

# Building Department

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## January 2011 HBA Newsletter

Another year has passed and we head into 2011 with renewed hopes of a more prosperous year ahead. We have had the privilege of having Louise Kennedy fill a void left by Becky Witte's move to Human Resources. It is anticipated that Louise will be with us in Central Permitting until sometime toward the end of February at which time the position will remain empty until further notice. We have had to ask for your patience in the past as we made adjustments to staffing in an effort to continue to provide the service you deserve and once again your patience will be appreciated.

I am going to take this opportunity to share some random thoughts provided to me by another staff member in Growth Management with statements demonstrating how they relate to the permitting and construction processes.

-“I asked God for a bike, but I know God does not work that way. So I stole a bike and asked for forgiveness.” Doing work without permits and asking for forgiveness and is not conducive to relationship building (See last months newsletter). While we are not God nor do we want to even be thought of in that manner, permits are required PRIOR TO work commencing. We have provided latitude that is backed by the Building Code for emergency situations such as HVAC and water heater replacements. All we ask for is notice that the work is being done by phone fax, or e-mail so we have answers when you are reported to this office/ Code Enforcement. Since we accept fax applications there really is no reason advanced notice cannot be provided. This is part of our overall program in an attempt to eliminate unpermitted and unlicensed activity.

-“Do not argue with an idiot. He will drag you down to his level and beat you with experience.” Remember that when you feel like arguing with me. If you think we as a staff are wrong with the implementation of a code section, do not feel as though there will be any retaliation on our part if we are challenged in the correct manner. The correct way is to provide the code section in question and the proper backing through other code sections, declaratory statements, interpretations or other means supporting your position. Again, this is part of relationship building and getting it right, not what we want.

This past week I was in a class where the instructor continued to emphasize his 40 plus years of experience in his field. He kept saying that experience is learning from your past mistakes. While I understand the idea he was trying to portray it is quite unfortunate that this was not

expanded. Learning from our own mistakes is only part of the equation. Learning from the mistakes of others keeps us from making the same mistakes. Learning from successes is also a part of experience that cannot be forgotten. I do not have to experience things to learn from experience. I have never been hit by a car but learning from experience tells me that it probably hurts. Those that say I have been doing this for so many years are dangerous when their reliance is just on that alone. In our ever changing environment, experience plays an important part in not only our implementation and code interpretations but also in future code development, but keeping up with the times and changes are equally important. Working together as stakeholders in the process to create and maintain safe environments and structures is our common goal. Be safe, stay safe, think safe and build safe.

Until next month,

Gary Hiatt, CBO