

SWAIN COUNTY, NC – 828-488-9134
Building Permit Frequently Asked Questions

Q: What do I need to get a Building Permit? What size plans do I have to submit? Do I need an architect or engineer?

A: You can download applications for permits from our website or pick them up here in the office.

Q: When is a Licensed Contractor Required?

A: A licensed contractor is required whenever construction is done that exceeds \$30,000 in value. The value is based either on a signed contract or our permit valuation, which is \$91.36/sq. ft. of heated space of new residential construction. Re-models are based on contract price. For commercial projects, talk to our commercial plan reviewer. These rules are made by the NC Licensing Board, and we have no control over them. You may contact the Licensing Board for further information at 919-571-4183 or www.nclbgc.net.

Q: Do I need an architect to draw my plans?

A: Residential plans normally do not require an architect. If the proposed residence is unusually large and/or complicated it could require plans sealed by an architect or engineer. For commercial plans you need to talk to our commercial plan reviewer. A log home must have a set of plans.

Q: Do I need a permit for a residential storage building?

A: Any building greater than 12' in any dimension requires a building permit. If it is greater than 400 sq ft it requires a permanent foundation. All buildings used for commercial purposes require a building permit and a permanent foundation.

Q: Do I need a permit for a roof over an existing deck/porch?

A: Yes.

Q: Do I need a permit to enclose my carport?

A: Yes.

Q: When is a remodeling permit required?

A: Not required in single family residences for work costing less than \$5000 if no structural (load bearing) work is done, or if no work involving plumbing, mechanical, or electrical systems is done. Replacing plumbing fixtures without altering the trap or the drains or vents does not require a permit.

Q: Does Swain County have Code books for sale?

A: No. We do have order forms, or you can go to Code Services on the State DOI (Department of Insurance) website and order online.

http://www.ncdoi.com/OSFM/Engineering/engineering_home.asp

Q: If I make changes on my approved plans, do I need to bring them back to Plan Review?

A: If you are adding square footage or a bedroom, yes. Other minor changes can usually be worked out with the field inspector. On a commercial project you need talk to the Commercial Plan Reviewer.

Q: When do I need a permit from the Health Department?

A: Any time you're building on a lot that does not have city water and sewer. If you are remodeling or adding to an existing structure where the proposed work extends outside of the existing footprint

(outline) of the building, or you are adding bedrooms to a residence, you need a permit from Environmental Health.

Q: What is the status of my plan I submitted?

A: Residential Plan Review is normally completed in 24 to 48 hours. The plan reviewer will contact you when it is ready.

Q: When are you going to get to my job site?

A: If you have called in your inspection request the previous workday, prior to 3:00 pm, the inspector should be at your job site between the hours of 8:00 am and 2:30 pm.

Q: I was turned down on my inspection, who can I talk to about it?

A: First you need to talk to the inspector who can explain exactly what he meant on the call sheet and why he requires the correction.

Q: When can I get electrical service?

A-1: After your final service inspection has been approved and a sticker has been placed on the meter box, or

A-2: After you have paid a deposit for temporary electrical (which is 2.5 times the Building Permit fee, for residential) and the inspection has been approved and a sticker has been placed on the meter.

Q: Who do I contact about asbestos?

A: Call NC State Health Hazards Control (919-707-5950) in Raleigh.

Q: Who do I talk to about site grading, soil erosion, water quality, wetlands, stream run-off, etc.?

A: Contact Swain County Inspections at 828-488-9134