

Do I Need A Building Permit?

How Do I Obtain A Permit?

How Does The Inspection Process Work?



Guardian Inspection Services

Building Department

Customer Brochure

ADOPTION OF BUILDING CODES

Effective April 9, 2004 all construction in the State of Pennsylvania will be regulated by nationally recognized building codes:

1. The 2003 International Building Code has been officially adopted as the Non-Residential Building Code.
2. The 2003 International Residential Code has been officially adopted as the Residential Building Code.
3. National Electrical Code, 2002 Edition, has been officially adopted as the Electrical Code.

INTERNATIONAL BUILDING CODE/ 2003 (FIRST EDITION)

All non-residential construction projects in the State are governed by this building code. It controls the design, construction, alteration, enlargement, removal, demolition, equipment, repair, conversion, use and maintenance of all buildings and structures.

INTERNATIONAL RESIDENTIAL CODE/2003 (FIRST EDITION)

This Code is limited to governing only residential construction.

NATIONAL ELECTRIC CODE, 2002 EDITION

Whether it is new construction or repair/alteration to an existing building, all electrical work to be done in this municipality must meet the requirements of this Code.

BUILDING CODE INSPECTIONS

All construction inspections under the IBC and NEC codes are conducted by GUARDIAN INSPECTION SERVICES (GIS). This Third Party Inspection Agency has been exclusively hired by this municipality to provide inspections within its jurisdiction. All of GIS inspectors have provided the State with the proper credentials and current insurance certificates, which cover the work of the inspectors on the job site. The planning stage of a construction project would be the proper time to contact the inspectors through the municipal inspection Office so you may determine what the Inspection fees will be, what information must be submitted with your application and whether your project meets code requirements before you purchase material or hire a contractor to do the job.

PERMITS REQUIRING BUILDING CODE INSPECTIONS

It is the joint responsibility of the owner, lessee, if any, and the contractor to determine that the permit has been obtained before performing any work. It is unlawful for any contractor or subcontractor to perform any work for which a permit is required unless a permit is obtained and posted as required by the Building Code.

Applications shall be submitted to the Building Official for the following activities, which will require Code inspections:

1. Construct or alter a structure
2. Construct an addition
3. Demolish or move a structure
4. Make a change of occupancy
5. Installation of equipment

OBLIGATIONS DURING CONSTRUCTION

A condition of a Building Permit is that the applicant completes the work as approved by the municipality in accordance with the Zoning Ordinance and the Building Code and the plans approved by the Zoning Officer and the Building Inspector.

Applicants are required to post their Building Permit in a window or other prominent place on the site and to keep a copy of the building plan on the site.

HOW TO APPLY FOR A PERMIT

An application for a Building Permit is available at the Inspection Office. In addition to the completed application, sketches, building drawings, plans, or other documents must be submitted for review.

WHY BUILDING PERMITS ARE REQUIRED

A Building Permit serves as formal and legal permission to start any construction project. The assurance of a permit indicates that plans for a new structure, addition, renovation, foundation, prefabricated structure, temporary building or mobile home have been approved by the inspector and that plans comply with the municipal Zoning Ordinance and the Statewide Building Code.

PERMIT PROCESS (STEP BY STEP)

1. The APPLICANT completes a BUILDING PERMIT APPLICATION for the proposed new construction, remodeling, or accessory structure.
EXAMPLES: including but not limited to,
Dwellings Buildings manufactured
Garages Decks (homes)
Porches Sheds
Change in use or occupancy of a property, or installation of new plumbing, electrical or mechanical equipment.
2. The APPLICANT submits the application along with a plot plan drawing or floor plan drawing, and the required fee, to the Guardian Building Official or his representative.
3. The Building Official reviews the application for completeness and compliance with the Building Code and other local requirements. The applicant may request a consultation meeting with the Building Official regarding the submittal. The review period takes a minimum of three days from the date the completed form is received. The maximum review period is 30 days.
4. The Building Official issues the Building Permit or denies the application accordingly.
5. The APPLICANT completes the project according to the terms outlined in the application.
6. The Building Code Inspector performs all required inspections of the project in progress and a final inspection at the end of the project.
7. The Building Code Inspector notifies the Inspection Office that the work authorized under the permit is completed and meets all Code requirements for occupancy.
8. The Building Official checks the completed project. If the project is a principal dwelling unit, an addition to the dwelling, or an accessory structure, which required Building Code Inspections, the Building Official issues an Occupancy Permit. After the Occupancy Permit is issued, the property owner may then move personal items into the newly constructed area.
9. All other construction projects will receive a Final Inspection Approval certificate at the completion of the project.

CONSTRUCTION EXEMPT FROM PERMITS

Repair and replacement projects, which do **NOT** involve structural changes to a building, do not require a permit. Siding and gutters are such an example.

For example, shingle replacement will not require a permit when replacing less than 25% of the roof. Replacement windows or doors do not require a permit, unless the existing opening will be made larger, which is a structural change. Note that there are minimum size requirements for all windows, including replacement. Cosmetic work, such as painting, wallpapering, tiling, carpeting, cabinetry or countertops, does not require a permit. Reinstallation of plumbing fixtures, such as tubs, sinks, and toilets, does not require a permit.

If you are in doubt, Please call the Guardian office.

ELECTRICAL INSPECTIONS

All construction requiring electrical wiring or services must be inspected by individuals authorized by Guardian Inspection Services and must conform to the National Electrical Code.

The electrical fee is incorporated into the Building Permit Fee; however, if a project involves **ONLY** electrical work and no other construction, a special Electrical Permit will be issued.

FACTS ABOUT DEMOLITION

Before any building is demolished, either in part or completely, the applicant is required by the Building Code to obtain a Building Permit for the removal of the structure. This applies to accessory buildings as well. The purpose of this permit is for the removal of the building from your tax records and to document the removal of any non-conforming structures.

SMOKE DETECTORS

Under the Statewide Building Code, all new dwellings, all residential additions and alterations involving living space, must have smoke detectors wired directly into the electrical system of the house and they must have a battery backup. Smoke detectors are required in each bedroom and on each level of the home, including the basement.

In new home construction, the detectors must be interconnected, so that they all sound simultaneously. Any alteration of an existing house, such as a family room addition or finishing a basement, will require the smoke detectors to be installed in these areas as per code. If an alteration of an existing house is to the entire house, then the smoke detectors must be installed in the same manner as new construction requirements.

APPEALING REFUSAL OF A BUILDING OR ZONING PERMIT OR INSPECTION

If an applicant is refused issuance of a Building or Zoning Permit or would like to contest an inspection disapproval, he/she can appeal that decision of the Building Official to the Appeals Board. There is an associated non-refundable fee for the hearing, which must be paid by the hearing applicant.

Remember, all Zoning Ordinance regulations, including building and property line setback criteria, must always be met.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

For more information concerning permits and/or inspection regulations affecting any type of construction or change of use, contact the Guardian Inspection Services Office at 814-372-2112, between the hours of 8:00 - 4:00 weekdays. You can also schedule an appointment with the Building Official by calling the Guardian Office.