

INSPECTION SERVICES DIVISION INFORMATION

Revised: 4/03

CITY OF OSHKOSH
DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
INSPECTION SERVICES DIVISION
PHONE: 236-5050 OR 236-5048
FAX: 236-5084

PERMIT ISSUANCE HOURS: 7:30-8:30 AM and 12:30-1:30 PM or by special appointment
NORMAL OFFICE HOURS: 7:30AM-4:30PM

INSPECTION REQUEST LINE: 236-5128

QUESTIONS ON ZONING REGULATIONS CONTACT:
PLANNING SERVICES DIVISION
PHONE: 236-5059

Frequently Asked Questions:

Why Do I Need a Permit?

The permit and inspection process gives you, your neighbors, and the City assurance that specific standards are met when expanding, altering, or repairing your property by complying with State Codes, Local Codes and Zoning Requirements. These standards are based on well-established health, safety, and environmental considerations intended to protect the integrity of the building, the safety of its inhabitants, and the welfare of the public. Projects not completed according to code can affect your home's insurability and potential sale. City building records are available from our department upon request. Prospective buyers can use these records to see if permits were obtained and if compliance was achieved for specific projects.

When Do I Need a Permit?

A permit is required prior to beginning any new construction, repairs, additions, alterations, and demolitions, including the installation of new boilers, furnaces, electrical wiring, plumbing fixtures, garages, porches, fences, and decks. A permit is also needed to change the use of a building or portion thereof, replace or move walls, doors, columns, and beams. Changes to required exits or means of providing natural light and ventilation (including windows) require a permit.

Certain small projects may be allowed without a permit provided the information is recorded and approval given by the Inspector. Questions about when a permit is needed should be directed to the Inspection Services Division, located on the second floor of City Hall, Room 205, or at 920-236-5050 or 920-236-5048.

Who is Responsible for Obtaining a Permit?

The property owner is responsible for ensuring that a permit is obtained prior to work being started. Contractors can also apply and obtain permits on behalf of the property owner. Under no circumstances can construction or demolition start prior to obtaining the Building Permit and posting the placard in a front window or door visible from the road. Once a permit is obtained, the work must be started within six months or it will expire. If work is started within six months, the permit is valid for one year from the date of issuance.

Commencing work without a permit is subject to a double fee or \$100 plus the normal permit fee, whichever is greater. When unpermitted work is discovered, a Stop Work Order will be issued and a permit that accurately describes the work must be obtained before any work may resume.

How Do I Apply for a Permit?

The process by which you obtain a permit depends on the type of work you are doing. Generally, simple projects not requiring plan review can be permitted that day provided all the necessary information is complete and accurate. Projects requiring plan review may require up to 10 business days for a full review, which may include architectural, structural, electrical, fire prevention, accessibility, environmental, plumbing and HVAC refrigeration, heating and ventilation. Please reference the handouts located outside of the Inspection Services Office for detailed information on your specific project. Permit issuing hours are 7:30 am – 8:30 am and 12:30 pm – 1:30 pm, Monday through Friday. For projects requiring scaled site plans, you may purchase one from the City Planning Services Division, Room 204, Monday through Friday, 8 am – 4:30 pm for a nominal fee.

Is There Assistance Available to Me?

The Inspection Services and Planning Services Divisions have created a number of brochures to give you basic information on various popular projects. These brochures are located on the second floor hallway and Room 205 of City Hall. They are also located on our website at www.ci.oshkosh.wi.us.

How Much Does the Permit Cost?

With few exceptions, permit fees are based on the fair market value of the work being done, including the cost of materials. The Permit Fee Schedule is included and it is also available on our website, www.ci.oshkosh.wi.us.

Do I Need to Hire a Professional Architect, Engineer or Contractor to Do the Work?

Unless otherwise specified by the Building Code, owner-occupants of single-family homes may prepare their own plans. All residential work must demonstrate compliance with the Wisconsin Uniform Dwelling Code (UDC) and the Oshkosh Municipal Code.

Depending on the type of work you are doing, you may or may not be required to hire a contractor. An owner-occupant of a single-family home may take responsibility for carpentry;

heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC); and masonry work. In addition, an owner-occupant of a single-family residence may take responsibility for plumbing and electrical work. In all other instances, a licensed or registered contractor is required.

The following is a summary of the requirements for different types of contractors:

- Building contractors must have a Dwelling Contractor Financial Responsibility Credential from the State of Wisconsin.
- HVAC or Refrigeration Contractors must have a HVAC Contractor Credential from the State of Wisconsin.
- Plumbing Contractors must have a Master License.
- Electrical Contractors must have a local license.

How Can I Verify That My Contractor Has a State License?

To verify the status of a State License, you should call the Wisconsin Department of Commerce at 608-261-8500 or access their website at www.commerce.state.wi.us.

Will I Need Any Permits in Addition to the Building Permit?

Depending on the project, the following permits may be required:

- Electric
- HVAC
- Plumbing
- Moving
- Storage Tank
- Water Meter*
- Sidewalk/Curb Cut**
- Working in the Right of Way**

* An application to obtain a water meter is filled out at the Water Distribution Center at 757 W. 3rd Avenue.

** Applicant is required to be bonded. Forms can be filled out at the City Clerk's Office, Room 104. The permit can then be obtained from the Engineering Department, Room 301.

What Are My Responsibilities After The Permit Is Issued?

The permit placard is required to be posted publicly at the construction site at all times. If the placard is misplaced or lost, a replacement placard can be obtained from the Inspection Services Division, located on the second floor of City Hall, Room 205. As construction commences, it is the responsibility of the applicant to call the Inspection Request Line, (920)236-5128, for the required inspections listed on the check-off sheet, given at permit issuance. Depending on the type of project, a Certificate of Occupancy, if noted on the Building Permit, may be needed prior to occupying.

What Do I Do If the Scope of the Project Changes After the Permit Is Issued?

If the scope of work is being altered during construction, you must contact an Inspector. An additional permit may be required depending on the changes made to the scope of the project.

Are There Avenues to Pursue if I Have Concerns Regarding My Contractor?

The Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection can be reached toll free at 1-800-422-7128, or by mail at:

200 N Jefferson St.
Suite 146-A
Green Bay, WI 54301

What do I do if I Cannot Comply With Zoning or Building Code Requirements?

A Zoning Variance can be applied for in the Planning Services Department, Room 204, of City Hall. A Building Code Variance can be applied for in the Inspection Services Division, Room 205, of City Hall. An application for appeal may be made when it is claimed that the true intent of the Codes or rules legally adopted thereunder have been incorrectly interpreted, the provisions of the Codes do not apply, enforcement of any provision may cause unnecessary hardship; or specifically in the case of the building or housing code appears, an equally good or better form of construction or repair can be used.

All appeals shall be accompanied by supporting data.

What Is an Unnecessary Hardship?

An unnecessary hardship means that no feasible use can be made of the property without the granting of the variance, that the hardship is something which is unique to this property and not the owner of the property, that the hardship is not self-created, and that the hardship is not economic.

What Is the Cost To Apply for a Variance?

When applying for a Variance from the City of Oshkosh a fee of \$125.00 is required to be submitted with the application and supporting data.

Is There Financial Assistance Provided by the City of Oshkosh When Making Home Improvements?

Yes, Housing Improvement Loans are available from the City of Oshkosh, which are no interest, deferred or installment loans provided to eligible homeowners. In order to be considered for a loan, your home must have at least one structural, plumbing, heating or electrical problem or other substandard condition. Generally, work is limited to repairs needed to make the house meet Federal Section 8 Housing Quality Standards, the Lead Reduction Rule, and the City

Minimum Housing Code. For more information, contact the Planning Division in Room 204 of City Hall or call 236-5056 Monday through Friday, 8:00 am – 4:30 pm.

Safety Information:

Lead Hazards: Homes built prior to 1978 may have used lead based paint. Remodeling work can produce dust and paint chips, which can be inhaled or swallowed. Lead paint is poisonous, especially to children and pregnant women. This can be a dangerous and hazardous situation. Information is available from the Health Department located in Room 201 or at 920-236-5030.

Mold Concerns: Information on mold is available from the Health Department located in Room 201 or at 920-236-5030.

Asbestos Concerns: Information on asbestos can be obtained from the WI Department of Natural Resources at 608-266-3658 or 920-492-5800. For home improvement complaints regarding asbestos, call 1-800-422-7128.

This handout is intended to provide property owners/contractors with a simplified review of code provisions relating to the topic noted.

This handout is not, however, actual code provisions. For a review of the regulations that would apply to your particular site, please refer to the City of Oshkosh Zoning Ordinance.