
Sec. 8-14.4. Permits.

(a) *Permit application.*

- (1) *Required.* Any owner or authorized agent who intends to construct, enlarge, alter, repair, move, demolish or change the occupancy of a building or structure, or to erect, install, enlarge, alter, repair, remove, convert or replace any electrical, gas, mechanical or plumbing system, the installation of which is regulated by this code, or to cause any such work to be done, shall first make application to the building official and obtain the required permit.
- (2) *Work exempt from permit.* Permits shall not be required for the following. Exemption from permit requirements of this code shall not be deemed to grant authorization for any work to be done in any manner in violation of the provisions of this code or any other laws or ordinances of this jurisdiction.

a. Building:

1. Painting, papering, tiling, carpeting, cabinets, counter tops and similar finish work.
2. Temporary motion picture, television, and theatre stage sets and scenery.
3. Prefabricated swimming pools that are less than 24 inches (610 mm) deep.
4. Swings and other playground equipment.
5. Window awnings supported by an exterior wall which do not project more than 54 inches (1372 mm) from the exterior wall and do not require additional support.

b. Electrical:

1. Listed cord and plug connected temporary decorative lighting. Temporary electric power and lighting installations shall be permitted for a period not to exceed 90 days.
2. Reinstallation of attachment plug receptacles but not the outlets therefor.
3. Replacement of branch circuit overcurrent devices of the required capacity in the same location.
4. Electrical wiring, devices, appliances, apparatus or equipment operating at less than 25 volts and not capable of supplying more than 50 watts of energy.
5. Minor repair work, including the replacement of lamps or the connection of approved portable electrical equipment to approved permanently installed receptacles.

c. Gas:

1. Portable heating, cooking or clothes drying appliances.
2. Replacement of any minor part that does not alter approval of equipment or make such equipment unsafe.
3. Portable fuel cell appliances that are not connected to a fixed piping system and are not interconnected to a power grid.

d. Mechanical:

1. Portable heating appliances.
2. Portable ventilation appliances.
3. Portable cooling units.

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4. Replacement of any minor part that does not alter approval of equipment or make such equipment unsafe.
 5. Portable evaporative coolers.
 6. Self-contained refrigeration systems containing 10 pounds (4.54 kg) or less of refrigerant or that are actuated by motors of 1 horsepower (746 W) or less.
 7. Portable fuel cell appliances that are not connected to a fixed piping system and are not interconnected to a power grid.
- e. Plumbing:
1. The stopping of leaks in drains, water, soil, waste or vent pipe; provided, however, that if any concealed trap, drainpipe, water, soil, waste or vent pipe becomes defective and it becomes necessary to remove and replace the same with new material, such work shall be considered as new work and a permit shall be obtained and inspection made as provided in this code.
 2. The clearing of stoppages or the repairing of leaks in pipes, valves or fixtures, and the removal and reinstallation of water closets, provided such repairs do not involve or require the replacement or rearrangement of valves, pipes or fixtures.
- f. Repairs:
1. Ordinary minor repairs may be made without a permit, provided that such repairs shall not violate any of the provisions of the technical codes. Such minor repairs shall not include the cutting away of any wall, partition or portion thereof, the removal or cutting of any structural beam or loadbearing support, or the removal or change of any required means of egress, or rearrangement of parts of a structure affecting the egress requirements; nor shall ordinary repairs include addition to, alteration of, replacement or relocation of any water supply, sewer, drainage, drain leader, gas, soil, waste, vent or similar piping, electric wiring or mechanical or other work affecting public health or general safety. The building official or his designee shall be available to determine whether a proposed repair is exempt.
 2. Emergency repairs. Where equipment replacements and repairs that otherwise require a permit, must be performed in an emergency situation, the permit application shall be submitted within the next working business day to the building official.
- (3) *Temporary structures.* The erection of temporary structures such as construction sheds, seats, canopies, tents and fences used in construction work or for temporary purposes such as reviewing stands shall not require a permit as long as such structures shall be completely removed in a timely fashion.
- (4) *Work authorized.* A building permit shall carry with it the right to construct or install the work, provided the same are shown on the drawings and set forth in the specifications filed with the application for the permit. Where these are not shown on the drawings and covered by the specifications submitted with the application, separate permits shall be required.
- (5) *Information required.* Each application for a permit, with the required fee, shall be filed with the building official on a form furnished for that purpose and shall contain a general description of the proposed work and its location. The application shall be signed by the owner or his authorized agent. The building permit application shall indicate the proposed occupancy of all parts of the building and of that portion of the site or lot, of any, not covered by the building or structure, and shall contain such other information as may be required by the building official.

(b) *Drawings and specifications.*

- (1) *Requirements.* When required by the building official, two or more copies of specifications, and of drawings drawn to scale with sufficient clarity and detail to indicate the nature and character of the work, shall accompany the application for the permit. Such drawings and specifications shall contain information, in the form of notes or otherwise, as to the quality of materials, where quality is essential to conformity with the technical codes. Such information shall be specific, and the technical codes shall not be cited as a whole or in part, nor shall the term "legal" or its equivalent be used as a substitute for specific information. All information, drawings, specifications, and accompanying data shall bear the name and signature of the person responsible for the design.
- (2) *Additional data.* The building official may require details, computations, stress diagrams, and other data necessary to describe the construction or installation and the basis of calculations. All drawings, specifications, and accompanying data, required by the building official to be prepared by an architect or engineer, shall be affixed with their official seal.
- (3) *Design professional.* The design professional shall be an architect or engineer, legally registered under the laws of this state regulating the practice of architecture or engineering, and shall affix his official seal to said drawings, specifications, and accompanying data, for the following:
 - a. All group A, E, and I occupancies.
 - b. Buildings and structures three stories or more high.
 - c. Buildings and structures 5,000 square feet (465 m) or more in area.

For all other buildings and structures, the submittal shall bear the certification of the applicant that some specific state law exception permits its preparation by a person not so registered.

- (4) *Structural and fire resistance integrity.* Plans for all buildings shall indicate how required structural and fire resistance integrity will be maintained where a penetration of a required fire resistant wall, floor or partition will be made for electrical, gas, mechanical, plumbing and communication conduits, pipes and systems and also indicate in sufficient detail how the fire integrity will be maintained where required fire resistant floors intersect the exterior walls.
- (5) *Site drawings.* Drawings shall show the location of the proposed building or structure and of every existing building or structure on the site or lot. The building official may require a boundary line survey prepared by a qualified surveyor.
- (6) *Hazardous occupancies.* The building official may require the following:
 - a. *General site plan.* A general site plan drawn at a legible scale which shall include, but not be limited to, the location of all buildings, exterior storage facilities, permanent access ways, evacuation routes, parking lots, internal roads, chemical loading areas, equipment cleaning areas, storm and sanitary sewer accesses, emergency equipment, and adjacent property uses. The exterior storage areas shall be identified with the hazard classes and the maximum quantities per hazard class of hazardous materials stored.
 - b. *Building floor plan.* A building floor plan drawn to a legible scale which shall include, but not be limited to, all hazardous materials storage facilities within the building and shall indicate rooms, doorways, corridors, exits, fire rated assemblies, with their hourly rating, location of liquid tight rooms, and evacuation routes. Each hazardous materials storage facility shall be identified on the plan with the hazard classes and quantity range per hazard class of the hazardous materials stored.

(c) *Examination of documents.*

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- (1) *Plan review.* The building official shall examine, or cause to be examined, each application for a permit and the accompanying documents, consisting of drawings, specifications, computations and additional data, and shall ascertain by such examinations whether the construction indicated and described is in accordance with the requirements of the technical codes and all other pertinent laws or ordinances.
 - (2) *Affidavits.* The building official may accept a sworn affidavit from a registered architect or engineer stating that the plans submitted conform to the technical codes. For buildings and structures, the affidavit shall state that the plans conform to the laws as to egress, type of construction and general arrangement and, if accompanied by drawings, show the structural design and that the plans and design conform to the requirements of the technical codes as to strength, stresses, strains, loads and stability. The building official may, without any examination or inspection, accept such affidavit, provided the architect or engineer who made such affidavit agrees to submit to the building official copies of inspection reports as inspections are performed and upon completion of the structure, electrical, gas, mechanical, or plumbing systems a certification that the structure, electrical, gas, mechanical or plumbing system has been erected in accordance with the requirements of the technical codes. Where the building official relies upon such affidavit, the architect or engineer shall assume full responsibility for the compliance with all provisions of the technical codes and other pertinent laws or ordinances.
- (d) *Issuing permits.*
- (1) *Action on permits.* The building official shall act upon an application for a permit without unreasonable or unnecessary delay. If the building official is satisfied that the work described in an application for a permit and the contract documents filed therewith conform to the requirements of the technical codes and other pertinent laws and ordinances, he shall issue a permit to the applicant.
 - (2) *Refusal to issue permit.* If the application for a permit and the accompanying contract documents describing the work do not conform to the requirements of the technical codes or other pertinent laws or ordinances, the building official shall not issue a permit, but shall return the contract documents to the applicant with his refusal to issue such permit. Such refusal shall, when requested, be in writing and shall contain the reason for refusal.
 - (3) *Special foundation permit.* When application for permit to erect or enlarge a building has been filed and pending issuance of such permit, the building official may, at his discretion, issue a foundation only permit. The applicant may proceed at his own risk and without assurance that a permit for the remainder of the work will be granted or that corrections will not be required in order to meet provisions of the technical codes.
 - (4) *Public right-of-way.* A permit shall not be given by the building official for the construction of any building, or for the alteration of any building where said building is to be changed and such change will affect the exterior walls, bays, balconies, or other appendages or projections fronting on any street, alley or public lane, or for the placing on any lot or premises of any building or structure removed from another lot or premises of any building or structure removed from another lot or premises, unless the applicant has made application at the office of the director of the Department of Engineering identifying the public street on which he proposes to build, erect or locate said building; and it shall be the duty of the building official to see that the street lines are not encroached upon except as provided for in this code.
- (e) *Contractor's responsibilities.* It shall be the duty of every contractor who shall make contracts for the installation or repairs of building, structure, electrical, gas, mechanical or plumbing systems, for which a permit is required, to comply with state or local rules and regulations concerning licensing which the applicable governing authority may have adopted.
- (1) *Electrician's license.*

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- a. No person, firm or corporation shall engage in the electrical construction, installation or repair business, within the corporate limits of the City of Columbus, without obtaining a business license as required by the ordinances of the City of Columbus.
 - b. No person shall engage in the business of electrical contractor unless such person holds a valid license issued by the State Construction Industry Board, Division of Electrical Contractors. No partnership or corporation shall have the right to engage in the business of electrical contractor unless there is regularly connected with such partnership or corporation a person or persons actually engaged in the performance of such business on a fulltime basis who have valid licenses issued by the State Construction Industry Board, Division of Electrical Contractors.
 - c. Any person, partnership or corporation making application for a license to engage in the business of electrical contracting in Columbus, Georgia, shall furnish the Revenue Collections Division of Columbus, Georgia, a copy of the license issued by the division of electrical contractors.
 - d. No person shall engage in alarm system, general system, or telecommunication system, low-voltage contracting unless such person has a valid license issued by the state construction industry licensing board, division of low-voltage contracting. No partnership or corporation shall have the right to engage in the business of low-voltage contracting unless there is regularly connected with such partnership or corporation a person or persons, actually engaged in the performance of such business on a fulltime basis and supervising the low-voltage systems installation, repair, alteration, and service work of all employees of such partnership or corporation, who have valid licenses issued by the state construction industry licensing board, division of low-voltage contracting.
 - e. Any person, partnership or corporation, making application for a license to engage in the business of low-voltage contracting in the city shall furnish the revenue collections division of the city a copy of the license issued by the division of low-voltage contracting of the state construction industry licensing board.
- (2) *Plumber license.* No person shall engage in the business of plumbing contractor unless such person holds a valid license for master plumber issued by the state construction industry board, division of master plumbers and journeyman plumbers. No partnership or corporation shall have the right to engage in the business of plumbing unless there is regularly connected with such partnership or corporation a person or persons actually engaged in the performance of such business on a full-time basis who hold a valid license for master plumber issued by the state construction industry board, division of master plumbers and journeyman plumbers. Any person, partnership or corporation making application for a license to engage in the business of plumbing in Columbus, Georgia, shall furnish the revenue collections division of Columbus, Georgia, a copy of the license issued by the division of master plumbers and journeyman plumbers.
- (3) *Mechanical license.* No person shall engage in the business of conditioned air contractor unless such person holds a valid license for conditioned air contractor issued by the state construction industry board, division of conditioned air contractors. No partnership or corporation shall have the right to engage in the business of conditioned air contractor unless there is regularly connected with such partnership or corporation a person or persons actually engaged in the performance of such business on a full-time basis who hold a valid license for conditioned air contractor issued by the state construction industry board, division of conditioned air contractors.. Any person, partnership or corporation making application for a license to engage in the business of conditioned air contractor in Columbus, Georgia, shall furnish the revenue collections division of Columbus, Georgia, a copy of the license issued by the division of conditioned air contractors.
- (f) *Conditions of the permit.*
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- (1) *Permit intent.* A permit issued shall be construed to be a license to proceed with the work and not as authority to violate, cancel, alter, or set aside any of the provisions of the building official from thereafter requiring a correction of errors in plans, construction, or violations of this code. Every permit issued shall become invalid if the work authorized by such permit is not commenced within six months after its issuance, or if the work authorized by such permit is commenced within six months after its issuance, but then is suspended or abandoned for a period of six months after the time the work is commenced. One or more extensions of time, for periods not more than 90 days each, may be allowed for the permit. The extension shall be requested in writing and justifiable cause demonstrated. Extensions shall be in writing by the building official.
 - (2) *Permit issued on basis of an affidavit.* Whenever a permit is issued in reliance upon an affidavit or whenever the work to be covered by a permit involves installation under conditions which, in the opinion of the building official, are hazardous or complex, the building official shall require that the architect or engineer who signed the affidavit or prepared the drawings or computations shall supervise such work. In addition, they shall be responsible for conformity with the permit, provide copies of inspection reports as inspections are performed, and upon completion make and file with the building official written affidavit that the work has been done in conformity with the reviewed plans and with the structural provisions of the technical codes. In the event such architect or engineer is not available, the owner shall employ in his stead a competent person or agency whose qualifications are reviewed by the building official.
 - (3) *Plans.* When the building official issues a permit, he shall endorse, in writing or by stamp, both sets of plans "Reviewed for Code Compliance." One set of drawings so reviewed shall be retained by the building official and the other set shall be returned to the applicant. The permit drawings shall be kept at the site of work and shall be open to inspection by the building official or his authorized representative.

(g) *Fees.*

- (1) *Prescribed fees.* A permit shall not be issued until the fees prescribed herein have been paid. Nor shall an amendment to a permit be released until the additional fee, if any, due to an increase in the estimated cost of the building, structure, electrical, plumbing, mechanical or gas systems, has been paid.
- (2) *Work commencing before permit issuance.* Any person who commences any work on a building, structure, electrical, gas, mechanical or plumbing system before obtaining the necessary permits shall be subject to a penalty of 100 percent of the usual permit fee in addition to the required permit fees.
- (3) *Accounting.* The building official shall keep a permanent and accurate accounting of all permit fees and other monies collected, the names of all persons upon whose account the same was paid, along with the date and amount thereof.
- (4) *Fee schedule.*
 - a. *Building.* For all buildings, structures, or alterations requiring a building permit, a fee shall be paid as required at the time such permit is issued, in accordance with the following schedule:
 1. The permit fee for new construction and substantial renovation of one- or two-family residential structures shall be \$0.35 per square feet of the structure. All areas under a roof shall be included in the total square feet of the structure. The minimum fee shall be \$250.00.
 2. The permit fee for new construction and substantial renovation of commercial structures shall be calculated per square foot and type of occupancy below:
 - Assembly and Educational Occupancies = \$0.65/square foot

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- Business and Mercantile Occupancies = \$0.50/square foot
 - Residential Occupancy = \$0.55/square foot
 - All other occupancies = \$0.40/square foot

All areas under a roof shall be included in the total square feet of the structure. The minimum fee shall be \$250.00.

3. For renovation projects under \$25,000. the permit fee shall be \$100.00.
 4. For renovation projects over \$25,000.00, up to and including \$50,000 the permit fee shall be \$150.00.5. For renovation projects over \$50,000.00, up to and including \$75,000 the permit fee shall be \$250.00. Renovation projects over \$75,000.00 shall be deemed substantial renovation projects and fees will be calculated per paragraphs 1 and 2 above.
 6. A plan review fee, for commercial construction shall be one-fourth the permit fee to be submitted with permit application, \$75.00 minimum. Plan review fee is a separate fee from the permit fee and shall not be deducted from the permit fee.
 7. For the moving of any building or structure, other than a portable building, the fee shall be \$150.00.
 8. For the moving of any portable building the fee shall be \$150.00.
 9. For the demolition of any residential building or structure, the fee shall be \$75.00.
 10. For the issuance of any certificate of occupancy, the fee shall be \$60.00.
 11. Where any work or installation has been disapproved, the fee for a reinspection shall be as follows:
 - i. For first occurrence there will be no charge.
 - ii. For subsequent occurrences the fee shall be \$75.00.
 12. Where any building permit has been expired less than 24 months, the reactivation fee shall be \$75.00
 13. Where inspections are required after hours for approved shut downs, or other emergency needs, the fee shall be \$75.00, for the first hour, plus \$50.00 for each additional hour thereafter.
- b. *Gas.* For all gas systems requiring a permit, a fee shall be paid as required at the time such permit is issued, in accordance with the following schedule:
1. For the installation, repair, alteration or addition of gas piping, appliances or appurtenances, the fee shall be \$75.00 per meter.
 2. Where any work or installation has been disapproved, the fee for a reinspection shall be as follows:
 - i. For first occurrence there will be no charge.
 - ii. For subsequent occurrences the fee shall be \$75.00.
 3. Where inspections are required after hours for approved shut downs, or other emergency needs, the fee shall be \$75.00, for the first hour, plus \$50.00 for each additional hour thereafter.
- c. *Electrical.* For all electrical systems requiring a permit, a fee shall be paid as required at the time such permit is issued, in accordance with the following schedule:

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1. For the installation, repair, alteration or addition of electrical work the fee shall be \$75.00 per meter.
 2. For temporary electrical service, the fee shall be \$75.00 per meter.
 3. For construction power permits the fee shall be \$75.00 per meter.
 4. Where any work or installation has been disapproved, the fee for a re-inspection shall be as follows:
 - i. For first occurrence there will be no charge.
 - ii. For subsequent occurrences the fee shall be \$75.00.
 5. Where inspections are required after hours for approved shutdowns, or other emergency needs, the fee shall be \$75.00, for the first hour, plus \$50.00 for each additional hour thereafter.
 6. Construction power approval shall be issued for a period of no more than 180 days. If necessary for temporary work to remain for more than 180 days, request for such extension of temporary approval shall be made in writing by the person, firm or corporation holding the permit.
- d. *Plumbing.* For all plumbing work requiring a permit a fee shall be paid as required at the time such permit is issued, in accordance with the following schedule:
1. For the installation, repair, alteration or addition to any plumbing system, fixture, or appliance the fee shall be \$75.00 per meter.
 2. Where any work or installation has been disapproved, the fee for a re-inspection shall be as follows:
 - i. For first occurrence there will be no charge.
 - ii. For subsequent occurrences the fee shall be \$75.00.
 3. Where inspections are required after hours for approved shut downs, or other emergency needs, the fee shall be \$75.00, for the first hour, plus \$50.00 for each additional hour thereafter.
- e. *Mechanical.* For all heating and air conditioning work requiring a permit, a fee shall be paid as required at the time such permit is issued, in accordance with the following schedule:
1. For the installation, repair, alteration or addition of heating, ventilating, duct, air conditioning and refrigeration systems, the fee shall be \$75.00.
 2. Where any work or installation has been disapproved, the fee for a re-inspection shall be as follows:
 - i. For first occurrence there will be no charge.
 - ii. For subsequent occurrences the fee shall be \$75.00.
 3. Where inspections are required after hours for approved shut downs, or other emergency needs, the fee shall be \$75.00, for the first hour, plus \$50.00 for each additional hour thereafter

f. Solar Panels. For all solar panel work requiring a permit, a fee shall be paid as required at the time such permit is issued, in accordance with the following schedule:

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1. For the installation, repair, alteration or addition of solar panel systems on one- or two-family dwellings, the fee shall be \$250.00. For the installation, repair, alteration or addition of solar panel systems on all other structures, the permit fee shall be \$0.25/square feet of solar panel area with a minimum fee of \$250.00 and there shall also be a plan review fee of one-fourth of the permit fee with a minimum review fee of \$75.00.
 2. Where any work or installation has been disapproved, the fee for a re-inspection shall be as follows:
 - i. For first occurrence there will be no charge.
 - ii. For subsequent occurrences the fee shall be \$75.00.
 3. Where inspections are required after hours for approved shut downs, or other emergency needs, the fee shall be \$75.00, for the first hour, plus \$50.00 for each additional hour thereafter

gf. *Building permit valuations.* If for substantial renovation projects, in the opinion of the building official, the valuation of building, alteration, structure, electrical, gas, mechanical or plumbing systems appears to be underestimated on the application, permit shall be denied, unless the applicant can show detailed estimates to meet the approval of the building official. Permit valuations shall include total cost, such as electrical, gas, mechanical, plumbing equipment and other systems, including materials and labor.

(Ord. No. 17-19, § 2, 5-9-17; Ord. No. 18-24, § 1, 6-12-18, eff. 7-1-18; Ord. No. 24-034, § 1, 6-11-24)