project. "In some cases, the existing infrastructure may not be able to support the development. This is something you'll want to know before investing more time and money." The number to call for zoning assistance is **503-823-7526**.

Cost for a pre-application conference is \$1,129. The conference lasts approximately 1½ hours and should help you get the answers you need in one place.

Plan ahead. Appointments are now scheduled four to five weeks in advance. To schedule a pre-application conference, bring a site plan, elevations drawings, if available, and a completed pre-application conference request form to the Development Services Center.

Sign Code rules hearing set

A hearing of the Sign Code's enforcement violation citation process, fines and appeals is scheduled for 9:30 a.m., May 9 at 1900 SW 4th Ave., Room 5A. Copies of the proposed rules are available in the Development Services Center

Written comments must be received by May 11. Send them to Kermit Robinson, OPDR, 1900 SW 4th Ave., Portland, OR 97201.

**The Plans Examiner is a bi-monthly publication of the City of Portland
Office of Planning and Development Review
Commissioner Charlie Hales, 503-823-4682**

How To Reach Us

All Area Code 503
Monday through Friday
8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.
(e) = Electronic Messaging System
Please leave detailed information.
Your call will be returned.

While browsing the internet,
visit our home pages —
www.opdr.ci.portland.or.us and
www.planning.ci.portland.or.us/

OPDR — Administration	503-823-7308	TRANSPORTATION	
Building Code Questions	503-823-7310 (e)(4)	Development Requirements and/or Right-of-Way Policy	
Fire Code Questions	503-823-7366	Glenn Pierce	503-823-7079
Blueprint 2000	503-823-7822	Minor Partitions—Cherrie Eudaly	503-823-7081
24-hour Inspection Request Recording	503-823-7000 (e)	Local Improvement Districts	
Inspection Section — 1 & 2 Family Dwellings	503-823-7388	Matt Brown	503-823-7027
Commercial {	Plumbing	503-823-7302	Street Permit Engineering
	Building & Mechanical	503-823-7303	Jerry Markesino
	Electrical	503-823-7304	503-823-7057
Development Services Center	503-823-7310	Transportation Plan Review	
Development Services Center FAX	503-823-3018	Joyce Reyman	503-823-6108
Trade Permits	503-823-7363	Systems Development Charge	
Newsletter Contact — Ann Kohler	503-823-7886	Joyce Reyman	503-823-6108
Permit Status via FAX	503-823-7000 (4)		
Permit Status via Voice Mail	503-823-7357		
Permit Records			
Document Control/Current Applications	503-823-7357 (e)		
Inspection Records/Finalled Permits	503-823-7660		
Building Record Center FAX	503-823-7765		
Septic Tanks/Cesspools	503-823-7247		
Planning & Zoning – Information	503-823-7526		
ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES		TREES — Urban Forestry (7:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.)	
Development Engineering	503-823-7761	Pruning/Planning/Removal Permits	
Construction & Demolition Recycling Info	503-823-7107	N / NE — Luke Miller	503-823-4511
Industrial Source Control	503-823-7585	NW / SW — Charley Davis	503-823-4523
		Southeast — Ned Sodja	503-823-4440
		Tree Cutting Ordinance	
		Frank Krawczyk	503-823-4011
		Transportation Improvements	
		Joe Hintz	503-823-4025
		Commercial Planning and Development	
		Frank Krawczyk	503-823-4011
		Residential Development and Improvement	
		Myles Black	503-823-4018
		WATER	
		Water Service Information	503-823-7368
		Hydrant Permits	503-823-7368
		Plan Review — Commercial — Tony Re	503-823-7400
		Residential — Todd Aschoff/Corbett White	503-823-0604
		Subdivision Planning — Tony Re	503-823-7400
		Backflow Valve Installation Requirements	
		Dave Barrigan	503-823-7479
FIRE BUREAU			
Development Standards, Sprinklers, Alarms			
Rich Butcher	503-823-3802		
Flammable Liquids, Tanks, Hazardous Processes			
Doug Friant	503-823-3935		

Development Services Center
1900 SW 4th Ave.
Hours
7:30 a.m. — 3:00 p.m.
The Center is also open Thursday from 5:00 p.m. — 7:30 p.m. for Residential Permit Night.



Printed on recycled paper.

If you have comments about the Plans Examiner newsletter or have suggestions for stories you'd like to see covered in the future, please call Ann Kohler, 503-823-7886.

We want to hear from you!

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