

**CITY COUNCIL
COMMUNICATION:**

ITEM _____

99-355

**OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER
CITY OF DES MOINES, IOWA**

AGENDA:

AUGUST 16, 1999

SUBJECT:

ELECTRICAL AND
PLUMBING CODE
CHANGES

SYNOPSIS -

The Electrical Board and Plumbing Board recommends these proposed changes to Chapter 8 of the Des Moines Municipal Code (Building Construction Codes), specifically subchapter two (Electrical Code) and subchapter four (Plumbing Code). The most significant change affects sections 8-82,8-83, and 8-84 and is related to the development of a Residential Wireman Certification.

TYPE:

FISCAL IMPACT -

NONE.

RESOLUTION
ORDINANCE
RECEIVE/FILE

RECOMMENDATION -

Approval of first reading.

SUBMITTED BY:

JAMES GRANT
COMMUNITY
DEVELOPMENT
DIRECTOR

BACKGROUND -

The following is a brief description of each of the proposed changes to the ordinance sections:

ELECTRICAL CODE:

8-82: The change in this section includes the addition of a new residential wireman classification in the licensing fee schedule. In following sections a residential wireman classification is created.

8-83: This section includes a residential wireman classification in the list of licenses and certifications. In addition, it is recommended to change the amount of update training needed to renew a journeyman or master electrician's certification from six clock hours to eight hours. This update training requirement is relatively new. During last years renewal cycle it was found that most of the training provided was based on a general 8-

hour training program rather than six clock hours. This change is recommended in order to be compatible with the training that is available and simplify the qualification of training programs.

8-84.02: This change eliminates exception #2 of subsection (b). The City intended this exception to exist for two years after the adoption of the journeyman electrician certification program, in order to allow non-certified electricians to be certified as journeyman electricians if they demonstrated that they had a certain level of experience. This two-year period has expired and this exception is no longer in effect. See change to section 8-84.04.

8-84.03: This change is recommended to provide further clarification for the apprentice electrician classification.

8-84.04: This section included the effective date of March 31, 1997, for three specific sections that enacted the Master, Journeyman, and Apprentice Electrician classifications. This effective date has expired and these classifications have been implemented. This section is recommended to be repealed.

8-85.05: This is a new section that provides a residential wireman certification. Based on present electrical licensing requirements, an individual must be certified as journeyman electrician with four years experience in order to do any electrical work. This new classification is intended to qualify individuals to do exclusively residential work and requires an individual to pass an examination as well as having at least two years experience before qualifying as a residential wireman. Several area electrical contractors requested this residential certification to assist them in utilizing their work force more effectively. They explained that they had electricians that did not have the four years of experience, or the ability to pass a journeyman examination, even though they were very capable of installing residential wiring. The Permit and Development Center (PDC) staff and the Electrical Board developed this proposed language to qualify these less experienced individuals and address the contractors needs.

8-88: This is a recommendation from the Electrical Board to repeal a section in the Electrical Code that requires contractors to have identification signage on their vehicles. This section requires the inspector to determine if vehicles are personally owned or owned by the company, which is difficult to determine or enforce when out in the field. In addition, this section indicates that if a contractor's vehicle is not properly identified, it is grounds for the issuance of a stop work order or suspension of the contractor's license. This appears to be extreme and is not effectively enforced.

8-92: This would repeal the sign wireman's classification. Since

the PDC began processing the contractor's licensing program in 1993, we have not had one individual desiring to be licensed as a sign wireman. Staff has found that most circuitry installed to serve illuminated signs is installed by licensed electrical contractors.

8-118: This change provides further clarification as to where the regulations related to service entrances apply.

PLUMBING CODE:

8-178: This change adds an additional exception to the plumbing contractors licensing requirements to allow homeowners to install or repair the plumbing systems in their own homes. This does not allow homeowners to install building sewers, septic systems, water services, or back flow devices; however, it does allow them to install or repair other portions of the plumbing system. This "Homeowners" provision is similar to what is allowed in the Electrical and Mechanical Codes and limits the work to owner-occupied residences. This will not apply to rental property.

8-198: This is a change that allows the use of alternative materials for bedding of PVC sewer pipe. The present code language allows only a 3/8" smooth gravel to be used. The suggested language allows any material that is allowed by the Metro Design Standards to be used, which changes from time to time, based on the availability of material and new technologies.