Processing of Applications

Code Enforcement Officials review submitted applications to make sure they are in accordance with NYS building/fire code, local zoning & other applicable laws.

If problems occur with the proposal, Code Enforcement Officials meet with the applicant to discuss the needed changes prior to issuing the permit.

Zoning Approval

When property to be developed is regulated by a local site plan or zoning law, a building permit will not be issued until all site plan requirements issued by the municipality are met.

Appealing Refusal of a Building Permit

If an applicant is refused issuance of a building permit, he can appeal that decision of the Code Enforcement Official to the Board of Appeals.

Obligations during Construction

A building permit applicant is required to complete the work as approved by the Code Enforcement Officer in accordance with the building codes adopted by the Town of West Seneca.

Inspections during Building Construction

Inspections required under the building code are listed on the building permit. Such inspections are performed by a Code Enforcement Officer who checks each major phase of construction & makes certain that the work conforms to the building code, the building permit & the approved building plans.

The Code Enforcement Officer must be able to see the part of construction required to be inspected & **24 hour advanced notice is required.** Should an inspection find that some work does not conform to approved plans, the inspector will advise & possibly send a notice asking that the situation be remedied.

Another inspection may be necessary before work is resumed. If the work continues without resolving the problem, applicants can be subject to legal action.

Applicants are also required to post their building permit in a window or other prominent place on the site, keep a copy of the building plan at the site & bring any proposed changes to the attention of the Code Enforcement Officer as soon as possible. These changes will require review & approval in the same manner as the original building plans.

Facts about Demolition

Before any building is demolished, either in part or whole, the applicant is required by the building code to apply for a demolition permit from the municipality's Code Enforcement Officer.

The process for obtaining one is similar to that of a building permit. Some cases may require the hiring of a professional Engineer to oversee the demolition

Additional Information

Further information concerning building permits & the building code is available by contacting your Code Enforcement Office.

TOWN OF WEST SENECA
"PROUD PAST - UNLIMITED FUTURE"

Why a Building Permit?

A Citizen's guide to How & Why

West Seneca

Code Enforcement Office

1250 Union Rd.

West Seneca, NY 14224

716-558-3242

Introduction

Initiating safety measures for building construction has been a priority for civilization through recorded history. In the United States, developing regulations for building was underway even during the presidencies of George Washington and Thomas Jefferson.

Three centuries later, buildings are erected with much regard to standards of public health and safety. Codes assist in safeguarding against fire, structural defects and deterioration of the building stock. They also help to ensure that construction is energy-efficient.

An important element behind the success of these codes is the establishment of a workable relationship between the code enforcement officials and community groups that they serve.

Such groups include homeowners, developers, urban planners and designers, plus construction industry representatives.

This relationship serves as a means of not merely enforcing the building code, but also enabling local government to remain responsive to the community's needs for both public and private construction.

This brochure has been prepared to provide a better understanding of how the building permit process operates.

Definition of a Building Code

On a practical level, a building code is the government's official statement on building safety. For technical purposes, it is a compendium of laws and ordinances setting minimum safety standards and arranged in a systematic manner (codified) for future reference.

The code takes into account plumbing, electrical and mechanical systems, along with essential fire and structural aspects.

How to Apply for a Permit

An application for a building permit is available through the Code Enforcement Office. In addition to the completed application, sketches, building drawings, plans and/or other documents must be submitted for review.

A fee or charge for services, including water connection, and a survey may be required of the applicant. In select cases, an architect or engineer will be needed to design the building and prepare necessary drawings and detailed plans.

Why Building Permits are Required

A building permit serves as formal and legal permission to start any construction project. The issuance of a building permit indicates that plans for a new structure, addition, renovation, foundation, plumbing, air conditioning or heating system, fireplace, prefabricated structure, temporary building or mobile home have been approved by local government officials and that the plans comply with mandated building codes and zoning laws.

Delays Due to Permits

Homeowners may be led to believe that submitting an application for a building permit could cause unnecessary and costly alterations to their plans. They also might feel that going through bureaucratic channels will create undue delays in construction.
However, the majority of building permit applications are processed with little delay. If plan modifications are needed the deficiencies are based on a careful review of the proposed work to insure safe and sound construction.

A positive aspect of applying for the permit is that homeowners have access to the code official's knowledge and experience when and if they have any inquiries about their projects or the permit itself.