

**PENNSAFE BUILDING INSPECTION SERVICES LLC**  
**“GUIDE TO OBTAINING A BUILDING PERMIT”**

THIS GUIDE AND ALL OTHER INSPECTION DEPARTMENT PAPERWORK AND HANDOUTS ARE FREE AND READILY AVAILABLE AT OUR OFFICE.

*The following six step process is required to obtain your Building Permit and Certificate of Occupancy/Approval:*

When you are submitting an application for a Building Permit for the first time, it may be considered somewhat confusing. This guide is has been developed to help you understand the process and to ensure a quick turnaround time for your plan submittal and Certificate of Occupancy approval.

***\*Step 1: Visit or call our office to discuss your proposed building project\****

Pick up permit applications, handouts and other office information concerning the PA. Uniform Construction Code, local requirements and fees **prior to** beginning any construction or home improvement project.

If zoning is in place at the municipality where your project is taking place, make sure that your project plans meet all requirements prior to submitting any documents.

For preliminary discussion, bring informal documentation or a sketch of your ideas for your project to the office. Your proposal can be reviewed to determine compliance with building requirements. Our personnel will suggest helpful ideas or supply code information to aid you in the plan review process.

Either the homeowner or the contractor can submit the application and project plan. It is suggested that the contractor submit the project plan. This suggestion is offered only because of the construction and code knowledge of most contractors.

***\*Step 2: Submit your completed permit application, municipal approval form and the project plans\****

It is suggested that you call the office to ensure that an inspector is present to answer any remaining question that you may have before submitting your application and project plan.

Bring your completed application, municipal prior approval form and two (2) copies of the project plans as well as any other necessary documents (approvals, certificate of insurance) to the building inspection office to begin the plan review process.

Some remodeling projects and smaller jobs will need an application and a scope of work or an original copy of the contract in order to supply information for the plan review process. If the plans are found to be incomplete or the drawings are insufficient, you may have to provide our office with additional information.

The length of time for the plan review process can vary. The Building Permit for some smaller projects can be issued almost immediately. Residential additions and homes generally take about 3 days. Larger commercial projects can take approximately 3-4 weeks. Our office will work diligently with you throughout this process. Our goal is to issue your Building Permit in a timely manner.

### ***\*Step 3: Receive your Building Permit\****

Once your application is deemed complete and your plans have been approved, your Building Permit will be issued. You must obtain the permit within 180 days of your application and plan approval or such approval becomes null and void. Should the 180 days elapse, you will be required to submit both a new application and fees. No construction can begin until the Building Permit has been issued.

One copy of your approved project plan will be returned to you. The returned approved plan must be located at the jobsite at all times. This policy is necessary because the inspector uses this plan for the actual field inspections. No exceptions will be allowed.

The initial inspection must be completed within 6 months (180 days) of the issuance of the permit. Building Permits expire if the construction project is not completed in 2 years from the issuance date of the permit. You must have inspections showing substantial progress of the project at intervals of no more than 180 days.

If no building progress has been made on your building project for 180 days, you may request in writing, to the department authority that your permit be extended, giving the reasons for the delay.

If your Building Permit expires, you may renew it by paying additional fees based upon the remaining items that need to be completed on your building project.

### ***\*Step 4: Call to schedule the required building inspections\****

**The following are the 6 specific inspections that are required for new construction projects (i.e. home or addition).**

- 1) **Footings and foundation inspection:** prior to pouring footers or placing foundation walls.
- 2) **Plumbing, mechanical and electrical system inspection:** rough inspection of plumbing, mechanical and electrical systems shall be made prior to covering or concealment, prior to installing any fixtures, and prior to the framing inspection.
- 3) **Frame inspection:** this inspection is made after the roof, masonry, all framing, firestopping, draftstopping and bracing are in place and after the plumbing, mechanical and electrical rough inspections are approved.
- 4) **Energy Code:** this inspection is done after envelope insulation and sealing is installed.
- 5) **Wallboard inspection:** this inspection is done after all wallboard is in place and prior to the application of any finish material.
- 6) **Final inspection:** this inspection is done after permitted work is complete and prior to occupancy.

**The final inspection shall not be provided until all previous inspections have been successfully completed and approved.** Additional inspections for multi-family and non-residential projects may be necessary. Our staff will advise you if additional inspections are required.

Field inspections take place during the actual construction process. We request a minimum of 24 hours notice when scheduling your inspection. This advance notice allows us to schedule inspections in a timely manner to better serve you.

Upon completion of each inspection, the inspector will indicate whether or not approval is granted by signing the Inspection Checklist Form. If the inspection is approved, the next phase of your project may commence. If the inspection is not approved, then the inspector will indicate, in writing, the reasons for the disapproval and issue you or your contactor a copy of the violations.

It is recommended that you or your contractor be aware of the Building Code requirements. Our staff will offer information and code interpretations to assist you with your project. Please dedicate proper planning prior to starting your building project.

***\*Step 5: Receive your final inspection approval\****

When all work is completed and all required inspections have been approved, call our office to arrange a final inspection. The inspector will make a final on-site inspection of your project and sign the inspection document indicating that all work has been completed and has been performed consistent to the requirements of the Building Code.

A copy of the final inspection report will be given to you for your records. A copy will be issued to the contractor, lending institution and the municipality in which the project was located.

***\*Step 6: Receive your Certificate of Occupancy\****

Once the final inspection approval has been received on your Building Permit, a Certificate of Occupancy will be issued for new dwellings, buildings and additions. This procedure takes place immediately following the final inspection approval.

A Temporary Occupancy Permit may be issued in certain instances, provided that all fire, life, health and safety concerns are met and the building can be safely occupied. Normally a time limit that must be adhered to is given to complete your project.

**\*\*Remember that you cannot occupy your building until the Certificate of Occupancy is issued\*\***

**“Building Inspections for Safer Communities”**