



## CITY OF HELENA BUILDING DIVISION



# "BITS"

### Miscellaneous "BITS" of information that may be of interest to the City of Helena Contractors and Design Professionals May 2007



Please join our "Group". The Building Division is currently developing a "Construction Group" e-mail list to create a system by which we can inform the local Contractors and Design Professionals of useful information. All future notifications will be done by e-mail only. This information may be things such as updates on code issues, training opportunities relating to products or codes and notification of the Division's interpretations that may impact how you install certain materials. Take a moment and drop us an e-mail at [lmiller@ci.helena.mt.us](mailto:lmiller@ci.helena.mt.us) or the next time you are in our office mention that you would like to be in the "Construction Group" and give us your e-mail address.



The City of Helena Community Development Department now has a Zoning Officer who will complete zoning reviews for residential projects, answer zoning related questions and process the Board of Adjustment variances in addition to other duties as a City Planner. Should you have questions relating to the City's zoning, contact Elroy Golemon at 447-8448. City of Helena zoning regulations as well as all of the City Codes and ordinances can be found at <http://www.sterlingcodifiers.com/MT/Helena/index.htm>.



Don't over look job site safety. In a recent training seminar sponsored by MBIA, NAHB and GRIP, attendees were provided with instruction on fall prevention techniques and OSHA fall protection requirements. It is the responsibility of the on-site contractors to ensure a safe working environment. A copy of "Jobsite Safety Handbook" distributed at the training provides tips and techniques to ensure a safe work site. The safety of the City inspectors will not be compromised. If they feel the job site is unsafe, the inspection will not be completed. Corrections to unsafe conditions shall be made to the site before the inspector will return for the inspection.



Inspection of construction projects is an important element of the building process to ensure compliance with the codes and the safety of the building occupants during construction and after the project is completed. When a project is permitted through our office an "Inspection Record Card" is issued with the construction documents. This card lists all of the inspections that are required throughout the construction of your projects. Inspection requests shall be called into and scheduled with our office, as far in advance as possible, typically 48 hours notice will ensure you a spot on the schedule. The items or elements being inspected must be completed before for inspection will occur. The general contractor or superintendent needs to review all aspects of the work for which the inspection is being called to verify the project is indeed ready for inspection. The complete set of approved construction documents and the inspection record card must be on-site and available for the inspector at the time of the inspection. At the completion of the project, when any corrections and all applicable items listed on the inspection record card have been approved, the Inspector will sign the lower right hand corner of the card. This signed card will serve as the Certificate of Occupancy for the project. The City will retain a copy for the project address file and the original card should be left on-site in a permanent building file with the owner along with the permit set of construction documents.



Special inspections are an important part of larger projects or projects with specific elements required by Chapter 17 of the building code to have inspections conducted by an approved independent inspector. Special inspections are required for materials, installation, fabrication, erection or placement of components and connections requiring special expertise to ensure compliance with the approved construction document and code requirements. Special inspections are supplement to and do not replace the required inspections listed on the Inspection Record Card that are conducted by the City of Helena Building Inspectors. A "Statement of Special Inspection" and "Quality Assurance Plan" prepared by the engineer or architect of record shall be submitted with the construction documents for review and approval prior to the issuance of a building permit. Prior to issuance of the Certificate of Occupancy, a final report documenting the required special inspections and corrections of any discrepancies noted in the inspections shall be submitted to the Building Division. Special inspections conducted by an independent inspector often afford the contractor greater flexibility in scheduling of inspections for the items listed in Chapter 17.



The approval of a building permit application not only involves the Building Division but also the Planning Division, Parks and Recreation Department, Engineering Division, Public Works Division, Fire Department and as applicable, the City-County Health Department. Approvals from each division must be in place before the Building Division has the authority to release a building permit. As the review process proceeds, review comments from each division will be forwarded to the designated contact person for the project, whether it is the owner, contractor or design professional. Responses to or corrections of the construction documents that are required by these divisions must submitted to the Building Division office for tracking and will then be distributed to the appropriate division for review and approval. Provide a minimum of three (3) copies for re-review.



With the up-coming adoption of the 2006 building codes, the City will again sponsor a training session to familiarize the local building community of some significant changes in the codes. The residential "Plan Correction List" will be updated to reflect the changes in the 2006 International Residential Code. This document is required for all residential plan submissions. Additional information will be updated and new handouts, including an engineered deck ledger board attachment schedule, will be available at the training session. We will notify you by e-mail in advance of this training, which is slated for mid to late June.



Additional training sessions may be offered to smaller groups if there are specific areas of concern in the code or in the inspection process that firms or companies' feel would be beneficial to learn more about. These discussions would be general in application and not job specific. Please contact our office to discuss this option.



As of June 20, 2007 the City of Helena Building Division will begin enforcing the 2006 edition of the International Codes. New building plans may now be designed to the 2006 codes and any permit application received on or after June 20, 2007 will be reviewed under the newly adopted codes. Submissions found to be incomplete will not be accepted. If any submittal is thereafter not completed, returned and properly logged in prior to the June 20<sup>th</sup> date, it will be reviewed under the 2006 criteria. Pending final adoption are: 2006 editions of the International Building Code, International Residential Code, International Mechanical Code, International Fuel Gas Code, International Existing Building Code and the Uniform Plumbing Code. Other codes currently being enforced include: 2005 edition of the National Electrical Code and 2003 edition of the International Energy Conservation Code. Codes listed above are amended by the Administrative Rules of Montana Title 24, Chapter 301 that can be found at: [www.mt.gov/dli/bsd/bc/rules.asp](http://www.mt.gov/dli/bsd/bc/rules.asp). Copies of the code are available on line at [www.iccsafe.org](http://www.iccsafe.org) or may be available from the State Building Codes office at 406-841-2040.