

CITY OF BEL-NOR

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Building Permits for Residential Projects – FAQ

1. When is a Building permit required?

A City Building permit is required prior to work beginning on any of the project types listed on the permit application form.

A Building Permit is required to construct, enlarge, alter, repair, move, demolish and replace, convert unfinished space to habitable rooms, or change the occupancy of a building or structure or to a portion of a building or structure.

Some examples of typical residential construction projects that require a Building Permit are: new house construction, additions, fix-up/rehabilitation repair type projects, finishing basements, kitchen remodel, bath remodel, garages, porches, fences, decks, patio covers, sheds, retaining walls, swimming pools, built-in backyard outdoor kitchens and fireplaces, antennas, flag poles, solar panel arrays, wind turbines, fire or storm damage repairs, etc.

With respect to repairs, a Building Permit is required to repair a building or structure that has been damaged from termites, fire, wind, flood, or earthquake, regardless of the extent of the damage, as well as to fix up or rehabilitate a building that has not been maintained in good condition due to neglect or lack of on-going maintenance.

Residential building projects that also include electrical, and/or plumbing, and/or mechanical work, residents or their Contractors must contact St. Louis County for permits and inspections. Electrical work must be done by a licensed Electrical Contractor or qualifying homeowner, plumbing work by a licensed Master Plumber or qualifying homeowner, and mechanical work by a licensed HVAC Servicer-Installer Contractor or qualifying homeowner.

2. How much does a Building Permit cost?

The cost of a building permit is based on the type of work being performed, the total cost of the project, and the number of inspections required by our City inspector. The cost is as specified in Section 530.020 of the Bel-Nor Municipal Code. Building permit applications must first be reviewed by our City inspector, who reviews the submitted plan and determines what inspections are needed.

The city Inspector is authorized to estimate the total cost of construction of a structure, building or project by multiplying the volume of the structure by an appropriate cubic -foot cost rate. Structures or projects for which it is impractical to estimate the total construction cost by such cubic -foot cost method shall be estimated by applying current, commonly accepted unit cost figures to the various components in a commonly accepted manner. In lieu of determining the total cost of construction as outlined above, the City Inspector may accept a bona fide contract or any affidavit of the owner of the building, structure or project, in which the total cost of construction, including site improvements related to the permit, is verified by applicant and owner. The City Inspector is further authorized to accept a bonafide cost amount of subcontract, for any specialized trade or discipline of construction, and determine the total assessable costs of construction for the different projects.

For example, in constructing a covered deck, the inspector must inspect and approve 1) the

footings or piers, 2) the framing, 3) the roof decking prior to shingling, and then 4) perform a final inspection. The cost of the plan review is \$16.00 and the cost of each inspection is \$45.00. For administrative purposes the City adds a fee based on total cost of the project: \$30.00 for the first \$1,000.00 of estimated cost then \$3.00 each additional \$1,000.00 estimated cost. In this example, if the total project cost is estimated at \$10,000, the permit fee would be:

- Plan review - \$16.00
- Four inspections – 4 x \$45.00 = \$180.00
- Administrative costs - \$20.00 + \$3.00 x 9 = \$47.00

Therefore, the total cost of the building permit would be \$243.00. **Note:** this City fee does not include any separate fees charged by St. Louis County for electrical, plumbing, or mechanical inspections. **Typically, your contractor will arrange for these inspections and include their cost in his or her bid, but it is the resident's responsibility to ensure this is done!**

3. What paperwork do I need to submit with my application?

See the application form for the document checklist. Most important items are a copy of the contract or work scope with resident's and contractor's signatures, including the estimated project cost, and then plans, sketches, or architectural drawings describing the project.

4. How long does it take for the City to issue a Building Permit?

Because the City Building Commissioner must review the plan submitted and determine the number and type of inspections required, **it may take up to five working days to issue a permit.** Resident and their contractors should plan their work accordingly!

5. For how long is the Permit valid?

The application form has a space for planned start and complete dates. In determining how long the Permit is valid for, the City Clerk will add 30 days to the planned completion date and use that. Of course, permit expiration dates can always be extended if there are weather or scheduling issues. Please call City Hall at 381-2834 in the event more time is needed to complete the project.

6. What kind and how many inspections are required?

This is a function of the type of project. See paragraph 2 above. Some typical examples are foundations, framing, columns/supports, fence post holes, and stairs or steps.

7. How are permits and inspections paid for?

The City accepts cash, check, credit card (in person only), or money order. Make checks and money orders payable to: City of Bel-Nor.

8. If I decide not to follow through with the project, will my fees be refunded?

The portion of the permit fee covering Administrative processing and Plan Review is non-refundable in the event the permit is never executed.

9. What do I do to arrange for an inspection?

To arrange for an inspection, please call our Building Commissioner, Debra Irvin, at 314-401-7122, or by email at dirvin407@yahoo.com.