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# Building Safety Month Edition

## Code

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### City of Alexandria Celebrates Building Safety Month Theme 2013: “Code Officials Keep You Safe”



On May 1, the City will mark the beginning of Building Safety Month with a kickoff event in Market Square, 301 King Street, between 11 a.m. and 6 p.m. The kickoff event will begin with a proclamation by Mayor William D. Euille, and will continue with food and speeches by members of City staff and the building

community—City Manager, Rashad M. Young, Lynn Underwood, MCP—Norfolk Building Official & ICC Governance Committee Chair, and representatives from the International Code Council.

Building Safety Month is a public awareness campaign offered each year to help individuals, families and businesses understand what it takes to create and sustain safe and sustainable structures. Each week during the month, a specific area of building safety will be spotlighted: Fire Safety and Awareness, May 6th-12th; Disaster Safety and Mitigation, May 13th-19th; Backyard and Pool Safety, May 20th-26th; and Energy and Green Building, May 27th-31st.



### The Residential & Small Business Project Facilitator Team is Here for You!

Beginning, the City of Alexandria’s Permit Center will introduce a new customer service focused program – the Residential & Small Business Project Facilitator Team. The team will focus on assisting home owners and small businesses through the pre-permit, permitting and inspection processes. The team will provide the following types of services:

- ◆ Provide customer guidance and assistance throughout the pre-permit, permit and inspection processes
- ◆ Provide a single point of contact for all project stakeholders
- ◆ Assists customers navigating City construction permit related processes and requirements
- ◆ Provides timely project updates and status
- ◆ Track projects to ensure they are expeditiously processed and routed to the right City departments and technical review disciplines
- ◆ Facilitate interdepartmental coordination to help reduce potential obstacles and project issues

If you would like to take advantage of this exciting program, please contact:

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## The City of Alexandria Hosts The Jiangsu, China Quality and Technical Supervision Bureau Delegation



The City of Alexandria hosted a delegation of six engineers from the Jiangsu Province in China on September 11, 2012. Information was shared regarding the building inspection and plan review process, codes and standards adoption, and product acceptance criteria.

### The Leadership Circle Guest Speaker: Lieutenant General Richard L. Kelly, USMC (Ret.)

Lieutenant General Richard L. Kelly spoke to the Leadership Circle sponsored by the Department of Code Administration on January 11, 2013. L.G. Kelly completed his 35 year career as the Deputy Commandant, Installations and Logistics, Headquarters, U. S. Marine Corps. He was responsible for the leadership, management, and modernization of worldwide Marine Corps logistics; facilities and real estate; e-business and contracting; small business; and maintenance and distribution's highest priorities were modernizing the Marine Corps supply chain, regionalizing its bases and stations, and implementing the Marine Corps Business Enterprise. They were accomplished through a comprehensive, end-to-end approach which included technology insertion, process reengineering, training and organizational reform, activity based resource management, best practices integration, and benchmarking services.



### Barrier Construction Requirements for Single Family/ Duplex Private Outdoor Swimming Pools and Spa Pools

The Alexandria Aquatic Health Code (Sec. 11-11-1 et seq.), as per their revised Alexandria Health Department memorandum dated August 29, 2011, does not apply to a swimming pool serving a single family dwelling or a duplex residence. (Essentially, 1&2 Family Dwellings are exempted from the 6 foot height barrier enclosure requirement of the Health department ordinance).

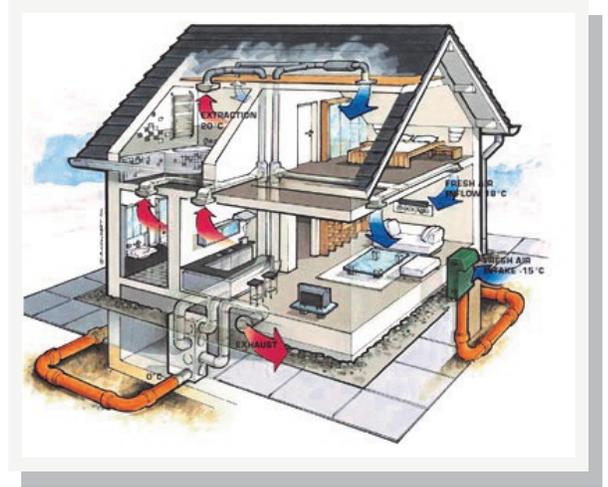
The design and construction of barriers for residential swimming pools, spas and hot tubs is required to comply with the provisions of the 2009 Virginia Residential Code. (Chapter 42 and Appendix G).

One & Two Family Dwelling outdoor swimming pools, including an in-ground, above-ground, or on-ground pool, hot tub or spa shall be surrounded by a barrier at least 48 inches above grade measured on the side of the barrier which faces away from the swimming pool and shall comply with Section AG105.2, 2009 Virginia Residential Code (Appendix G), and all of its sub-sections.

## Residential Ventilation Air vs. Commercial Ventilation Air:

It is important to investigate the differences between the ventilation air (outside air) requirements of the Virginia Residential Code (VRC) for One & Two Family Dwellings (R-3 & R5), and all other occupancies as described in the Virginia Construction Code (VCC).

The ventilation, heating and cooling requirements for the VRC has loads required to be calculated using the Air Conditioning Contractors of America (ACCA) Manual J. While other approved methodologies are allowed, the focus of this article will be on the Manual J requirements. The standard Manual J calculation considers infiltration as a main source of ventilation air to dilute odors, gases and smoke. Infiltration also helps control indoor humidity during the heating season and provides make-up air for exhaust fans less than 150 cfm's, and combustion air for gravity vented appliances. Manual J specifically states: "Do not use the Manual J for any type of commercial application (even if located in a residential structure)".



Chapter 4 of the Virginia Mechanical Code (VMC) specifically states that every occupied space shall be ventilated by natural (gravity) or mechanical means. Natural ventilation may be windows, doors, louvers, or other openings to the outdoors. This method of ventilation uses a percentage of floor area to size the openings to the outside. These openings must be readily accessible and controllable by the occupants at all times. The code does not state or intend that the doors, windows or openings to actually be constantly open. The intent is that they be maintained in an operable condition so that they are available for use at the discretion of the occupant. However, the VMC does require that the equipment serving a space with natural ventilation to be sized to include this additional load with the procedures described in ASHRE/ACCA Standard 183. The procedures and quantities for mechanical ventilation can be found in section 403 of the VMC.

In summary, ventilation air for VRC construction is typically obtained through infiltration whereas ventilation air for VCC construction is through natural or mechanical ventilation.

### More Customer Service Improvements

Beginning approximately July 1st, Engineering Aides from the Department of Transportation & Environmental Services and Permit Technicians from the Department of Code Administration will have consolidated job functions. Team members from both departments will be able to assist customers with all construction related permitting needs. In the interim, there will be training sessions for both teams, so the consolidation efforts will occur as easy as possible; while being careful not to impact customer services. The end result will be lower Alexandria Permit Center wait times as well as faster services for everyone visiting the permit center.

### Coming Soon... Fire Prevention Permit Applications Online

The Alexandria Fire Department and the Alexandria Department of Code Administration have been coordinating an online application for Fire Prevention Permits. Since December, the Alexandria Permit Center has been requiring all applications be submitted online. However, there was no ability to apply for a Fire Prevention Permit online.



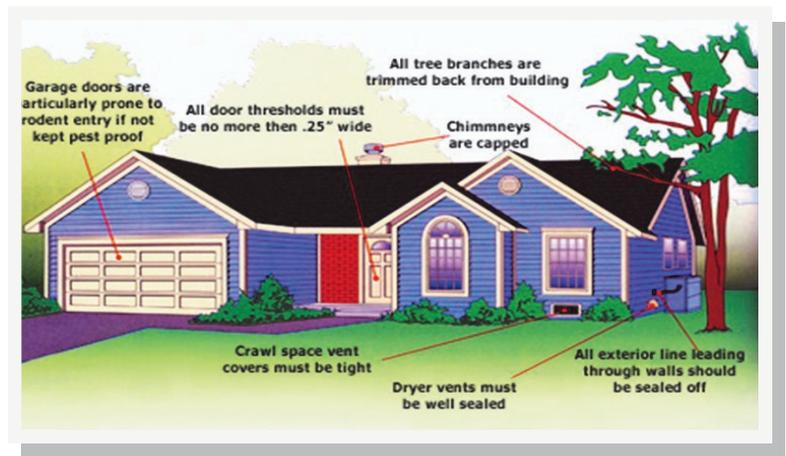
We anticipate the ability to submit Fire Prevention Permits online will be completed by no later than August 1st.

# Rodent Proofing 101: Protecting Your Home

Rodent proofing involves constructing and maintaining a building so that rats are unable to gain entrance. Gaps around doors and holes around pipes and electrical wires should be closed with a material that restricts the entry of rodents such as metal trim, steel wool and concrete. The exterior walls, from foundation to roof, which are accessible to rats, must be closely monitored for openings or weak materials which rats can chew.

Remember, rodents must have food, water and harborage to survive. Rodent control begins with the elimination of one or more of these elements. Along with this, an effective rodent control program demands good sanitation. The following steps should be taken to discourage rodent activity:

1. All trash and garbage must be stored in waterproof - sturdy containers with tight-fitting lids.
2. Property must be maintained in a clean condition, free of trash and debris.
3. Firewood and scrap lumber must be elevated a minimum of six inches off the ground; 18 inches is recommended.
4. Birdseed must be kept at least 18 inches above the ground in a birdfeeder properly designed to discourage spills.
5. Pet food and water should not be allowed to remain outside for extended periods of time.



## Litter Enforcement 2013

The month of April was Litter Enforcement Month which means we increased our efforts on littering, illegal dumping, trash on private property and other related code violations. Litter and illegal dumping hurt our community. They create public health issues, can affect our local economy by reducing home prices and affecting businesses, recreation and tourism, and can be a financial burden to clean up.

More importantly litter and illegal dumping can lead to more serious crimes. Enforcing litter and illegal dumping laws may seem nominal but individuals need to know that these acts are crimes and have repercussions. We have joined efforts with the Alice Ferguson Foundation and 14 other agencies in the region to increase our enforcement efforts during Litter Enforcement Month.

To report a location where illegal dumping has occurred, call the 24-hour Nuisance abatement hotline at 703.836.0041. For questions related to hazardous materials/storage regulations or to report hazardous material violations, call 703.746.4200 (business hours) or 703.836.0041 (after business hours).



*Tim Lawmaster is a veteran maintenance code inspector with more than 15 years property maintenance experience. His primary job is conducting proactive inspections in Arlandria, Hume Springs and the Lynhaven communities.*