

# Permitting Frequently Asked Questions

**Q. Why do I need a building permit?**

A. NC General Statutes require a permit to be obtained if a building, structure or service system is erected, constructed, enlarged, installed, altered, repaired, moved, removed, converted or demolished. If you build without obtaining the necessary permits, you will be asked to stop work and will be required to obtain the necessary permits at double the price. If you continue, a written stop work order will be issued.

**Q. What forms of payment does the Vance County office accept for zoning or building permits?**

A. Currently we accept cash, check or money order, for county zoning & building permits. Henderson City and ETJ zoning permits are obtained from the city office at 134 Rose Ave.

**Q. May we apply by fax, mail or online for a zoning or building permit?**

A. No, all permits require that the customer physically come into our office to apply for and purchase zoning and building permits.

**Q. Where are you located and what are your office hours?**

A. We are located at 156 Church Street in the new county courthouse in Henderson (Access from Rose Avenue next to the Sheriff's Office) and our office hours are Monday thru Friday 8 am. to 5 pm.

**Q. What hours can we apply for or purchase a zoning or building permits?**

A. You need to come in between the hours of 8 am. to 4:30 pm. to allow enough time to acquire the needed information to process all permits. Most likely the permit will not be ready the same day as the application and materials are submitted.

**Q. May we pay re-inspection fees to the inspector or leave the fees in the permit box for the inspector to pick up?**

A. No, all re-inspection fees (when any one trade fails an inspection more than twice) must be paid at the Planning and Development Department. You may bring or mail the fee. All re-inspection fees must be paid in full before power or a Certificate of Occupancy is released or other inspections are scheduled.

**Q. What do I have to have ready in order to get conditional power on a residential dwelling?**

A. The following trades must be at 100% in order to receive conditional power: electrical, mechanical, gas test and insulation. Also, the fee must be paid and the conditional power application applied for in our office. This does not apply to Manufactured homes.

**Q. Do the inspectors have cell phones? If so, can we call them in the field?**

A. Yes. Customers may call the office at 252-738-2080. Ask for the inspector assigned to your job. The inspector will give you his/her cell phone number.

**Q. My homeowners association says I don't need a building permit for storage buildings from the county because it was approved by the HOA. Do I need a permit for the electric?**

A. You **DO** need a permit for the **building AND** the **electric**. Regardless of where you build on private property, if any one (1) side is longer than 12 ft. you need a building permit. You always need a zoning permit regardless of the size!

**Q. Can I call during the day and find out if my inspection passed for that day?**

A. Yes, but normally not until after 4 pm.

**Q. How many inspections do I need to have for my house?**

A. As many as needed, but the minimum is usually around 5. They are: footings, floor & foundation, Rough In (which includes: electric, mechanical, plumbing, gas system, and framing), insulation and final.

**Q. What size accessory building can I build without a building permit?**

A. Anything 12' x 12' or smaller. You must have a zoning permit regardless of size.

**Q. How much insulation is required in walls?**

A. R-13 is to be installed in walls, R-19 in floors and R-30 in ceilings. Vapor barriers or plastic is not required anymore in the code.

**Q. I want to finish my bonus room, do I need a permit?**

A. Yes.

**Q. Do you do single trade inspections?**

A. Yes, but in an effort to save time and money, we will do all trades at once on the **rough-in** stage.

**Q. What will happen if I decide to build without being issued appropriate permits?**

A. You will be asked to stop work and obtain the necessary permits. These permits will be double in cost. If you continue, a written stop-work order will be issued.

**Q. Once I purchase my permit, what is the procedure for requesting an inspection?**

A. The permit holder must call the inspections office during business hours with the correct permit number to request an inspection. The inspection will be done within the scheduled time frame. Your inspection will be done as soon as possible, however we cannot promise an exact time. You may call the inspections office after 8 am, but before 9 am on the date of your inspection to find out whether it will be AM or PM.

**Q. In reference to mobile home qualifications, what is meant by a Wind Zone I, II or III classification?**

A. The numerical wind zone is determined by the NC Department of Insurance and is dependent on how close your property is to the ocean. Zone I is for interior counties and Zone III is for coastal counties. Vance County has been designated as Zone I.

**Q. Why is the wind zone rating on my mobile home so important and is there anything I can do to make my mobile home meet the wind zone requirement for Vance County?**

A. The zone rating of a home is determined by how the home is constructed and anchored down. The zone rating of a home cannot be changed after construction.

**Q. Once I receive my building permit, how long do I have until it expires?**

A. You have six (6) months after date of issue to begin work and call our department to do an inspection. Once an inspection has been done in the six (6) months, you have one (1) year until your next inspection or the permit is no longer valid.

**Q. How will I know if my inspections passed or failed?**

A. There will be a report left at the job site to inform you. If necessary items listed on the report must be corrected and re-inspected before proceeding onto the next level of construction.

**Q. When I pass my final inspection, how soon should I receive power at my residence, barn, etc?**

A. The power company is notified the same day as the inspection. We send it in by Fax. You will have to have set up an account with the power company to ensure that you receive service. Please see the power company brochure for further information.