

Frequently Asked Questions

Building Department

Question 1

When are permits required?

Answer

Building permits are required for new construction, renovations, and remodeling, with the exception of some routine maintenance. They are also required for such projects as swimming pools, storage sheds, and some other improvements that are not part of the principal structure on a property. The primary reason to require building permits is to verify that new construction and improvements are done safely and in compliance with state and local regulations. Building permits also provide a permanent record for future residents of work that has been done on the property.

Zoning Permits are required when opening a business, when almost any type of construction is being done and also when there is a change of use in the property.

Question 2

What is needed to submit a Building Permit application?

Answer

A.) When submitting a Permit application for approval, two copies of a plan must be submitted as well as two copies of the proposed plot plan for approval, a Building Permit application form and a departmental sign-off card. All forms must be fully completed.

B.) May require approval from the Torrington Area Health District (if served by septic System).

C.) When applying for a permit, the owner of the property or agent for the owner, (contractor or architect), may act as the applicant, and shall be responsible for the prosecution of the permit. Agents for the applicant must have a letter of authorization.

D.) At the time an application for a permit is received, the Building Official must examine all of the documentation submitted with the application to determine if the proposed work is compliant with the state building code. The local fire marshal determines if the proposed work is substantially compliant with the state fire safety code, where applicable. If insufficient information is presented to determine compliance with the state code, then the application must be denied.

E.) Please submit installation instructions and listing information for all equipment that is proposed to be installed with your application. The Building Department will review this information for code compliance prior to inspection and shall verify that the installation complies with the listing instructions and code requirements.

Question 3

How long does it take to obtain a permit?

State law allows the building official up to thirty (30) days to review your application for proposed work and ten (10) days to issue a Certificate of Occupancy (once all inspections and paperwork are completed). Call at least 24 hours in advance for inspections.

Answer

Question 4

What do permits cost?

Building Permits \$15 per \$1000 of constructed value (or portion thereof). The permit applicant is required to place a reasonable estimated value on the work to be done, even if there is no actual cost to a project (i.e. someone installing a free wood stove or relocating a shed or building on the same property)
A Zoning Permit is \$100

Answer

Question 5

Hours and Phone Numbers

The Building Department is open Monday through Friday 8:00 a.m. till 12 noon to obtain permits. Inspections are available from 9:00 a.m. till 2:00 p.m. Monday through Thursday. The phone number is (860) 379-3818 (ext 332). Call this number to schedule inspections. APPOINTMENTS FOR INSPECTIONS MAY NOT BE LEFT ON THE DEPARTMENT ANSWERING MACHINE. You must have a permit before an inspection is scheduled. For any building code questions, ask to speak to an inspector. If a voice mailbox is reached at any time, leave a detailed message and your call will be returned as soon as possible.

Answer

Question 6

What if I have an emergency situation ?

If this is a life safety emergency, than hang up and dial 911. Please notify our office immediately that an emergency condition exists and that you need an approval immediately. You must state the reason for the emergency and you must have an approval before proceeding with any work.

Answer

Question 7

What if I a Property Maintenance complaint, or a Housing Complaint?

You can go to the Building Department website at the Townofwinchester.org and under the Building Department print out a complaint form and either drop it off at the Building Department, or fax it to us at 860-738-6598, and we will get back to you on it.

Answer

Question 8

When is a Rental Certificate of Occupancy Required?

A Rental Certificate of Occupancy is required for all 3 family, or more every 2 years, or prior to having the apartment occupied as per our Town Ordinances. Please call our office at 860-379-3818 to set up an inspection.

Answer

Question 9

How long is a Building Permit good for?

When building permits are issued, the work involved must be started within 180 days. The permit will become invalid if work is suspended or abandoned for more than 180 days. The Building Official may grant extensions to the permit if applied for in writing.

Answer

Question 10

Where Can I Find Out Information On The Building Code?

The first step may be to simply speak to the Building Official to discuss your project. All cities and towns in Connecticut use the Connecticut State Building Code. There is no such thing as a local building code (however local Zoning Regulations will dictate where some uses or structures may be located). The State Building Code is available in most libraries. The Building Department has order forms available to residents or contractors who would like to order their own copies. The Building Department also has available various handouts, which provide general information on many common building topics. The Building Code is a comprehensive and expensive publication; and in most cases it wouldn't be very useful to most homeowners.

Answer
