

# GUIDE TO BUILDING PERMITS FOR GARAGES/OUTBUILDINGS

## STEVENS COUNTY LAND SERVICES PERMIT CENTER

7/11/2011

Customer Service Bulletin # **B-4**

The Stevens County Building Ordinance identifies the following construction as being EXEMPT from the requirement to obtain a building permit:

- Garages, home workshops for occasional use, agriculture buildings or any outbuilding that **will not be occupied or used for commercial purposes AND is located 20 feet or more from all property lines and any occupancy rated structure (residence)**. "Occupied" includes living quarters, office space, guestroom, studio, playroom, etc.

***If the outbuilding is exempt from building permit requirements, it is still subject to compliance with other county and state regulations. All structures, even those exempt from building permits, are required to submit an application for a site plan analysis to the Planning Division for review under various regulations. The site plan analysis must be submitted prior to start of site preparation or construction activities.***

- A bathroom in the structure needs approval of the proposed sewage disposal system from Environmental Health.
- If you wire the building for electricity, you need an electrical permit from Wash. State Dept. of Labor and Industries.
- If you install a wood or gas fired appliance (heater, generator, etc) a mechanical permit is required.

Although you may not need a permit for the outbuilding, it must still be built according to International Residential Code standards.

You **will** need a building permit for an outbuilding in the following circumstances:

- Proposed outbuildings which will be closer than 20 feet to any property line or occupancy rated building (residence).
- Garages/outbuildings intended to be used as temporary residences must comply with residential occupancy requirements.
- Shops or outbuildings intended for commercial use and activities.
- Outbuildings with occupied space (i.e., an office, play room, guest room, studio).
- On platted properties with restrictions that require building permits for ALL structures (exemption does not apply)

Contact the county offices if you have questions about your project. The Building Division has prepared a summary of the various building codes to assist you throughout the building design and construction process. It also identifies design criteria specific to Stevens County, such as frost depth and snow load.

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 not begin.

3. **HEATED STRUCTURE:** If you plan to heat your outbuilding, the foundation must extend 30 inches below, and 6 inches above, grade. The same applies to any garage that is attached to a house. A gas, oil or wood fired heating appliance installed in a garage or outbuilding requires a Mechanical Permit.

4. **SEWAGE DISPOSAL [ENVIRON. HEALTH DEPT. (509) 684-2262]:** If you intend to install a bathroom or water/sink in your outbuilding, you will need to either apply for a sewage permit or seek approval to connect to an existing system for your project. Please contact Environmental Health for application materials or additional information. The proposed sewage disposal system design must be approved before the building permit is issued.

5. **LAND USE APPROVALS [PLANNING DIVISION (509) 684-2401 Selection #4]** The Planning Division reviews **ALL** proposed construction projects during the site analysis review to determine conformance with the County's various land use regulations.

6. **DRIVEWAY/ACCESS PERMIT [PUBLIC WORKS DEPT. (509) 684-4548].** Projects that are served by driveways that gain access directly from a county road must have a road access permit. This applies to new driveways as well as existing which were not previously permitted. Contact the Public Works Department to secure your permit or ask questions about the application process. Contact the Washington State Dept. of Transportation in Spokane at (509) 324-6540 for a road approach to a state highway. Please reference the state's approach permit number on your building permit application.

7. **BUILDING DIVISION APPROVALS [(509) 684-8325 Selection #5]:** You need to submit two complete sets of plans for review. Please refer to the code summary and residential plan checklist in your application materials for code requirements and necessary information to show on the plans. One approved set will be returned to you with your building permit; it must be made available at the job site for inspections. Staff is available to provide technical assistance regarding building, plumbing, mechanical, energy or fire code questions.

- Plans will be reviewed for conformance to structural, life safety, and fire code minimum standards. If applicable, energy, plumbing, and mechanical code issues will also be reviewed.
- The design for all trusses, or for any structure over 4,000 sq.ft. in floor area, **or for any post-frame structure (pole building)** shall be stamped by a licensed Washington State engineer or architect.
- Stevens County does not review electrical installations. Please contact the State Dept. of Labor and Industries for information and permits. Regional Office in Spokane @ N. 901 Monroe Street 1-800-509-8847 (509) 324-2640

8. **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.

- Footings or Post Hole: Call before pouring. The rebar needs to be visible for inspection. Post/poles must be set in the holes and braced. Please mark nearby property lines. At this time, the inspector will also review the plot plan submitted with the application materials and verify setbacks and building location.
- Foundation Walls/Slab: Call before pouring. The rebar needs to be visible for inspection.
- 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.
- Framing: Framing completed, rough-in plumbing done. Ready for insulation (if applicable).
- Final: Everything completed that relates to structural, fire and life safety code requirements.

9. **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 or construction activity stops for longer than 6 months. Use means that substantial progress has been made during the 180 days. Permits that are not used may be extended at the discretion of the Building Official. A written request for an extension must be submitted by the applicant.

10. **WHAT OTHER CONSTRUCTION IS EXEMPT FROM PERMIT REQUIREMENTS?** 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.