

structure will also make it easier for the department to pursue further sharing of examinations with the other states involved in our reciprocal electrical licensing agreements.

● **Inspection Fees For Outbuildings**

We have been asked to clarify fee items in the residential section of the fee schedule.

Dwelling unit inspection fees are based on “square footage” including any attached garages regardless of service size or additional inside feeders. The special electrical equipment associated with some dwellings (e.g. swimming pools, spas, hot tubs, septic pumping systems) requires additional fees at one of two fee levels. The lower fee applies if the special equipment is inspected when the wiring in the associated dwelling unit is inspected; the higher rate applies if the special equipment is not inspected when the dwelling is inspected.

Residential outbuildings are inspected at one of two flat fees, regardless of the size of the circuit, feeder, or service that powers the building. The lower fee (\$30.50) applies if the outbuilding is inspected when the associated dwelling unit is inspected, or the higher rate (\$48.10) if the outbuilding is not inspected when the dwelling is inspected.

Note that “outbuildings” are structures that serve a direct accessory function to the residence, such as a pump house or storage building. “Outbuilding” does not include buildings used for commercial type occupancies or additional dwelling occupancies. All other miscellaneous structures on residential property have permit fees based on service or feeder size in WAC 296-46B-905(1)(b). If there is no dwelling unit on the property or a valid building permit for a dwelling unit, then any pump house, storage building, or other miscellaneous structure wired will be charged by feeder or service size from WAC 296-46B-905(1)(b).

The fees listed in WAC 296-46B-905 must always support the number of inspection trips requested by the permit holder. Any fee of less than \$72.80 (two half-hour progress inspections) is expected to be completed in one requested inspection. If a contractor or homeowner buys a permit for \$48.10 and schedules the work so two separate inspections are needed, the fee paid does not support the cost of the inspections. An additional trip fee (\$36.40) will be added to the original fee to support the second inspection request.

Except for Class B labels, the department does not charge for return trips necessary to verify completion of safety corrections issued. The department also does not sell permits based only on trip fees. It is still department policy that we do not charge for requests to perform “final” inspections.

● **Fire Alarm Systems, Security Systems, and Class B Labels**

NEC Article 760 covers the installation of wiring and equipment for fire alarm systems, including all circuits controlled and powered by the fire alarm system. These systems include fire detection and alarm notification, voice communications, guard’s tour, sprinkler water flow, and sprinkler supervisory systems. Fire alarm system installations are not eligible for Class B basic electrical work labels.

The criteria for whether a building is required to have a fire alarm system are found in NFPA 101 (Life Safety Code) and local building codes. Typically dwelling units do not require a “fire alarm system” when line voltage (battery back-up) smoke detectors are installed according to building codes. In such dwellings with low voltage security systems installed, heat and smoke detection devices and circuits may be included as an optional addition to the security system. These installations are eligible for Class B labels since they are not a fire alarm system.

Installers should note that some building officials are accepting a low voltage central fire alarm system in lieu of line voltage smoke detectors. This type of limited energy system would not be eligible for Class B labels since it is a true fire alarm system.

● **Electrical Question of the Month**

This Month’s Question: Where electrical equipment is installed to obtain a series combination rating, the identification plate must be substantially what color? **A)** Green, **B)** Orange, **C)** Yellow, **D)** Red.

Last Month’s Question: What is the maximum fine for violation of any of the provisions of the RCW that apply to electricians and electrical installations? **A)** \$500, **B)** \$1000, **C)** \$5000, **D)** \$10,000. The answer is: **D)** [RCW 19.28.131]