

I. PUBLIC HEARINGS

A. Local Technical Amendment

Mike Deegan, Operations Coordinator for Clearwater Gas System, appeared and indicated that he is recommending approval of a Local Technical Amendment to the Florida Fuel Gas Code Section 2015 G2415.5 that clarifies requirements for the capping and labeling of outlets on new gas piping systems and when shutoff valves should be installed.

Mr. Deegan conducted a PowerPoint presentation, a copy of which has been filed and made a part of the record, and indicated that the proposed Amendment addresses Declaratory Statements that were issued by the Plumbing Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) and accepted and approved by the Florida Building Commission (FBC) during its June 2017 meeting. He indicated that the Statements resulted from a Tarpon Springs plumbing inspector's request for an interpretation of the applicable code; and that he disagrees with the TAC's finding that a shutoff valve is required when an appliance is not to be installed. Discussion ensued, and Mr. Deegan responded to members' queries and comments as follows:

- International Code Council (ICC) commentary for section G2415.15 indicates that an outlet intended for a future appliance must be capped, but it does not address whether a shutoff valve must be installed at that time, and the ultimate determination rests with the authority having jurisdiction and possibly the gas supplier.
- Florida Administrative Code specifies that a Declaratory Statement is not to be interpreted as a change in the Code or a Local Technical Amendment.
- Having a shutoff valve on an unused outlet presents a safety hazard due to its exposure to physical damage and by making it much easier for unqualified individuals to connect appliances, which may allow the avoidance of a permit and inspection. Only licensed and qualified professionals should install gas appliances as they know the safety specificities of the appliance and location and which shutoff valve is needed.

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- He does not have numbers for how many people have been injured or killed in the county as a result of improperly installed gas appliances, but statistical information may be available on the National Fire Protection Association website.

Following discussion, Mr. Rosenbluth moved, seconded by Mr. Maslo, that the Local Technical Amendment be approved as recommended by Mr. Deegan. Upon call for the vote, the motion carried by a vote of 10 to 0, with Mr. Wolf abstaining; whereupon, at the suggestion of Mr. Dunn, Mr. Rosenbluth amended his motion to specify that the Amendment be effective 30 days from today; the seconder concurred, and no objections were noted.