Requirements for Multi-Family Residential Buildings (Moisture Protection) RCW 64.55

Requirements relating to the moisture protection of multi-unit residential buildings containing more than two units were enacted during a session of the Washington State Legislature. RCW 64.55 requires several new actions by design professionals and qualified inspectors.

These requirements became effective August 1, 2005 and will apply to building permits issued on or after that date. The new law mandates that:

- For any new building and for the renovation of any existing building, where the cost of renovation is 5% or more of the value of the building, or if only part of the building is being renovated the value is 5% or more of, the part of the building being renovated weather proofing plans and details, stamped by a professional engineer or architect shall be submitted to the Burien Building Department as part of the submittal documents.

- If reconstruction work is less than 5% of the value of the building or the portion of the building being renovated, the owner or applicant shall submit a letter to the building department so certifying and documenting the method of how the value of the building or portion of the building was established, and how the cost of renovation was determined.

- Any changes to the building enclosure design documents that alter the way the building or its components is waterproofed, weatherproofed, and otherwise protected from water or moisture intrusion shall be stamped by the architect or engineer and shall be provided to the building department, and to the person conducting the course of construction inspection in a timely manner to permit such person to inspect for compliance therewith.

- The building department shall not issue a building permit for construction of building enclosure of a multiunit residential building or for the rehabilitation construction unless the building enclosure design documents contain a stamped statement by the person stamping the building enclosure design documents in substantially the following form: "The undersigned has provided building enclosure documents that in my professional judgment are appropriate to satisfy the requirements of RCW 64.55.005 through 64.55.090.

- All multi-unit residential buildings shall have the building enclosure inspected by a qualified inspector during initial construction and during rehabilitative construction.

- Upon completion of the inspections, the qualified inspector shall prepare and submit to the building department a signed letter certifying that the building enclosure has been inspected during construction or rehabilitation and that it has been constructed or reconstructed in substantial compliance with the building enclosure documents. The building department shall not issue a final certificate of occupancy, or equivalent, until the letter required by RCW 64.55.060 has been submitted. RCW 64.55.060 further states that the building department is not charged with and has no responsibility for determining whether the building enclosure inspection is adequate or appropriate to satisfy the requirements.

The building enclosure plans, and inspection record shall be maintained by the building department as required by law; however, the building department staff will not review the building enclosure details for adequacy, review the qualifications of the third-party building enclosure inspector or review the inspection record of the building enclosure construction.