



Metro Codes

E—News For Neighborhoods

Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County

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Storm Recovery Assistance to Macon County

The Department of Codes & Building Safety, in cooperation with the Tennessee Emergency Management Agency provided a team of volunteers to assist Macon County officials in disaster recovery. Wade Hill, Chief Plans Examiner, along with Byron Hall, Building Inspection Chief, Jeff Castleberry, Property Standards Inspection Chief, and inspectors from the Building and Property Standards divisions joined with other officials and volunteers to conduct damage assessments following last Tuesday's devastating storms.

One of the major challenges faced by a community hit by a significant weather event is damage assessment. An accurate and timely assessment of the condition of effected structures is critical not only for insurance and claims adjusters, but also for evaluation of the overall scope of the disaster in order to determine the level of Federal assistance the community will receive. It is also necessary to ensure the safety of the survivors and aid works who are trying to deal with the devastation. Many buildings may appear to be safe, but without a thorough assessment of their damage, a potential hazard could exist that could cause further damage and harm at any time.

Because the damage was spread over a wide area, it was important to provide this community with additional support from experienced codes inspectors to make these crucial damage assessments.



The aftermath of the tornado that touched down in Macon County.



Neighbor Helping Neighbor

Billy Fields, from the Department of Codes and Building Safety was loaned by Metro Emergency Services to Tennessee Emergency Management Agency as the volunteer resources manager for the tornado ravaged Macon County. Billy was in charge of coordinating set up of a warehouse for distributing food, household goods, and clothing for the tornado victims. In the first ten days the volunteers served 1200 people. On Saturday, February 12th, the volunteer efforts had about 1600 people working. Macon County received overwhelming support and donations. Efforts are now concentrated on rebuilding families and community.



"Neighbors and volunteers all working together to give their support and to help the residents of Macon County concentrate on rebuilding families and community."



Home Insulation Saves You Money

Heat loss through the ceiling and walls in your home could be very large if the [insulation](#) levels are less than the recommended minimum, according to studies conducted by the United States Department of Energy.

When your house was built, the builder likely installed the amount of insulation recommended at that time. Given today's energy prices (and future prices that will probably be higher), the of insulation level might be inadequate, especially if you have an older home.

If the attic hatch is located above a conditioned space, check to see if it is at least as heavily insulated as the attic, is weather stripped, and closes tightly. In the attic, determine whether openings for items such as pipes, ductwork, and chimneys are sealed. Seal any gaps with an expanding foam caulk or some other permanent sealant.

While you are inspecting the attic, check to see if there is a [vapor barrier](#) under the attic insulation. The vapor barrier might be tarpaper, Kraft paper attached to [fiberglass batts](#), or a plastic sheet. If there does not appear to be a vapor barrier, you might consider

painting the interior ceilings with vapor barrier paint. This reduces the amount of water vapor that can pass through the ceiling. Large amounts of moisture can reduce the effectiveness of insulation and promote structural damage.

Make sure that the attic vents are not blocked by insulation. You also should seal any electrical boxes in the ceiling with flexible caulk (from the living room side or attic side) and cover the entire attic floor with at least the current recommended amount of insulation.

Checking a wall's insulation level is more difficult. Select an exterior wall and turn off the circuit breaker or unscrew the fuse for any outlets in the wall. Be sure to test the outlets to make certain that they are not "hot." Check the outlet by plugging in a functioning lamp or portable radio. Once you are sure your outlets are not getting any electricity, remove the cover plate from one of the outlets and gently probe into the wall with a thin, long stick or screwdriver. If you encounter a slight resistance, you have some insulation there. You could also make a small hole in a closet, behind a couch, or in some other unobtrusive place to see what, if anything, the wall cavity is

filled with. Ideally, the wall cavity should be totally filled with some form of insulation material. Unfortunately, this method cannot tell you if the entire wall is insulated, or if the insulation has settled. Only a [thermographic inspection](#) can do this.

If your basement is unheated, determine whether there is insulation under the living area flooring. In most areas of the country, an [R-value](#) of 25 is the recommended minimum level of insulation. The insulation at the top of the foundation wall and first floor perimeter should have an R-value of 19 or greater. If the basement is heated, the foundation walls should be insulated to

"Heat loss through the ceiling and walls can be very costly to homeowners". Studies conducted by the United States Department of Energy reveals the loss could very large if the [insulation](#) levels are less than the recommended minimum.



Air Leaks Steal From You

An energy audit can save you money. According to the United States Department of Energy, air leaks are one of the major reasons energy bills are often out of control. Some simple efforts can go a long way on making your home more efficient.

First, make a list of obvious air leaks (drafts). The potential energy savings from reducing drafts in a home may range from 5 to 30% per year, and the home is generally much more comfortable afterward. Check for indoor air leaks, such as gaps along the baseboard or edge of the flooring and at junctures of the walls and ceiling. Check to see if air can flow through these places:

- Electrical outlets
- Switch plates
- Window frames
- Baseboards
- Weather stripping around doors
- Fireplace dampers
- Attic hatches
- Wall- or window-mounted air conditioners.

Also look for gaps around pipes and wires, electrical outlets, foundation seals, and mail slots. Check to see if the caulking and weather stripping are applied properly, leaving no gaps or cracks, and are in good condition.

Inspect windows and doors for air leaks. See if you can rattle them, since movement means possible air leaks. If you can see daylight around a door or window frame, then the door or window leaks. You can usually seal these leaks by caulking or weather stripping them. Check the storm windows to see if they fit and are not broken. You may also wish to consider [replacing your old windows and doors](#) with newer, high-performance ones. If new factory-made doors or windows are too costly, you can install low-cost plastic sheets over the windows.

If you are having difficulty locating leaks, you may want to conduct a basic building pressurization test:

1. First, close all exterior doors, windows, and fireplace flues.
2. Turn off all combustion appliances such as gas burning furnaces and water heaters.
3. Then turn on all exhaust fans (generally located in the kitchen and bathrooms) or use a large window fan to suck the air out of the rooms.

This test increases infiltration through cracks and leaks, making them easier to detect. You can use incense sticks or your damp hand to locate these leaks. If you use incense sticks, moving air will cause the smoke to waver, and if you use your damp hand, any drafts will feel cool to your hand.

On the outside of your house, inspect all areas where two different building materials meet, including:

- All exterior corners
- Where siding and chimneys meet
- Areas where the foundation and the bottom of exterior brick or siding meet.

You should plug and [caulk](#) holes or penetrations for faucets, pipes, electric outlets, and wiring. Look for cracks and holes in the mortar, foundation, and siding, and [seal](#) them with the appropriate material. Check the exterior caulking around doors and windows, and see whether exterior storm doors and primary doors seal tightly.

When sealing any home, you must always be aware of the danger of indoor air pollution and combustion appliance "back drafts." Back drafting is when the various combustion appliances and exhaust fans in the home compete for air. An exhaust fan may pull the combustion gases back into the living space. This can obviously create a very dangerous and unhealthy situation in the home.

In homes where a fuel is burned (i.e., natural gas, fuel oil, propane, or wood) for heating, be certain the appliance has an adequate air supply. Generally, one square inch of vent opening is required for each 1,000 Btu of appliance input heat. When in doubt, contact Nashville Electric Service or Nashville Gas or your energy professional.

“ Proper insulation and weather stripping adds money to your pocket and a warmer home during winter months. Checking for leaks and sealing them with appropriate materials will make your home more energy efficient.”

How to Winterize Your Car

Climate changes don't affect just you, they also affect your car. In regions that don't enjoy mild winters, you wouldn't dream of heading outside without a heavy coat if the wind chill brought the temperature below freezing. Don't expect your car to function properly without some attention to its winter needs, too.

The oil in your engine changes depending on how hot or cold the engine is running. Because the outside temperatures will influence the internal temperature of your engine, you need to make sure you're using the proper oil for the conditions. During the winter months, if you live where temperatures get below freezing, you'll want to switch over to thinner, less viscous oil. If you run a 10W-30 in the summer, for example, try moving to a 5W-30 when changing your oil in the fall or winter. If you are in doubt, refer to your manual or the manufacturer.

Your car's coolant system is not intended only to keep your engine from overheating. It is also responsible for protecting your valuable engine against corrosion. Before the weather gets too cold, make sure you are using coolant with ethylene glycol to help protect your engine. Every vehicle requires a certain ratio of coolant to water, and your owner's manual or repair technician can explain what your engine needs. For most vehicles, a winter ratio is 60% coolant to 40% water. Adjusting this ratio is an important step in winterizing your car, so if you need help, ask someone who is experienced and knowledgeable.



It isn't only your engine that doesn't like to start in the winter. Your battery capacity is reduced by the cold weather, too. A thorough inspection of your battery, cables, terminals, and fluid will help you make sure your car is ready for the winter. Check over the battery cables for cracks and breaks. The terminals should fit snugly with no loose connections. You can check your battery fluid by uncovering the refill hole (or sometimes holes). If the level is below the bottom of the cap, refill with distilled water. While you're inspecting your battery, look around for the manufacture date. Knowing how old your battery is can clue you in to when it will begin to lose charge.

When buying a new battery, never buy one with a six-month-old manufacture date.

An easily overlooked part of your winterizing program is your windshield. If you have ever driven behind another vehicle kicking up wet, dirty road snow, then you already have a true appreciation for windshield washer fluid. For best results in clearing off cold, heavy grime, select a washer fluid with an antifreeze solution.

But beware: some washer fluids can be harsh and damage your car's paint.

Door locks can freeze in cold weather and break your key if you try to force them open. The old fashion cure was warm water, but what if you're not at home and don't have any warm water nearby? Discount stores, auto parts stores, and even hardware stores sell glycerin you can use for de-icing. Think about where you keep it, however, because if the de-icer is in the glove box of your frozen-shut car, then it won't help you any.

"Helpful hints for maintaining your car to ensure your car's best performance and dependability during these cold winter months."

.....and most of all to avoid car and towing expenses.

Car Emergency Kit



Well, it may never happen to you, but it could. You break down in the middle of nowhere in the middle of a storm. It may be freezing cold and you will be all alone. Do you have what you need in your vehicle to make sure you stay safe until help arrives? According to the American Red Cross, the following items should be part of your vehicle emergency kit:

- 12-foot jumper cables
- Four 15-minute roadside flares
- Two quarts of oil
- Gallon of antifreeze
- First aid kit (including bandages, gauze, adhesive tape, antiseptic cream, etc.)
- Blanket
- Extra fuses
- Flashlight and extra batteries
- Flat head screwdrivers
- Phillips head screwdrivers
- Pliers
- Vise Grips
- Adjustable wrench
- Tire inflator
- Tire pressure gauge
- Rags
- Roll of paper towel
- Spray bottle with washer fluid
- Pocketknife
- Ice Scraper
- Pen and paper
- Help sign
- Granola or energy bars
- Bottled water

This may seem like over-kill, but each item has a purpose and a place. If nothing else, at least carry the follow items:

- √ two roadside flares
- √ a quart of oil
- √ small first aid kit
- √ extra fuses
- √ flashlight
- √ Leatherman Tool (or any other multipurpose tool commonly containing pliers, wire cutters, knife, saw, bottle opener, screwdrivers, files and an awl), tire inflator, rags, pocket knife, pen and paper
- √ help sign will take up a minimal amount of trunk space

SAFETY IS AS SIMPLE AS A B C

“ALWAYS BE CAREFUL”

- Arthur Unknown

It's Coming....Paperless Billing for NES Customers

Laurie Parker



Nashville Electric Service will soon offer a paperless billing system that will eliminate the need for hard copy bills. Customers who sign up for the program will receive their bill by email and pay online at www.nespower.com.

"E-billing will make it easier for our customers to manage their accounts, and this technology will cut down on our production costs and benefit the environment," says Teresa Corlew, NES Chief Customer Care Office.

The program works to save trees by using "green-friendly" e-bills that reduce the demand for paper.

- According to the National Arbor Day foundation, one tree makes approximately 3,333 sheets of paper. And, one ton of uncoated virgin (non-recycled) printing and office paper uses 24 trees.
- The American Forest & Paper Association states that every ton of paper recovered saves 3.3 cubic yards of landfill space.
- According to the international publication Next Generation Power & Energy, there is a massive and growing awareness of the environmental impact of paper production. For every 38, 500 bills produced:
 - **One ton** of paper is used.
 - **Two tons** of trees are destroyed.
 - **16,450 gallons** of water are used
 - **1,941 pounds** of solid waste are generated
 - **60 pounds** of air emissions are spewed out
 - **5, 058 pounds** of greenhouse gases are emitted

"NES to offer paperless billing for it's customers in the near future and provide viewing online of their account, view their balance, usage history and make an electronic payment from a checking or savings account for free."

"We have set a goal of reducing the amount of paper bills we mail out by 10-percent. That's approximately 35, 000 bills each month, which is a lot of pulp and paper," Corlew claimed. "Beyond the environmental impact, we project a savings of over \$100, 000 per year."

The new service will be available to both residential and commercial customers. By enrolling, customers agree to no longer receive a paper bill in the mail. They will be able to log into their account, view their balance and usage history, and make an electronic payment from a checking or savings account for free. Credit card payments will also be accepted, but a \$3.96 service fee will be charged by the third party vendor.

Be on the lookout for more information about going paperless in the next couple of months on your billing statement and online at nespower.com.

Employee Highlights

**Notice on “Notice”
Edge-O-Lake Neighbors**

Linda Bush is an Office Support Representative III for the Property Standards Division. Linda’s primary responsibility is to provide clerical and administrative support to one of our three inspection Teams. As the “Blue Team” secretary, Linda generates their abate notices, processing legal notices for substandard properties, enters inspection results, and provides other administrative support to ensure the enforcement process comes together for the Property Standards Division. She also takes telephone requests for inspections from the public and zoning inspection requests from Contractors to complete the process for their Use and Occupancy letter.



Linda joined the Codes Department in August 1979. She issued permits in the permit department for approximately a year and then transferred to the Inspection Division where they make inspections for Building, Electrical, Plumbing, and Gas/Mechanical permits obtained in the Metropolitan Davidson County area. She has worked in every area of the Inspection Department. She also typed the Use and Occupancy letters for the department from 1987 to 2002. In August of 2002 Linda transferred to the Property Standards Division. Linda also works with the Metropolitan Board of Property Standards and Appeals during their monthly meetings and has also worked with the neighborhood NOTICE program.

Linda is a graduate of Central High School and has lived in the Nashville area all her life. She has three daughters and five grandchildren.

The “Neighborhoods Organized to Initiate Code Enforcement” (NOTICE) program is designed to help citizens identify and report codes violations in their neighborhood. The NOTICE program allows citizens to assist in the identification of codes violations. Neighbors can now become a direct participant in the process that helps improve and maintain their own neighborhoods.

Our “NOTICE” Program continues to grow as we include our neighbors in the Edge-O-Lake area. Currently, the neighborhood association meets in the cafeteria at Lakeview Elementary School. Their current schedule is the 3rd Thursday of every other month at 6:30 p.m. or as needed.

The streets involved in this association are: Sleepy Hollow, Ryder, Deerpath, Edge-O-Lake, Lake Villa, Murfreesboro Road, Broadview and Bell Road. Those in the Edge-O-Lake area may let the association know their concerns by attending the monthly meeting or by calling 360-3444 or emailing VTaryn@aol.com. The mailing address is 2510 Sleepy Hollow Dr./Nashville, TN 37217.

Neighbors working with neighbors to make your home and community a better place to live.



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PASS IT ON!

Pass the word about our newsletter! We would be honored if you would share our newsletter with your colleagues and co-workers. If anyone would like to sign up to receive it themselves,



For information regarding accessibility, please contact Manley Biggers at (615) 862-6521 or fax (615) 862-6499. He can also be reached at manley.biggers@nashville.gov

Terry Cobb and **Bill Penn** welcome your feedback on our e-newsletter. Please send your comments to Bill Penn, Assistant Director, Property Standards Div , 862-6590