

## Planning & Zoning News

Volume 4 Issue 2 April 2012 Department of Planning & Zoning Scott Anderson, Director

### Looking Forward, Planning Ahead

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A building inspector is the quality control inspector between the contractors and the homeowners. Building inspectors need to work with the builders to ensure all aspects of the home construction meet the code standards.



#### MAY IS BUILDING SAFETY MONTH

Building Safety Month annually raises public awareness of critical safety issues affecting every person, regardless of age or occupation. These entail the structural soundness of the buildings where we live and work, reliability of fire prevention and suppression systems, plumbing and mechanical systems, and energy efficiency and sustainability. The International Code Council Foundation first observed building safety month in 1980.

More than 4,000 years ago, the Code of Hammurabi, circa 2200–1800 B.C.E., prescribed the execution of any builder whose faulty construction of a house caused the death of its owner.

Building safety codes since then are far more precise, and the penalties far less drastic. The first building codes in the United States, established in 1625, addressed fire safety and specified materials for roof coverings. In 1630, Boston outlawed wood chimneys and thatch roof coverings. The first known formal U.S. building code was written in 1788 in Old Salem—now Winston-Salem, North Carolina, entirely in German. Larger American cities began instituting building codes in the early 1800s. In 1865, New Orleans became the first city to enact a law requiring inspections of public places.



# Safety Building Month



Whether you're building a house from scratch or looking to increase the energy efficiency of your home, there are a number of things you can do to make your home more sustainable and green.

Buildings have an enormous impact on the environment. Their design, construction and operation account for more than 40 percent of energy used and pollution generated in the United States, according to a 2002 white paper by the U.S. Green Building Council. Typically, demolition and construction debris accounts for 15–20 percent (in some places, up to 40 percent) of municipal solid waste in landfills. According to some estimates, as much as 90 percent of this waste could be reused or recycled.



Although no one can prevent natural disasters from occurring, there are many things you can do to make the impact less devastating for your family.

Every home should have 3 key elements in place before a disaster strikes:

- Evacuation Plan
- Communication Plan
- Emergency Supply Kit (don't forget to include supplies for pets)

For detailed information on an emergency preparedness kit, please visit the Homeland Security website at [www.ready.gov/america](http://www.ready.gov/america).



In 2010, more than 362,000 residential fires caused 2,555 deaths, more than 13,000 injuries and more than \$6.5 billion in property damage costs.

The United States Fire Association (USFA) states that the top five fire-safety topics most frequently identified with home fire deaths are smoke alarms, escape plans, child fire safety, older adult fire safety (cooking and heating) and careless smoking.

- Install at least one smoke alarm in every bedroom, outside of each sleeping room area and on each level of a multi-level building.
- Install a carbon monoxide alarm in the hallway outside of each sleeping room area.



Every year, more than 250 children under the age of five drown in swimming pools and more than 2,700 children seek medical treatment for pool-related accidents—mostly in backyard pools, according to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission. More than 75 percent of swimming pool accident victims were missing for five minutes or less when they were found drowned or in serious trouble.

- Install a fence at least four-feet-high around the pool area.
  - Install a self-latching gate or door in the fence to make pool areas inaccessible to children and unauthorized swimmers.
  - Spas and hot tubs also should have a similar fence or an approved, lockable safety cover.
- Install a door alarm. When the door or gate is opened, the alarm sounds and acts as an early warning device.
- Install a pool alarm to detect accidental or unauthorized entrance into the water. While the alarm provides an immediate warning, it does not substitute for the fences, door alarms and safety covers required by the code.

April						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
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29	30					

May						
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June						
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31						

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November						
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December						
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<b>PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING</b>	<b>APPLICATION DEADLINE</b>	<b>COUNTY COMMISSION MEETING</b>	<b>JOINT COUNTY COMMISSION CITY COUNCIL MEETINGS</b>
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"The toughest part of farming is choosing a cap."

## SLASH YOUR TRASH

The County Planning Department is continuing the county clean-up project. Funded by a state grant, the clean-up allows county residents to dispose of unwanted items and vegetation free of charge.



This spring the clean-up will occur on two Saturdays, April 28th and May 12th. The department is in the process of selecting the sites. Check your mail in the coming months to see if your neighborhood has been selected.

# PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSIONERS & STAFF

## COMMISSIONERS

Susie O'Hara,  
Humboldt/Colton Area  
2009-2013

Becky Randall  
Dell Rapids Area  
2008-2012

Wayne Steinhauer  
Wall Lake Area  
2011-2015

Mike Cypher  
Wall Lake Area  
2008-2012

Mark Rogan  
Garretson Area  
2010-2014

Gerald Beninga  
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Bonnie Duffy  
Split Rock Area  
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