

Town of Combes
P.O. Box 280
21626 Hand Rd.
Combes, TX 78535
Tel (956)425-7131 Tel (956)423-2714
Fax (956)412-6795



What is a Building Permit?

A building permit is a license which grants legal permission to start construction of a building project. What Construction Projects Need Building Permits? Check your local building department for the requirements in your area. Building permits are typically required for:

- New buildings
- Additions
- Renovations
- Demolitions
- Temporary buildings
- Mobile homes
- Electrical systems
- Plumbing systems
- Prefabricated structures
- Fencing-Residential and Commercial
- HVAC systems (heating, ventilating, air conditioning)
- Miscellaneous for residential (fireplace, pools, decks, fences, etc.)
- Miscellaneous for commercial (parking, health, food handling, etc.)

The Purpose of Permits

Permits allow the enforcement of the codes which have been adopted as law by a state, county, township or city. No matter what the specific project may be, the enforcement of codes is carried out to protect the public health, safety and welfare. The unit of government which enforces the code is acting to assure safe construction.

The Use of Permits

Building officials and inspectors use building permits as a vital step in their enforcement of codes. You have an investment in the home or business you are about to build or remodel. When that home or business building does not comply with the codes, your investment could be reduced. Applying for a building permit notifies the Code Official that you are constructing or remodeling a building so he or she can ensure code compliance.

Why a Building Permit?

Building permits provide the means for Building Officials to protect us by reducing the potential hazards of unsafe construction and therefore ensuring the public health, safety and welfare. The building permit process helps us understand what our local laws and ordinances are. Before any construction or remodeling work begins, application for a permit should be made. Building permits provide the means for Building Officials to inspect construction to ensure that minimum standards are met and appropriate materials are used.

1. Visit or Call your Local Code Official

The Code Official will ask "What are you planning to do?" and "Where are you planning to do it?" Then, the Code Official will explain the requirements (codes/ordinances) regarding your project. An application for a building permit will be given to you at this time. This initial contact will provide the resources and information you will need to make your project a success and avoid potential problems which could cost you time and money.

2. Submit Application

The permit application requires information about the construction project. You'll be asked to document "who" will perform the work, "what" work will be done, "where" the work will be done, "when" the work will be done and "how" the work will be done. Sketches, drawings, plans or other documentation of the proposed work will have to be submitted for review.

3. Wait During Review Process

The majority of permit applications are processed with little delay. The Building Inspector will determine if your project is in compliance with the construction codes, the zoning ordinance and with other municipal or state ordinances and statutes.

Residential 3 to 5 Working days; pools, sign, misc
Commercial 7 to 14 Working days

4. Receive Results of Review Process

A. If compliance with the code, zoning ordinances and other applicable regulations is determined, the application is approved and a permit issued. B. If compliance is not determined, your application as submitted will be denied. If you are refused a building permit, you can correct the Code violations or appeal the decision.

5. Receive Permit

The building permit is the document granting legal permission to start construction. You must proceed as approved in the review process. A fee will be collected at this time. The permit fee helps defray the cost of the Building Official's time spent in the application process, the review process and on-site inspection process. The fee also gives you access to the Building Official's knowledge and experience when and if you have any questions about your construction

project. An additional fee for services, such as water connection and surveys, may be required. Most building departments require you to post the building permit in a window or other prominent place at the construction site, keep a copy of the building plans at the site, and bring any proposed changes to the attention of the Code Official immediately. Changes will require a review and approval in the same manner as the original application.

6. Arrange Inspection Visits

Each major phase of construction must be inspected by the Code Official to make certain the work conforms to the Code, the building permit and the approval plan. The person responsible for the construction project must request each inspection. Normally, 24 to 48 hours advance notice is required. If an inspector finds that some work does not conform to approved plans, the inspector will advise (and possibly provide written notice) that the situation is to be remedied. If the violation is serious, a stop work order may be posted until the problem is resolved. Another inspection may be necessary before work is resumed.

7. Fire Inspections:

The Cameron County Fire Marshall is in charge of conducting all Fire Inspections if required to Commercial sites. Contact Information: 964 E. Harrison St., 2nd Floor | Brownsville, Texas 78520 Ph: (956) 547-7000 | Fax: (956)547-7006

7. Received Certificate of Occupancy

Upon final inspection, the inspector may issue a Certificate of Occupancy at the request of the General Contractor. This certificate is the formal document which marks the completion of your construction project and gives you permission to occupy your new or renovated building with the knowledge that it has met the safety standards in your community.