

BUILDING DIVISION – POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

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Over The Counter Permits

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ISSUE: Frequently minor permit applications are submitted which are not necessarily required to undergo a full plan review process. Confusion arises as to what types of permits may be issued over the counter and what information is required, what conditions may be attached, what fees may be assessed, and who is authorized to issue such permits. The issuances of over the counter permits has the potential of enhancing customer service (by reducing overall fees for permit and by providing a faster turn around time for issuance) and improving building division efficiency (by reducing routing and plan review time expenditures).

ANALYSIS:

The Exception to Section 107.1 of the 2009 International Building Code (IBC) permits that:

The *building official* is authorized to waive the submission of *construction documents* and other data not required to be prepared by a *registered design professional* if it is found that the nature of the work applied for is such that review of *construction documents* is not necessary to obtain compliance with this code.

Section 109.1 of the IBC requires a building permit fee to be collected for all issued permits.

Plan review fees are assessed when submittal documents are required by Section 107.1 of the IBC and when special circumstances dictate a plan review needs to be performed by building department staff.

To not require submittal documents, and provide a full plan review, shifts the burden for the plan review to the field inspector. This may lead to the need for extensive and costly corrections for violations discovered during the inspection process. While it is not the duty of the building division to function as an educational service, from a customer service perspective, it is incumbent on the division to minimally ascertain the competence and code knowledge of the installer, their ability to provide a code compliant installation, and the ramifications of non-code compliant construction.

It is ultimately the responsibility of permit applicant to keep abreast of code requirements and changes; and to provide quality code compliant installations. While this assumption should be valid for registered contractors working within the limits of their registration, in may not be valid on homeowner issued permits.

POLICY & PROCEDURE: The following policy is adopted to clarify which permits and under what conditions a permit may be issued over the counter.

- **Registered contractors**, working within the limits of their registration, shall be permitted to obtain the following Over the Counter Permits:
 - Repairs or upgrade to existing plumbing, mechanical, or electrical systems.
 - Residential and Commercial Water Heater – Installation or replacement not involving a change of use or change of character of use of the existing occupancy.
 - Residential and Commercial HVAC Components or Systems – Installations or replacement not over 2000 cfm (5 tons) and not involving a change of use or change of character of use of the existing occupancy. Roof top units may require screening as determined by Planning and Zoning regulations.
 - Gas fired decorative appliances and room heaters (i.e. gas logs, gas fireplaces, gas stoves)
 - Re-roofing; Self-contained Hot-Tubs and Spas; Lawn Sprinkler Back-flow protection assemblies; and Siding.
 - Electrical Service Change – Installation, replacement, or upgrade not involving a change of use or change of character of use of the existing occupancy and less than 600 volts and less than 400 amperes.
 - Temporary Construction Meters
 - Electrical for Signs approved by Planning and Zoning
 - Non-structural demolitions when approved by the building official and not associated with historic structures and not involving a change of use or change of character of use of the existing occupancy.
 - Other permits as approved by the building official.
- **Home owners** shall be permitted to obtain the following Over the Counter Permits when associated with work to be performed on the home owner occupied home:
 - Repairs to or upgrades to existing plumbing, mechanical, and electrical systems.
 - Water Heater –Replacement (like for like).
 - HVAC Systems – Replacement (like for like) plus New installations of Air Conditioner Units.
 - Re-roofing; Lawn Sprinkler Back-flow protection assemblies; and Siding.
 - Electrical Service Change – Installation, replacement, or upgrade less than 240 volts and less than 200 amperes.
 - Temporary Construction Meters
 - Non-structural demolitions when approved by the building official and not associated with historic structures.
 - Other permits as approved by the building official.
- Over the Counter Permits shall not be assessed plan review fees.
- Over the Counter Permits shall be assessed all other fees as normally required for permit issuances including, but not limited to, building permit fees and building use taxes.
- The issuance of Over the Counter Permits shall require the signing of an “Over the Counter Permit Issuance Declaration”, by the applicant, attesting to their responsibility for the full compliance with all applicable City requirements.
- Permit counter personnel shall be authorized to issue Over the Counter Permits.

Failure to comply with the requirements of this policy shall be cause to prohibit the homeowner or contractor from obtaining future Over the Counter Permits.

Last Revised: 4/22/2010

CC Policies and Procedures File

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