

## Division of Occupational Licensure & Office of Public Safety & Inspections Updates

The Division of Occupational Licensure (DOL) & Office of Public Safety & Inspections (OPSI) staff are proud to be part of the MBTA's South Coast Rail expansion and to celebrate the opening of the East Taunton Station on March 24, 2025. Thank you to State Building Inspector Michael Halley and State Wiring Inspector Edward Poulin for their work on this project.



DOL Staff at the ribbon cutting for MBTA's East Taunton Station. (Left to right: Sarah Wilkinson, Commissioner; Michael Halley, State Building Inspector; Edward Poulin, State Wiring Inspector; Thomas Lacey, Deputy Commissioner)

## 10<sup>th</sup> Edition of 780 CMR – Massachusetts Building Code

### **Concurrency Period Ending Soon**

The 10th Edition of the Massachusetts Building Code, as adopted by the Board of Building Regulations and Standards (BBRS), went into effect on October 11, 2024 running currently with the 9<sup>th</sup> Edition until June 30, 2025. That means a project permitted between October 11, 2024 and June 30, 2025 may elect to be permitted under the 9<sup>th</sup> **OR** 10<sup>th</sup> Edition of 780 CMR. As of July 1, 2025, all projects must be permitted under the 10<sup>th</sup> Edition.

The official 10<sup>th</sup> Edition Amendments to 780 CMR may be purchased from the State Bookstore here: [780 CMR - State Building Code](#)

Additional information on the 10<sup>th</sup> Edition of 780 CMR from the BBRS may be found here: [10th Edition State Building Code | Mass.gov](#)

## **DOL/OPSI has Moved!**

The Division of Occupational Licensure including our Welcome Center has moved to a new office at One Federal Street in Boston. Please use the following address for all mail correspondence:

Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
Division of Occupational Licensure  
Office of Public Safety & Inspections  
1 Federal Street, Suite 600  
Boston, MA 02110-2012

## **From the Building Official Certification Committee (BOCC)**

### **Notification Deadlines**

As of July 1, 2025, all conditional and certified Building Commissioners/Inspector of Buildings and Local Building Inspectors must notify the BBRS and your current and future State Building Inspector of any change in your employment status or employment location within one month of said change. This notification may be done by emailing [BOCC-MA@mass.gov](mailto:BOCC-MA@mass.gov) and the State Building Inspector that covers your current and future municipality who's contact information can be found here: [State Building Inspector Assignments](#).

The clerk of each city and town must annually transmit to the BOCC the name of each Building Commissioner/Inspector of Buildings and Local Building Inspector employed in the municipality. Please remind your city or town clerk that they must notify the BOCC using the correct form by April 1. [BOCC Forms for City & Town Clerks | Mass.gov](#)

### **Continuing Education Hours**

Your current credited hours can be reviewed here: [Certified Building Official Continuing Education Hours | Mass.gov](#) Reminder: All CEU documentation must first be sent to [BOCC-MA@mass.gov](mailto:BOCC-MA@mass.gov) on an Attachment B unless previously submitted on an Attachment A from the host of the meeting/training. Attachment A and B must go before the BOCC for approval. Attachment C is only to be submitted after Attachment A and B have been submitted, gone before the BOCC, and you notice a discrepancy on your CEU list. All forms are available here: [Continuing Education for Certified Building Code Enforcement Officials | Mass.gov](#)

### **New Employee or Recently Appointed?**

Please notify your appointing authority/City or Town Clerk that they must memorialize your appointment as a Local Inspector or Building Commissioner/Inspector of Building by submitting a New Employee

Report Form to the BOCC. A New Employee Report Form must be filed with the BOCC **immediately** following your appointment. Forms can be found here: [New Employee Report Form | Mass.gov](#)

For questions and concerns, reach out to [BOCC-MA@mass.gov](mailto:BOCC-MA@mass.gov)

## **DOL Welcomes New Employees!**



### **Tammy Gropman – Executive Director of Public Safety Boards**

Tammy Gropman joined DOL on January 27, 2025 as the Executive Director for Public Safety Boards, which includes the BBRS and BOCC.

Tammy holds a bachelor's degree in business administration and management from Bryant University, and is proud to bring her expertise in process improvement and change management to the Commonwealth. She has many years of experience in both the Supermarket and Telecommunications Industry. Most recently, Tammy received her PMP (Project Management) certification to continue broadening her skills and gained experience as a project manager at a small company offering WiFi, wiring and design, and network solutions.

After years of working in the private sector, Tammy is excited to work for the Commonwealth. Outside the office, Tammy enjoys reading, playing and coaching softball, and spending time with her active family.



### **Melissa Joyce – Building & Engineering Coordinator**

Melissa joins the Office of Public Safety and Inspections as the Building and Engineering Coordinator. Melissa brings valuable experience from her previous role as the Assistant to the Building Commissioner in a municipal building department. In this capacity, she played a key role in managing permits, assisting residents, navigating zoning regulations, and supporting inspectors, all while honing her strong organizational skills and commitment to efficiency.

Melissa is a graduate of Southern New Hampshire University, where she earned a degree in Business Administration with a concentration in Public Administration and a minor in Political Science. Her educational background, combined with her professional experience, makes her well-equipped to manage the diverse and dynamic responsibilities of her new role at DOL/OPSI.

Outside of work, Melissa is an active member of her community and stays busy as the mother of three teenagers. She enjoys reading and spending time with her family.



## **Damian Cote – State Building Inspector – District 1**

Damian Cote began with the Office of Public Safety and Inspections in March of 2025 as a State Building Inspector for District 1. He holds a bachelor's degree in psychology from UMass Amherst and a master's degree from Rhode Island School of Design.

Damian established and operated Holyoke Carpentry for 10 years. He's also served as an Adjunct Professor at both Rhode Island School of Design and Montserrat College of Art where he developed and taught college courses. Damian has worked as the Building Commissioner in various communities including Holyoke and is a Certified Floodplain Manager..

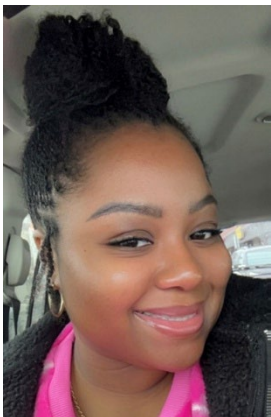
Damian is a commercial pilot and has pursued international experiences through extensive travel and language study, including immersion studies in Spanish.



## **Eric Chartrand – State Building Inspector – District 7**

Eric joined DOL/OPSI as a State Building Inspector on May 6, 2025. He is a 3rd generation carpenter and began working with his father at the age of 15. Eric spent a large portion of his career traveling to different work sites in Ft Lauderdale, Miami, New York City, Pennsylvania, Connecticut and Massachusetts. Eric has extensive experience as a solar installer and supervisor before entering the building inspector profession as a municipal inspector.

Eric is the father of two daughters, 11 & 15, that make up his world. He's also an avid guitar player and an animal lover with a cat, a bearded dragon, and milk snake.



## **Andrea Morris – Building & Engineering Office Support Specialist**

Andrea joined the Office of Public Safety and Inspections on May 5, 2025. With many years of experience working in the Public Works Permitting Department for the City of Boston, Andrea brings a strong background in municipal operations, as well as customer service, and administrative support. Currently she is pursuing a degree in Political Science at UMASS Boston.

Outside of work and school, Andrea enjoys spending time outdoors with her son.



## From the Building & Engineering Inspecting Team

### **10<sup>th</sup> Edition Updates to the Massachusetts Building Code**

As contractors, building officials, property owners, and registered design professionals prepare for the 10<sup>th</sup> Edition to fully take effect on July 1, 2025, I want to take this opportunity to highlight some major changes to the Massachusetts Building Code. Some of these changes are Massachusetts amendments adopted by the BBRS while others are changes in the International Building Code from the 2015 Edition to the 2021 Edition. This article provides a high-level summary of the changes mentioned, but is not a complete list of all updates and changes. DOL/OPSI will continue to provide education and training around 10<sup>th</sup> Edition code topics but I encourage you to review the full text of the 10<sup>th</sup> Edition to fully understand all changes.

#### **In the Residential Code (780 CMR Chapter 51)**

**Section R301.2 Climactic and Geographic Design Criteria** and its associated tables were updated to reflect new load numbers which must be used for structure design. The Commercial Code version of this table found at Table 1604.11 was also updated. Anyone doing structural design or structural review should consult these new tables and ensure they are using correct loads for the municipality they are working in.

**Table R302.6 Dwelling Garage Separation** is also different for the 10<sup>th</sup> Edition. Under the 9<sup>th</sup> Edition, this table was amended to differentiate between buildings with and without sprinkler systems, but there is no such amendment under the 10<sup>th</sup> Edition. The 10<sup>th</sup> Edition Table 302.6 only requires a minimum of 5/8 inch Type X gypsum board or equivalent between garages and habitable rooms above the garage but allows a minimum of 1/2 inch gypsum board or equivalent for all other garage/dwelling separations.

A small, but notable change is for landings at doors. Where a landing exists at a door, **Sections R311.2 & R311.2.3** of 780 CMR 10<sup>th</sup> Edition permits the top of the landing to be a maximum of 8 1/4 inches below the top of the door threshold, an increase of 1/2 an inch from the 9<sup>th</sup> Edition which allowed a maximum drop of 7 3/4 from the top of the threshold to the top of the landing. While this change seems minor, anyone building or inspecting these landings should be aware of this change to ensure compliance. Note that the 8 1/4 inch measurement from top of landing to top of threshold aligns with the maximum riser height for stairs found at R311.7.5.1.

#### **In the Commercial Code**

Chapter 3 of the Commercial Building Code contains use group classifications which are assigned to all spaces within a structure. A notable change to this chapter is in **Section 306.2 Moderate-Hazard Factory Industrial, Group F-1**. New to this section for the 10th Edition are four uses:

1. Cultivation of cannabis products (requiring dedicated lighting and/or atmospheric conditions).
2. Energy storage systems (ESS) in dedicated use buildings not classified as Use Group H.
3. Energy storage systems not exceeding the maximum allowable quantities of 527 CMR 1.00.
4. Greenhouses used for the purpose of manufacturing and/or processing cannabis products.

To go along with these changes, **Section 433 Indoor Agriculture for Cannabis** was added to 780 CMR to provide definitions and code requirements for indoor cannabis agriculture. Familiarize yourself with these

new provisions but note that 780 CMR 433.1 states, “This section shall not be deemed to impose, impact, or override any requirements on buildings or structures or portions thereof not utilized for Cannabis Cultivation or Extraction.”

**Section 1612 Flood Loads** is another area of the Commercial Code that has updates you should be aware of. Minimum elevation requirements shown in Table 1612.4 increased by one foot and an added zone for flood hazard area delineation was added to the code. The three flood hazard areas are now Coastal High Hazard Areas, Coastal A Zones, and A Zones. Note that R322 of 780 CMR Chapter 51 (Residential Code) contains similar changes to flood hazard areas and minimum elevations. The Department of Conservation and Recreation’s Flood Hazard Management program offers training on how to identify these three areas on FEMA flood maps. See our educational calendar for more information on these trainings. [Educational Calendar](#)

**Section 1705.5.3 Mass Timber Construction** contains a new table titled, Required Special Inspections of Mass Timber Construction. With Mass Timber construction continuing to gain in popularity, the International Code Council added this table to the 2021 International Building Code. Building Officials, contractors, and registered design professionals should ensure these special inspections are carried out where required on mass timber buildings.

**Section 1809.14 Ground Improvement** is a new section and concept for the 10<sup>th</sup> Edition and is a Massachusetts amendment. Ground Improvement is defined as, “a system that uses elements of aggregate, concrete, grout, or other mixture of cementitious materials and/or aggregates, or other materials that are significantly stiffer than the ground being improved, installed into the ground upon which building foundation units such as footings, slabs or mats are supported, to improve the engineering properties of the bearing strata.” 780 CMR 1809.14 (10<sup>th</sup> Edition). This section of the Building Code, and all its sub-sections establish the design, testing and construction criteria for these ground improvement systems. Building Inspectors and registered design professionals should become familiar with these requirements to ensure all provisions of this new section are followed during and after construction.

### **In the Existing Building Code (780 CMR Chapter 34)**

The Existing Building Code, 780 CMR Chapter 34 does not contain a lot of new Massachusetts amendments for the 10<sup>th</sup> Edition, but one major change is the BBRS amendment to remove Chapter 13. Chapter 13 lays out the Performance Compliance Method for complying with the Existing Building Code. With this method removed, the Prescriptive Compliance Method and the Work Area Method are the two ways of establishing compliance with the Existing Building Code for renovation work undertaken within an existing building.

### **Conclusion**

We understand these updates involve learning new standards and procedures for all parties involved in the design, construction, and inspection of buildings. DOL/OPSI will continue to provide support to the construction industry through education and informational resources, but we encourage everyone to get a copy of all 10<sup>th</sup> Edition codes and familiarize yourself with the full text of the code provisions mentioned above and others. Check our [Educational Calendar](#) regularly for upcoming trainings to help you transition to the 10th Edition.

## Education & Training

### **Educational Information & Resources**

OPSI launched a new calendar of educational events showing trainings and classes occurring across the Commonwealth that are primarily for Building Officials but may be open to others.

[Building Official Educational Opportunities Calendar](#)

[OPSI Short Term Rental Guidance - Based on the 10<sup>th</sup> Edition of 780 CMR](#)

Do you have a topic you would like to see covered in Codeword, at State Building Inspector District Meetings, or at other training events? Please send your ideas, questions, and comments to [BO-Education@mass.gov](mailto:BO-Education@mass.gov)

Need CEU's for your building official license? Check out these online courses:

[International Code Council Training Catalog](#)

[American Wood Council Training Catalog](#)

## Home Improvement Contractor Program Information

The Massachusetts Office of Consumer Affairs and Business Regulations announced a New Hub for the Home Improvement Contractor Program. The MA Contractor Hub will make it easier for contractors to register and renew as required by law, update their information, and maintain necessary documentation electronically and compatible with mobile devices.

[Home](#) or <https://contractorhub.mass.gov/s/>

**ATTENTION HIC REGISTRANTS:** Per updated legal guidance and consistent with HIC statutes, regulations, and renewal notices, HIC registrations expire on the date of expiration. Failure to renew by the date of expiration will lead to extra cost and delays. Your ability to pull necessary municipal permits may also be impacted. Renew before the expiration date to save money and time.

**Questions about the Home Improvement Contractor (HIC) program or need to register or renew your HIC? The Home Improvement Contractor Program has a consumer hotline!**

Home Improvement Contractor Program Consumer Hotline: 617-973-8787 or Toll-free: 888-283-3757

[Home Improvement Contractor Program | Mass.gov](#)

## Helpful Links & Email Addresses

The Board of Building Regulations and Standards: [BBRS-MA@mass.gov](mailto:BBRS-MA@mass.gov)

The Building Code Appeals Board: [BCAB-MA@mass.gov](mailto:BCAB-MA@mass.gov)

The Building Official Certification Committee: [BOCC-MA@mass.gov](mailto:BOCC-MA@mass.gov)

State Building Inspector District Information: [State Inspector Assignments Map | Mass.gov](#)  
[State Inspector Contact Information | Mass.gov](#)

Checkout past issues of Codeword: [Codeword Newsletter Recent Editions | Mass.gov](#)

## **Links to Building Officials' Associations**

[Massachusetts Building Commissioners & Inspectors Association](#)

[New England Building Officials Education Association](#)

[Mass. Federation of Building Officials](#)

[Southeastern Massachusetts Building Officials Association](#)

[Building Officials of Western Massachusetts](#)

[Metro-West Building Officials Association](#)