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Spring 2012

# Code connection



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

On April 27, 2012, Mayor William Euille joined the Code Administration staff to sign a proclamation declaring May Building Safety Month. This is the thirty second year that Building Safety Month has been celebrated.

## Mayor Declares May Building Safety Month

On April 27th, Alexandria City Mayor William Euille signed a Proclamation declaring May as Building Safety Month in the City of Alexandria. The International Code Council sponsors the Building Safety Month Event annually to promote building safety and to raise the profile of building safety professionals across the country. There are four core themes of Building Safety Month this year. Week 1 focusing on Energy & Green Building; week 2 Disaster Safety & Mitigation; week 3 Fire Safety & Awareness, and week 4 on Back Yard Safety

The Code Administration Team set up public displays and provided customers

information regarding building safety and the role of building and trade enforcement in keeping all safe, maintaining our neighborhoods and insuring an excellent quality of life. The team was at Market Square each Friday in May from 8 a.m.-6 p.m., and Saturday mornings from 7 a.m.-Noon for the Farmers Market. The team also setup a booth at the Alexandria Home Depot as part of a regional effort to promote Building Safety Week. .



Mayor William Euille and Code Administration Staff at the signing of the Building Safety Month Proclamation

## “KICK OFF”

If you were unaware, the “kick-off” for Building Safety Week was at T.C. Williams High School, Tuesday May 1, 2012 at 10:30 a.m. Several dynamic speakers, Dave Diamantes being one, spoke about our focus topics, “Fire Safety and Awareness and Energy and Green Buildings



Sandra Kyer and Wendell Phillips talking to a resident regarding the importance of building safety.



Mayor Euille after signing the Building Safety Month Proclamation

## City Council Support

By John Catlett

Following the signing and presentation of the proclamation, Mayor Euille was presented with a Virginia Building and Code Officials Association and International Code Council pin in recognition of the entire City Council's support.

Code Administration recognized Erica Bannerman of T&ES- Environmental Quality (center-back row) for her hard work in joining the Code Administration Team in Charlotte to obtain successful passage of the 30% Energy Reduction package for the 2012 International Energy Conservation Code. Her efforts helped secure regional participation scholarships and she was an active participant in the code development process.

## Online Permit Fee Estimator Is Now Available

By James Hunt

The Alexandria Permit Center is proud to announce that a new online permit fee estimator is now available to our customers. Try it at: [alexandriava.gov/PermitCenter](http://alexandriava.gov/PermitCenter)

## ICC Participation

By JOHN CATLETT

Team members from the Alexandria Department of Code Administration participated in the International Code Council's 2015 Group A code hearings during the 1<sup>st</sup> week of May. Changes to the International Building, Plumbing, and Mechanical codes were heard over a 7 day period. Some of the hearings started at 8 a.m. and did not conclude until

midnight.

Participants were Bill Ertumen, Building Plans Examiner/Engineer; Gregg Fields, Deputy Director; Wendell Phillips, Maintenance Team Inspector; Ken Granata, Plan Review Services Division Chief; Ray Dietzel, Plumbing & Mechanical New Construction Supervisor; and Director John Catlett who served on the IBC General Code Committee.



Staff attending the ICC Code Conference in Dallas. Left to Right: Ray Dietzel, Bill Ertumen, John Catlett, Wendell Phillips, Gregg Fields, and Ken Granata

## Submit Building Permit Applications Online!

By James Hunt

As of May 16, 2012, customers of the Alexandria Permit Center may now submit their building permit applications online. City Staff have worked hard to provide this new enhancement to our customer services provided by the Alexandria Permit Center. The only requirement is that customers must initially register to use the online application system. To date, customers can submit Building, Electrical, Plumbing, Mechanical, Sign, Demolition, and Fire Protection Systems permits online. Please visit the Alexandria Online Permit Center at [alexandriava.gov/PermitCenter](http://alexandriava.gov/PermitCenter) and submit your online permits today!

## Code Administration Hosts ICC Energy Code for Contractors Training

By John Catlett

On February 23, 2012, Code Administration hosted a free full day training program on the energy code requirements for the contractor and designer. This free program was funded through the local training levy charged on building permits. The program, developed and delivered by the International Code Council, was attended by over sixty contractors and designers from the region.

## Virginia Plumbing/Mechanical Inspectors Association (VPMIA) Meeting

By Ray Dietzel

The City of Alexandria sent Don Demaree, Plumbing/Mechanical Inspector, Dave Vargulic, Plumbing/Mechanical Plan Reviewer, and Ray Dietzel, Plumbing/Mechanical Construction Supervisor to Blacksburg, VA in March to celebrate the Fiftieth anniversary of the Virginia Plumbing Mechanical Inspectors Association (VPMIA). Members of the VPMIA are leadership and continuous training that result in uniform application of the codes.



Wendell Phillips handles a proactive litter enforcement case

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## Chemical Compatibility Alert



PVC Pipe Materials

## Code Administration's Maintenance Code Division Participates in Litter Enforcement Month

By Phil Pugh

The Code Administration Maintenance Code team participated in the 2<sup>nd</sup> annual litter Enforcement month in April, sponsored by the Alice Ferguson Foundation. The team worked with Alexandria Police Department, Transportation & Environmental Services, regional law enforcement departments and the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments to identify and address areas in our community for illegal dumping, trash accumulation on private properties, public alleys, properties with deferred maintenance and hoarding complaints. Inspectors conducted two hundred three proactive inspections and serviced sixty-three complaints for improperly stored or accumulating trash during the effort. The team is honored to have been a part of the regional effort and looks forward to contributing again next year during Litter Enforcement Month 2013 .

## Accessibility Workshop



By John Catlett

Bill Fuller, PhD, Senior Community Housing Officer with the Virginia Housing Development Authority presented the workshop "The Virtues of Accessibility and Fair Housing" on May 22, 2012. The seminar focused on the many easily achievable features to assist as we age or become disabled in our homes. Dr. Fuller has been very active in fair housing issues for his entire career and we were very fortunate to have him as our guest speaker.



Bill Fuller, PhD discusses the importance of accessibility compliance with staff

By Dave Vargulic

Plastic pipe or fittings may be damaged by contact with products containing incompatible chemicals. Whenever ABS, PVC or CPVC pipe materials are installed the pipe manufacturer should be consulted before any paints, thread sealants, lubricants, plasticized PVC products, foam insulation, caulks, leak detectors, insecticides, termiticides, antifreeze solutions, pipe sleeves, fire-stops or any other materials are placed in contact with the pipe. Michelle Webb, Technical Service Representative for Charlotte Pipe and Foundry, was contacted for additional information and comments on CPVC pipe and fire caulk compatibility.

In her response she stated, "Thank you for contacting Charlotte Pipe...As I mentioned, typically, fire caulks are used for penetrations through fire rated walls where metallic piping is utilized, such as cast iron or steel. When plastics penetrate the walls, it is generally a fire collar that is used. I would check with the local building and plumbing code to verify which system (caulk or collar) should be used in conjunction with plastic piping." For a copy of the non-compatibility document for CPVC CTS please visit your pipe manufacturers' web sites or contact [www.charlottepipe.com](http://www.charlottepipe.com) for the most up-to-date list of chemical compatibility listings.



## Revised Permit Applications

**By James Hunt**

Recently, the Department of Code Administration revised some permit applications by reducing the amount of information required as well as changed the layout from portrait to landscape. In addition, we have consolidated the trade permit applications to just one form. The change will only require customers to complete one form instead of multiple trade permit applications.

In addition to the revised applications, the Department of Code Administration has established various packets of information to make sure that all customers have the required documents prior to visiting the permit center to submit applications. Please [alexandriava.gov/14720](http://alexandriava.gov/14720) to obtain an application or packet for the type of work that you are doing for your home or business!

## Code Administration Video...Coming Soon!

**By James Hunt**

Staff from the Department of Code Administration will be working with the Alexandria Office of Communication and Public Information to create a video that will be aired on both the City of Alexandria Channel 70 and the Department of Code Administration website. The video will provide information regarding the Alexandria Permit Center as well as the Inspection Process. The video will be aired in June. Look for it soon!!!

## Monthly Reports Are Now Online

**By James Hunt**

The Department of Code Administration receives the second highest amount of requests for information out of all Alexandria City Government Departments. Given the high amount of requests, the department has posted monthly report information online for all our customers. By posting the information online, will allow customers to obtain the information much faster as well as reduce the expenses related to obtaining documents. Please visit our website at [alexandriava.gov/code](http://alexandriava.gov/code) and double click on Monthly Reports located within the Quick Links section of the website. Requestors are advised that if the information that is needed is not provided within the report, a normal Freedom of Information Act Request must be submitted at [alexandriava.gov/foia](http://alexandriava.gov/foia).

## Tell Us How We Are Doing!

The Alexandria Permit Center puts customer service first in everything we do. We would like to have your feedback to let us know how we are doing and what suggestions you have in order to improve our customer service to you, the customer. Please complete and submit our online survey at <http://sgiz.mobi/s3/Permit-Center-Survey>. Feedback that has been provided in the past has helped us to provide many improvements to the customer service that we have provided.



*Photo taken at the Grand Opening of the Alexandria Permit Center on March 5, 2009*