

Commercial Permit Process – Frequently Asked Questions

Under what conditions must I apply for a commercial building permit?

New construction of, as well as additions and alterations to, structures used for nonresidential purposes require a commercial building permit. Any owner or authorized agent who intends to construct, enlarge, alter, repair, move, demolish, or change the occupancy of a building or structure, or to erect, install, enlarge, alter, repair, remove, convert, or replace any electrical, gas, mechanical or plumbing system, the installation of which is regulated by the City of Hitchcock's codes, or to cause any such work to be done, shall first make application for a building permit. Multi-family residential projects are also required to go through the commercial building permitting process. Contact the Building Permit Department at (409) 986-5591 to discuss building permit requirements as they relate to your development project.

What building codes has the City of Hitchcock adopted?

The City of Hitchcock has adopted the following building codes:

- 2018 International Building Code
- 2018 International Plumbing Code
- 2018 International Property Maintenance Code
- 2017 National Electric Code
- 2018 International Existing Building Code
- 2018 Fuel and Gas Code
- 2018 Mechanical Code
- 2018 International Residential Code
- 2018 International Energy Conservation Code
- 2018 International Fire Code

Additional standards can be found in Title XV Land Usage Chapter 150 of the City of Hitchcock Code of Ordinances (Building Regulations), available online at www.cityofhitchcock.org.

What are the preliminary requirements for pursuing a commercial building permit?

Before applying for a commercial building permit, check to ensure that a development project complies with all zoning and platting requirements.

What are building plan review submittal requirements?

Submit at least two hard copy complete sets of building plans, one electronic set of the building plans, a permit application, and any applicable plan review fees. Contact the Building Permit Department at (409) 986-5591 to discuss building permit requirements as they relate to your development project.

Now that I have met all the zoning and platting requirements and I have submitted the required paperwork for a building permit, what is my next step?

The Building Permit Department will notify you whether your application has been approved or denied, usually within two weeks following the submission of a complete

application. You may call the Building Permit Department at (409) 986-5591 for a status update at any stage of the review process (during business hours).

When are fees required and how much are they?

Payment of the plan review fee is due at the time of building permit application submittal. Building permit fees as well as any other associated utility fees are normally collected upon issuance of the building permit. The fee amount is contingent on the valuation (cost of construction) of the project that is being proposed. Contact the Building Permit Department at (409) 986-5591 to inquire about building permit fees.

When can I start building construction?

Building construction must begin within 180 days following of the issuance of a building permit. The approved (signed) building permit, or a copy thereof, must be prominently displayed on the job site throughout the building process until all final inspections have been approved. At least one building inspection must occur during each 180-day period following the issuance of a building permit or the work will be considered abandoned. If the work is considered abandoned, a new permit must be issued (with new review and fees paid) before work on a project can continue.

How do I request an inspection?

The City may utilize a third-party contracted inspection company, to inspect construction projects. Inspections related to building construction (building, plumbing, mechanical, fire protection, and/or electrical) can be requested by contacting the Permits Department (409)986-5591.

The request must include the following information:

- Project address
- Inspection type requested
- Permit number
- Contractor's name and contact information
- Date inspection is to be performed
- Any special instructions or requests for the inspector

What inspections are required of my construction project and when are these inspections being done?

The inspections required for your construction project varies with the complexity of a job. Ordinarily, the City of Hitchcock performs its construction inspections in the following order:

- Electrical Temporary Pole
- Water Service
- Yard Sewer
- Gas Underground
- Plumbing Rough in
- Form Board Survey
- Building Foundation Pre-Pour Inspection
- Electrical Rough in
- Mechanical Rough in
- Plumbing Top Out
- Gas Rough in
- Building Frame Inspection
- Insulation Inspection
- Electric Meter Inspection
- Plumbing Final
- Gas Final/Release
- Electrical Final
- Energy Final
- Mechanical Final
- Building Final/Certificate of Occupancy Inspection
- If Fire Alarms or Fire Sprinklers are required, those inspections must be completed prior to the issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy.

Contact the Building Permit Department at (409) 986-5591 to discuss building permit requirements as they relate to your development project.

When can I use and occupy my building?

Once all final inspections and approvals have been obtained from the City, the City will issue a Certificate of Occupancy. Only after a Certificate of Occupancy has been issued can a building be occupied.

If I am not at the site at the time the inspections are made, how will I know if the work has been approved?

An inspection report will be left onsite of the work inspected. If you receive a partial pass or failing inspection, contact the issuing inspector for information on what work needs to be done to receive a passing inspection. After the work has been corrected, you must schedule a re-inspection.

Where can I find more information?

For more information on building permits, please refer to Community Development Department and Building Permit's webpage on the City's website at www.cityofhitchcock.org. Please contact the Building Permit Department at (409) 986-5591 if you have any questions concerning the subjects discussed.