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Summer 2012

Code connection

A NEWSLETTER FROM THE CITY OF ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA
DEPARTMENT OF CODE ADMINISTRATION

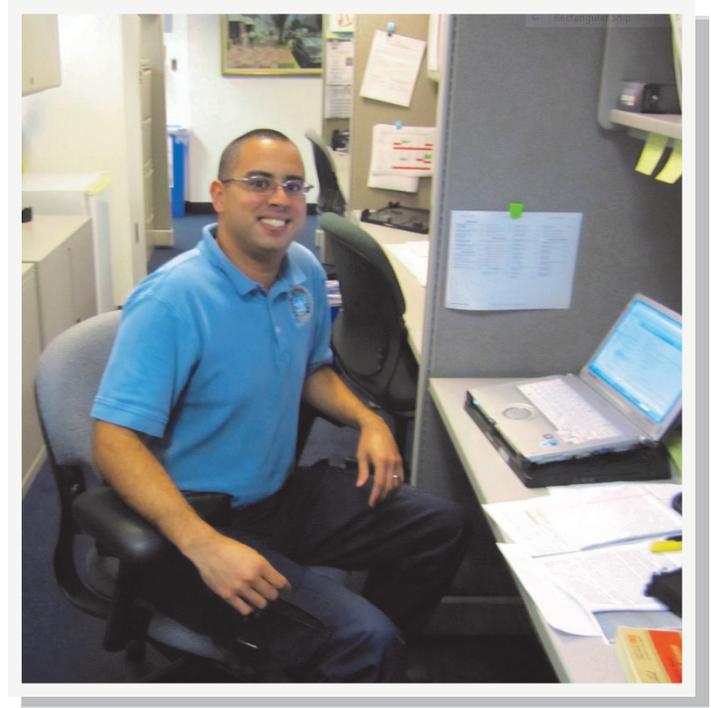


Leading by Example

Chris Evans, Acting Electrical New Construction Supervisor, was the first member of the Department to pass the newly created **Residential Energy combination Plans Examiner and Inspector** certification test. The test was created by the International Code Council (ICC) as a result of code development to address the increased importance of energy use in residential structures. Although this certification is not a current requirement in Virginia, we anticipate that it will be soon and Chris was proactive in taking the exam ahead of the requirement. In addition to the Residential Energy certifications, Chris has obtained eleven (11) other certifications from the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD). Chris has been one motivated

individual, he has not only obtained numerous certifications as mentioned above; he has taken classes in the evenings over the last several years and recently received a degree in Business Administration. Keep up the good work Chris! You're a great example to the team!

UPDATE: Others in Code Administration have recently passed the Energy Code Certification exam as well. They are as follows: New Construction Supervisor Ray Dietzel; Plans Examiner III and Master Code Professional Paul Sood; Plans Examiner II Lei Fei, PE; and Deputy Director Gregg Fields CBO. Congratulations to all of our newly certified staff!



Chris Evans, Acting New Construction Electrical Supervisor

Redesigned Building and Trade Permits

Code Administration has completed the redesign of its building and trade permits. The permits are designed to be more simple, neater and easier to understand. The redesign places a watermark on the front of each permit which immediately identifies it as a building permit (BLD), or a trade permit (ELE),(PLM),(MEC) and (FPS).



Officer Benny Evans and Michelle Albert

Brown Bag Lunch Series

On July 24, Alexandria Police Department Officer Benny Evans and Michelle S. Albert, LPC, CSOTP, CORE & Jail Diversion Coordinator for the Department of Community and Human Services presented a Brown Bag lunch on programs and resources to address our homeless population.

Twenty-four staff members from Code Administration and the Office on Housing attended. Our team learned that there are 199 homeless single adults and 43 homeless families in the city as of July, 2011. We also were educated as to the resources available to house the homeless (shelters), programs to assist those in need, and ways we can work collaboratively to get services to those in need. We want to thank Officer Evans and Ms. Albert for spending their lunch time with us.



Victor Purchase, Maintenance Code Inspector III

Maintenance Code Inspector Earns the Virginia Amusement Device Certification

Maintenance Code Inspector III Victor Purchase recently attended the Department of Housing and Community Development's Jack A. Proctor Virginia Building Code Academy for the amusement device inspector course. The 4-day course is designed for individuals who take on the responsibility of inspecting amusement devices in the Commonwealth of Virginia. This course is required for certification as an amusement device inspector and is offered only once a year, at a location where a traveling carnival is in operation.

Students get practical hands on inspection training; learn about the many intricate functions of the devices, identifying defects, safety features and all associated equipment for the devices. Victor's achievement adds him to a list of three other Code Administration inspectors who have also earned this important certification; Brian Paige, David Demaree and Joe Blethen. Congratulations Inspector Purchase, well done!

Amusement Safety Tips

- Read posted rules thoroughly.
- Follow all height/age restrictions and verbal instructions by ride operators.
- Read and explain all posted rules to your children.
- Always use the safety equipment provided (seat belt, shoulder harness, lap bar, chain, etc).
- Hold on to handrails, when provided. They're part of the safety equipment designed to keep you safely in place.
- Don't board a ride if you see broken parts, signs of improper maintenance, or an inattentive operator, you should listen to the ride.
- Follow your instincts; if something about a ride seems suspicious, don't ride it.

Permit Center Hours

Beginning November 5th, 2012, and occurring on the first Monday of each month, the Alexandria Permit Center will close at 2pm for staff training and staff meetings. In the past, Permit Center staff were not able to attend meetings and trainings because of the needed coverage in the Permit Center. With the closing, staff will be able to attend needed training and meetings to improve customer service. Customers are being encouraged to submit applications online at permits.alexandriava.gov.

Changes to Southern Pine Design Values

Please be aware, effective June 1, 2012 the American Wood Council has revised the design values for 2"x4" joists and rafters for No.2 dense and lower grades of visually-graded Mix-Southern pine lumber.

Furthermore, the International Code Council (ICC) issued a news release as follows:

“The current editions of the International Building Code (IBC) and the International Residential Code (IRC) include span tables to be used in the design of wood joists. The design criteria is established by Department of Commerce standard DOC PS 20-5, American Lumber Standard, which is also referenced in both the IBC and IRC. This standard identifies the American Lumber Standard Committee (ALSC) who administers an accreditation Program for the grand marking of lumber produced under the system.”

“On January 11, 2012 the ALSC Board of Review certified reduced design values for 2x4 lumber sizes of Southern Pine of grades # 2 or lower, effective June 1, 2012. In making this reduction, they stated the following: “The values represent approximately a 25-30% reduction. . . . **All design professionals are advised in the strongest terms by the Board to evaluate this information in formulating their designs in the interim period.**”

“As a result of this action taken by the ALSC, the ICC Board is directing the ICC membership to the American Wood Council website where the effect of those changed design values on the span tables contained in the IBC and IRC may be found.”

“The investigation of the adequacy of design values for other Southern Pine lumber sizes and grades is on-going.”

Code Administration recommends refereeing to Southern Pine Inspection Bureau (spib.org), Southern Pine (southernpine.com) and the International Code Council (iccsafe.org) for more information and to view the revised design values tables when designing structures using the above.



Southern Pine



Permit Center- Electronic Applications Only

Beginning December 1, 2012, the Alexandria Permit Center will only accept Building, Electrical, Mechanical, Plumbing, Fire Protection Systems, Sign, and Demolition Permit Applications online. Therefore, when customers visit the Alexandria Permit Center, they will proceed to one of three kiosks in the lobby area. Located at each of the kiosks, there will be a brochure for customers to use when registering to use the Alexandria Online Permit Center.

The submission of a permit application in an electronic-only format is the next step in a multi-phase project for all documents submitted for permit review to be submitted to staff electronically. The City of Alexandria has decided to accept applications electronically in support of the Eco-City Alexandria initiative. In addition to submitting applications electronically, our overall goal will be for our customers to submit plans electronically as well as any other supporting documents. Once submitted, plans will be reviewed by City staff electronically with comments, plans will receive electronic stamps, permit fees paid online, and finally permits will be issued online.

The ability to submit plans electronically will also benefit our customers. The City of Alexandria realizes the rising costs of doing business. For example, a customer submitting a building permit application for a new restaurant in the City of Alexandria is required to submit six sets of plans for staff review. If there are 25 sheets with a size of 24"x36", on average it can cost \$5 per sheet to reproduce. Ultimately, a customer could end up paying a minimum of \$750 for plan reproduction alone.

Electronic Smart Board

Code Administration has procured an interactive smart board for use by Permit Center Staff, Plan Review Staff and customers. Among other functions, the board will allow Plan Review Staff to discuss and mark up PDF plans electronically in real time with members of the development community and save the results in PDF format for electronic distribution by e-mail. The electronic smart board may eventually allow Code staff to hold “virtual” meetings with registered design professionals who will be able to remain in their own offices rather than having to come to City Hall and visit Code Administration staff.



Code Administration Summer Statistics

	June	July	August 1st-14th	2012 YTD	2011 YTD
New Construction Inspections	2634	2443	1067	26,102	24,770
Maintenance Code Inspections	1,017	901	351	6,688	5901
Plans Reviewed	872	918	548	5701	
Total Training Hours	32	57	13	322	187.5
Online Permits	529	574	205	3079	185
Online Payments	152	160	125	1048	0*



Alexandria Department of Code Administration
 301 King Street, Room 4200
 Alexandria, Virginia 22314
alexandriava.gov/code

Main Number	(703) 746-4200
Permit Center Division	(703) 746-4200
Permit Center Manager	(703) 746-4201
Plan Review Services Division	(703) 746-4193
Maintenance and Nuisance Code Division	(703) 746-4229
New Construction Inspections Plum., Mech., Fire Sup.	(703) 746-4238
New Construction Inspections Electrical and Fire Alarm	(703) 746-4219
New Construction Inspections Building	(703) 746-4210
Online Permit Center – Electronic Permits and Payments	permits.alexandriava.gov
Nuisance Abatement Hotline	(703) 836-0041
Permit Tracker – Track Permits In Progress http://	alexandriava.gov/city/codeenforcement/permittracker