

Do it yourself

Guidelines to pulling building permits

By **Walter L. Newton**

Editor

Do it yourself home or property improvements can be rewarding and cost-effective but at the same time the process for obtaining and maintaining building permits can be confusing and frustrating.

Like most counties, Park County has a building department. Its function is to issue construction permits, maintain safety standards for a project and inspect the work being performed to make sure it follows county regulations.

One of the first questions a do-it-yourselfer frequently asks is "Do I need a building

permit?"

According to the county web site the following structures and projects do not require a permit:

One story detached accessory structures used as tool and storage sheds, playhouses, and similar structures that do not exceed 120 sq. ft., fences not over 6 feet high, retaining walls that are not over 4 feet in height (measured from the bottom of the footing to the top of the wall), sidewalks and driveways not more than 30 inches above adjacent grade and not over basement or a story below and are not part of an accessible route.

Also listed are: painting, papering, tiling, carpeting, cabinets, counter tops, siding, and similar non-structural cosmetic work and swings and

other playground equipment accessories to detached one and two-family dwellings.

Even though these projects do not require permitting they must conform to county planning and zoning regulations.

Building permits are required for: all re-roofing or partial roofing work, septic systems, driveways, woodstoves and HVAC systems, demolition work, garages, additions, decks and basement finishes.

It is best to check with the building department if there are any questions as to what work needs a permit and what projects can be completed without a permit.

Fees for permits vary, some based on a flat fee and some on a sliding scale depending on square footage and type of

project.

Flat fee permits include: \$200 for re-roofing, \$100 for a mechanical permit (including woodstove installation), \$100 for an excavation and \$100 for a demolition permit.

Square footage types of permits can be estimated using the following figures but a final cost can only be calculated after the building plans are actually submitted to the county.

Dwelling or dwelling addition, .86 sq. ft. plus \$100 excavation fee, garage, .53 sq. ft., plus \$100 excavation fee, deck, .18 sq. ft., covered deck, .31 sq. ft., finished basement, .35 sq. ft., unfinished basement, .28 sq. ft. and a remodel, .35 sq. ft.

Other items to consider when planning a project is

snow and wind loads for a structure, minimum standards of living (electrical, plumbing, sanitation and water), structural engineering, any state required permits (electrical and plumbing), inspection regimen and possible fire mitigation requirements.

The Park County building department is open Monday through Thursday, 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. in Fairplay. It is closed for all federal holidays. No plan submittals or plan pick-ups after 5:00 p.m. and inspections need to be scheduled no later than 5 p.m. the day before an inspection needs to occur.

The building department can be contacted at 719-836-4255 and the website is <http://www.parkco.us/75/Building>.