



Building Department Newsletter

Volume II

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Special points of interest:

- May is Building Safety Month
- No Signs on Right of Way
- Recall on certain Circuit Breakers
- Any fence over 4' in height needs a permit

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Governor Bentley Proclaims May as Building Safety Month

“Building Safety Month: An International Celebration of Safe and Sensible Structures” is the theme for Building Safety Month for the month of May as proclaimed by Governor Bentley. Building Safety Month is a time to raise awareness of the efforts put forth by Building Inspectors, Code Officials, Fire Officials, Architects, Engineers and the construction industry in general in ensuring homes and businesses are constructed to be energy efficient and meet safety, health and sanitation standards of the adopted building related codes for the protection and general welfare of all citizens.



Signs on Rights-of-Way – NOT ALLOWED

Chapter 7 of the Zoning Ordinance of the City of Madison provides rules and regulations for permitting and placement of various types of signage within the City of Madison. Please note that any signs found to be protruding into or placed on ANY rights-of-way, including medians, of the City of Madison shall be deemed in violation of the city sign regulations, will be promptly removed

by Code Enforcement Officers and will not be returned to the sign owner but disposed of or destroyed accordingly.

At no time shall any sign be placed on or attached to light poles, traffic signs, informational city, state or federal roadside signs, electrical transformers or any other public property located within any rights-of-way or easement of the city.

Circuit Breaker Safety Warning Notice

A major manufacturer of circuit breakers has issued a safety warning for two name brands of circuit breakers. These circuit breakers have the potential to fail causing damage to the electrical system and in extreme situations could cause a fire or serious injury. Please go to the following website link for more information on the types of circuit breakers affected, what you need to do if your residence or place of business has these circuit breakers installed and what steps you need to take to have them replaced: http://www.sea.siemens.com/us/Products/Residential-Electrical/Product/Circuit-Breakers/Pages/plugin_recall.aspx?stc=usibt600011





When Fence Permits Are Required

A fence permit is required for any fence four (4) feet in height or higher. The fence permit must be obtained prior to erection of any new fence or replacement of fences that have fallen, been torn or blown down.

When applying for a fence permit the property owner or property owner's contractor must complete a permit application and attach two copies of a plot plan of the property

that depicts the location of the proposed fence in relation to property lines and any easements. The permit application with the two sets of plot plans must be submitted to the Building Department for review and approval. The cost of the fence permit is \$50.00. Exceptions to obtaining a fence permit are minor replacement of random deteriorated fence boards or replacement of a single section of fence.

All property owners are required to sign an affidavit stating that the fence will not be installed within any city rights-of-way and that erection of the fence within any utility or drainage easement will not be replaced or re-erected by the city or the utility company if the fence must be removed to gain access to an easement or perform work therein. Please note that fences no less than four (4) feet in height are required as barriers around all in-ground and above ground pools unless other code approved methods are used to deny access to the pool.

“Never enter into a contract with anyone without first asking the contractor to show you all their licenses”



Contractor Licensing Verification

Whether you are a homeowner needing repairs, planning an addition or renovations to your home, a future homeowner shopping for a contractor to build your new home or a business looking to renovate a tenant space, it is extremely important before you sign any contract that you verify the licenses of the person or company you plan to hire. All contractors performing work in the City of Madison must hold a valid city business license obtained from the Revenue Department. Some contractors such as homebuilders, general contractors, plumbers, heating and air-conditioning con-

tractors and electricians, to name a few, are also required to hold and maintain State licenses issued by the respective State regulatory board.

Never enter into a contract with anyone without first asking the contractor to show you all their licenses, both City and State (where required). When you are satisfied that the person or company hold valid licenses, check the contract before signing it to see if the contract spells out who is responsible for obtaining the required building permit. It is recommended that the contractor be responsible for obtaining all

permits, otherwise the property owner will be held responsible for all work performed and for meeting all code requirements.

Additionally, never hire someone without checking their references. Obtain addresses and names of previous clients and telephone numbers if available. Don't be afraid to call upon these clients and check the workmanship of the contractor. Reputable contractors will not have any problems with providing this information. It is in your best interest to ensure that the work performed is done right and meets minimum code requirements.

BUILDING DEPARTMENT

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We're on the Web!
MadisonAl.gov



Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Can the finished ceiling of my home consist of exposed wood ceiling joists?

A: Yes. Section R315 of the 2006 International Residential Code as adopted by the City of Madison allows interior finishes that have a maximum flame spread rating of 200 based on the ASTM E-84 test.

Northern pine lumber is the only species of lumber that has a flame spread rating higher than 200 therefore any other species of lumber would not be permitted to be exposed unless fire retardant treated wood is used or otherwise protected to meet or exceed ASTM-E84 tests. Exposed joists are not allowed in locations such as garage ceilings and the underside of enclosed stairways.

Q. I am a contractor that installs or replaces residential roofing material and siding. Other than a city business license, at what point do I need to obtain a State license to perform such work?

A. Any single trade performed on a residential structure of which the total contract price of the work, including labor and materials, exceeds \$10,000.00 requires a limited license issued by the Alabama Homebuilder's Licensure Board before the work is performed. The limited license does not permit the work to be subcontracted out to any other contractor. If the proposed work includes two or more trades, such as replacing a roof and replacing siding on a residence the total cost of which exceeds \$10,000.00, then a Residential Homebuilder's License issued by the Alabama Homebuilder's Licensure

