

## What You Need to Know About Flood Vents

1 - Openings must be installed in foundation walls so that water can flow, unimpeded, in and out of the crawl space without damaging the walls' integrity. The regulation is easy to remember: one square inch of opening in the foundation wall for every square foot of the area of your house. For example, a 2,000-square-foot crawl space would need 2,000 square inches of opening. The number of flood vents you need to install depends on the size and type of vent you buy. (More on that later.)

2 - Each enclosed area must have a minimum of two openings. If there are multiple enclosed areas within the foundation walls, each area must have at least two openings in its exterior walls.

3 - Flood vents must be below flood level to work. The bottom of each opening must be no more than 1 foot above whichever of these is higher: the interior or exterior grade immediately under the opening.

4 - Any screens, grates, grilles, fixed louvers, or other covers or devices you install must not block or hinder the automatic flow of floodwaters into and out of the enclosed area.

### Why Are Flood Vents Required?

The purpose of flood vents (also called "flood gates" or "flood ports") is to reduce structural damage from flooding. These permanent openings accomplish

this objective by allowing water to pass into or out of a building's exterior foundation walls.

Why is that so important? In a flood situation, if the water pressure inside and outside your home can't equalize rapidly enough, the windows and doors could blow out. In addition, this pressure can compromise the foundation and make your home unsafe to live in. Studies have shown that houses with proper openings survive a flood; homes without such vents collapse.

### Who Needs Flood Vents?

According to its website, the NFIP "requires flood vents for residential basements, crawl spaces, garages, and other enclosed structures that are below the Base Flood Elevation (BFE) in Special Flood Hazard Areas." BFE is the height of the base flood, usually in feet, in relation to the National Geodetic Vertical Datum of 1929 or other datum as specified.

When a community participates in the NFIP every property owner in the community must follow all of FEMA's and NFIP's requirements whether or not the property owner purchases flood insurance. One of the requirements is properly installed flood vents.

### How Cost Savings Add Up

Properly installed and situated flood vents can pay for themselves very quickly. They allow you to

save in two ways. The annual reduction on your flood insurance premiums can be considerable. Secondly, should floodwaters rise to your home, flood vents can reduce the risk of structural damage, which can be very costly to repair.

### Which Type of Flood Vent Should You Install?

There are two types of flood vents on the market: non-engineered and engineered. Engineered vents have been designed in such a way that they provide a more efficient flood relief system, and thus fewer vents will need to be installed.

The opening size of the non-engineered flood vent is calculated by multiplying the width times the height of the opening. The opening size of the engineered flood vent is calculated using a mathematical formula that takes into account certain coefficients, net area and opening shapes. This

formula calculation must be certified by a professional engineer. The main difference between the two types of flood vents is that fewer of the engineered flood vents are required to meet NFIP requirements. For example, a non-engineered 8" x 16" vent is rated at 128 square inches while an engineered 8" x 16" is rated at 200

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## On the Shelves: What's Happening at the Vernonia Library

### "Food for Fines" Returns to the Vernonia Public Library!

On December 16, 2013 you can help feed our community while paying off your library fines. The Vernonia Public Library will be sponsoring a food drive and fine amnesty program to benefit Vernonia Cares Food Bank. For each food item donated, \$1 will be credited toward your fine balance up

to a maximum of \$10.00. Please note that credit cannot be applied to lost or damaged book replacement fees. Patrons who do not have fines are also encouraged to make donations of non-perishable food items. Home-canned items, cans that are past their expiration date or are dented or damaged, or cans with barcodes lined or scratched through will not be accepted.

## City Administrator Report

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### PARKS DEPARTMENT OPRD & DISTRICT IMPROVEMENTS AT THE SPENCER PARK DEVELOPMENT

Based on an exchange of information, the Vernonia School District shared that they directed the replacement park general contractor to winterize the site, hydro-seed the existing surface and plan to restart site work this spring, completing the project by June 2014. The City anticipates that the District will provide the city with their revised approach to meeting the specifications and schedule. The City has a cost estimate to crush the brick and asphalt salvaged from the school demolition at \$6.75/yard. The City may add to the crushing materials owned by the Community Garden project. The asphalt crushing requires the work be done when the temperatures are at or below freezing, so this will be a winter project. Members of the Parks Committee continue to explore design build options for the picnic shelter and restroom facility.

### OPRD MASTER PARK PLAN

MacKay & Sposito intend to complete the Master Park Plan by January 2014. The Parks Committee held a town hall meeting on November 14, 2014. A final plan will be shared with City Council in December 2013. Adoption of the plan will occur at a City Council meeting in January 2014.

### OTHER DEPARTMENTS AD HOC MARKETING GROUP

An ad hoc group composed of the Vernonia School District, West Oregon Electric Cooperative, City of Vernonia and community representatives met for the second time to discuss ways that the City of Vernonia could more effectively market itself in the future. Our interest is twofold – provide information to households and businesses that may look at this community as a place to move to. Metropolitan Group offered to assist the group in composing an initial mission statement and provide limited support as we craft a message. Projects that we are assessing include a unified internet based information, better engage the Columbia County Economic Team, involve the Vernonia Area Chamber of Commerce, approach large employers in adjoining areas to make sure their internal resources has information on Vernonia.

### POLICE CHIEF CONNER

We are informed by DPSST that Chief Conner has met all training and management requirement for the position of Police Chief at this time. DPSST will issue a certification automatically sometime in January 2014, when Chief will have completed two years in the position. We will all celebrate at that future date

## Police Blotter Oct. 1-13

### ARRESTS/CRIMINAL CITATIONS

- November 06, 2013 – Arrest near the Vernonia Lake on an outstanding arrest warrant.
- November 08, 2013 – Arrest in the 100 Block of A St. on an outstanding arrest warrant.
- November 10, 2013 – Arrest in the 800 Block of Jefferson Ave. on an outstanding arrest warrant.
- November 16, 2013 – Arrest on Bridge St. near Jefferson Ave. on an outstanding arrest warrant.
- November 16, 2013 – Report taken and referred to the Columbia County Justice Court for Violation of Release Agreement.
- November 17, 2013 – Arrest and transported to the Columbia County

Jail for Harassment and Disorderly Conduct.

- November 17, 2013 – Report taken on a Runaway Juvenile. Case Pending.

### TRAFFIC/OTHER CITATIONS

- November 02, 2013 – Issued a citation for Improper Display of Tags on N. Mist Dr. near Douglas St.
- November 06, 2013 – Issued citations for Driving While Suspended and Driving Uninsured on Bridge St. near Spencer Ave.
- November 17, 2013 – Issued citations for Driving Uninsured, Improper Display, and Improper Mudguards on N. Mist Dr. near Cherry St.

## Vernonia City Council Meetings and Closures

City Council Meetings are scheduled for 7 PM:  
Monday, December 2, 2013  
Monday, December 16, 2013

City Closures are scheduled for:  
Thanksgiving Day  
Thursday, November 28  
Staff Day  
Friday, November 29

*Dates and times subject to change due to conflicts of schedules*

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