

# GUIDE TO BUILDING PERMITS FOR RESIDENTIAL ADDITIONS

## STEVENS COUNTY LAND SERVICES PERMIT CENTER

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Customer Service Bulletin # **B-2**

One part of your project is obtaining the necessary permits. Your project will be reviewed in coordination with other County agencies which are responsible for regulating different aspects of the development process. It's important to know that your project may require review and approvals or permits from Environmental Health, Planning and Public Works, before the Building Division issues your permit. The following information lets you know what steps you need to take to ensure a timely issuance of your building permit.

1. **COMPLETED SITE PLAN/SITE PLAN ANALYSIS.** A site analysis application must be submitted to the Planning Division for review. The site analysis will identify if your proposal is consistent with the County's development regulations. Be sure to show the setback distance between your proposed addition and the property lines.  
**FAQ:** Can I submit the site plan analysis at the same time I submit application and plans for the building permit?  
**Answer:** YES. This allows the Building Department to begin processing your application and review of the construction plans. However, your project cannot be approved until the site analysis is complete. **PLEASE NOTE:** In some circumstances, building plans may require modification based on the site plan analysis.

2. **COMPLETED APPLICATION FORM.** Review and complete the building permit application form. Please have all required information on the form at the time of application. If incomplete, your application will be returned and processing will be delayed.

3. **ADEQUATE SEWAGE DISPOSAL SYSTEM [ENV. HEALTH DEPT. (509) 684-2262]** Your project will be reviewed by the NE Tri-County Health District, Environmental Health Dept. if your project includes **adding bedrooms**. They will determine if the existing sewage disposal system is sized adequately for the additional bedroom(s). If the project adds a bedroom, but the remodel also removes an existing bedroom so that the total number of bedrooms does not change, please note this on your application.

Please provide a copy of your existing septic permit, if available; this will help expedite your review. If you have questions about your existing system, contact the Environmental Health Dept. and ask them to review the information on file and discuss your proposed project.

4. **LAND USE PRELIMINARY APPROVALS [PLANNING DIVISION (509) 684-2401]** The Planning Division reviews **ALL** proposed construction projects to determine conformance with various land use regulations. Some common issues are listed below. If you think your project may be impacted by any of these issues, contact the Planning Division for additional information prior to submitting your application.

- A site address is required for building and sewage permit applications.
- Projects within 200 feet of the shoreline of any major lake, river, stream or wetland may be subject to SHORELINE and CRITICAL AREA ORDINANCE restrictions. Residential construction in these areas requires that a shoreline permit exemption, or possible Critical Area Ordinance permit, be processed by the Planning Division prior to building permit issuance.
- Projects in a potential flood plain area will need a FLOOD PLAIN permit.
- Projects on property less than 20 acres in size will be reviewed for compliance with the county's subdivision laws. If you know the parcel was created through a subdivision action, reference the platted lot's legal description in your application materials.

5. **BUILDING DIVISION APPROVALS [BUILDING DIVISION (509) 684-8325].** You will need to submit two complete sets of plans for review. Refer to the Residential Plan Checklist for necessary information to show on the plans and the compilation of building codes for commonly used residential code requirements. One approved set will be returned to you; it must be available at the job site for inspections. Staff is available to provide technical assistance regarding building, plumbing, mechanical, energy or fire code questions. If you need additional information about any of these issues, contact the Building Division prior to application submittal.

- Plans will be reviewed for conformance to structural, life safety, energy, plumbing, mechanical and fire code minimum standards.
- Plans must show how you plan to connect the existing building to the new construction at merging points of the foundation and roof. Floor plan must distinguish between new and existing.
- The design for all trusses, or for any structure over 4,000 square feet in floor area, shall be stamped by a licensed Washington State engineer or architect.
- Stevens County does not review electrical installations. Please contact the Washington State Dept. of Labor and Industries for information and permits. Colville (509) 684-7417

6. **WHAT INSPECTIONS ARE REQUIRED?** At a minimum, the following inspections are required. You should contact the Building Division to request the inspection at least 48 hours in advance. Inspection requests for the same day may not be performed. During the busy spring, summer and fall building season, inspectors normally have their list of inspections scheduled and are on their way before 9:00 A.M.

- a) **Footings:** Call before pouring. The rebar needs to be visible for inspection. Mark all nearby property lines within 20 feet of the building. At this time, the inspector will also review the plot plan submitted with the application materials and verify setbacks and building location.
- b) **Foundation Walls/Slab:** Call before pouring. The rebar needs to be visible for inspection.
- c) **Rough-In Plumbing:** If slab will be over plumbing, call before covering so plumbing can be inspected. Air or Water Test is required on both water supply and drain/waste lines before covering.
- d) **Framing:** Framing completed, rough-in plumbing done. Ready for insulation.
- e) **Insulation:** Insulation in walls, floors ceiling complete, including all vapor barriers. Ventilation fans and air intake systems will be checked. Window and door "U"-Values will be verified.
- f) **Final:** Everything completed that relates to structural, fire and life safety code requirements (i.e., stairs, handrails, smoke detectors. Does not include items such as carpeting, all light fixtures, baseboard molding, etc.)

7. **HOW MUCH ARE APPLICATION FEES?** Fees are established by resolution of the County Commissioners. Building permit fees for residential additions or outbuildings are computed from a construction valuation and a sliding fee schedule. There are plan review fees for residential and commercial structures. Fees must be paid at time of application submittal. Please contact the Building Division directly if you have questions about your specific project.

8. **WILL YOUR BUILDING PERMIT EVER EXPIRE?** All building permits will expire if the permit is not used within 180 days from the date of issuance. Use means that substantial progress has been made during the 180 days. Permits that have not been used, may be extended (one time only) at the discretion of the Building Official. A written request for an extension must be submitted by the applicant. The permit may also expire if construction activity stops for a period longer than 180 days (6 months). Keep the Building Division informed of your progress, call for at least one inspection every six months and your permit will remain current. If the permit does expire, and you desire to reactivate an expired permit, you could be charged half of the current fee for that permit.

9. **EXEMPTIONS.** A permit is not required for any construction, repairs or movement of any **unheated** detached garage, agricultural, or storage building for private, non-occupancy type use, **if** the structure is separated by a minimum of 20 feet from any occupancy rated structure or external property line. A site analysis application and site plan is required for the exempt structure. No permit or fee is required for any repairs or construction less than \$2,000 in valuation (including materials and labor, or replacement costs). Exemptions do not include mechanical systems.

10. **IS ADDITIONAL INFORMATION AVAILABLE?** There is a wide variety of handouts and manuals available at the Permit Center to assist you in understanding the building permit process. Staff has prepared a compilation of all the building codes to assist you throughout the design and construction process. It also identifies design criteria specific to Stevens County, such as frost depth and snow load. This handout is free and available upon request at the Building Division.