

Code question from the inspectors

The Indiana Builders Association (IBA) attended the Annual Conference of the Indiana Association of Building Officials (IABO) this month, staffing a booth at their Vendor Show. This is a reciprocal agreement with IABO, of several years running. Some years our booth has been the only one at the IABO Vendor Show with a code book, and this year was no exception, ...uh, except the ICC booth where code books were on display for purchase.

IBA had only one code question asked this year, however. Someone needed to know what the minimum code requirement is for distance from the ground for a disconnect means for an outdoor air conditioner unit. Answer: There is no minimum stated in the IRC. What we found is:

1. Table E4001.5 Disconnect Means, for an air-conditioning condensing unit, requires “a readily accessible disconnect within sight from the unit as the only allowable means.”

2. Section E3401.1 Scope, defines readily accessible as “Capable of being reached quickly for operation, renewal or inspections, without requiring those to whom ready access is requisite to climb over or remove obstacles or to resort to portable ladders, chairs, etc.”

3. E3305.2 Working clearances for energized equipment and panelboards, which requires the dimensions for the working



Understanding the Code

**By Marlys
Pedtke**

*Code & Technical
Specialist
Indiana Builders
Association*

space to be “not less than 36 inches in depth, ...not less than 30 inches wide in front of the electrical equipment, ...and the space shall be clear and shall extend from the floor or platform to a height of 6.5 feet.”

We surmised that the person with the question had a disconnect switch low enough to get wet from weather, and wanted to have it raised according to the code. We could tell them that the switch could not be higher than 6.5 feet, but we could not tell them a low dimension.

It is always a gratifying experience to watch builders and inspectors pour over the code together, learning from each other and challenging each other, and this was no exception.

If you have more information to add to this code question, please contact IBA Code Specialist Marlie Pedtke at mpedtke@aol.com.