



# City of Boynton Beach Building Division

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## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

The Boynton Beach Field Inspection Section is providing this detailed list of “Frequently Asked Questions” in an effort to help you get your construction work inspected as smoothly as possible while getting the power released and the building certificate of occupancy issued in an expeditious manner. If you should need additional information, please contact the Building Division at (561) 742-6350.

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### Licensing:

- Q** If I'm just doing “handyman” type of work, do I have to be licensed?
- A** If you are engaged in building, mechanical, electrical or plumbing work, then most likely the answer will be yes. To be sure, you should call the Occupational License Division at (561) 742-6360 in order to discuss the scope of work with the appropriate bureau.
- Q** If I unknowingly hired an unlicensed contractor, am I in trouble?
- A** No, under normal circumstances, we prosecute the unlicensed contractor either through criminal, Construction Industry Licensing Board, Department of Business & Professional Regulations or administrative/civil means, or all, and the property owner is considered a victim.
- Q** As a homeowner, am I responsible for any construction work done on my property regardless of whether or not I did the work?
- A** The responsible party is usually the licensed contractor, who should be the holder of the permit. However, if the homeowner obtained the permit, did the work or supervised the work, then the homeowner is the responsible party. **Please remember that even though you hire a licensed contractor, the homeowner is ultimately responsible for any work performed on his/her property.**



### Permits:

- Q** I received a “four times fee penalty on my permit.” What is that penalty for and how do I avoid it in the future?
- A** The “four times fee penalty” is a fine for performing construction work without first acquiring the proper permits. Do not perform any construction work without checking first to see if a permit is required. For information, call Permitting at (561) 742-6350.
- Q** Do I need a licensed contractor to obtain a permit for work on my house? What about my office?
- A** Property owners can obtain their own permits if:
- (a) they own and occupy their own home or a home is to be constructed for their own use and in which they plan to immediately reside, or
  - (b) a commercial building improvement whose total construction cost is less than \$5,000 and whose occupancy is for the owner and is not offered for sale or lease. No life safety, structural work or fire rated areas may be involved.
  - (c) [for residential] not more than one such permit shall be issued in a 12-month period.
  - (d) the homeowner or commercial building owner shall be domiciled at that address for a minimum of 12 months after receiving their final inspection.
  - (e) you agree to erect the structure in full compliance with all applicable codes by making application for an owner-builder permit.
- Q** My permit has expired. Can I reactivate it?
- A** No, you must reapply.
- Q** How long is my permit good for?
- A** You must successfully pass a required inspection every 6 months.

## **Inspections:**

**Q** Am I required to keep approved drawings on my job site?

**A** Yes, these are usually kept in the construction trailer or in the superintendent's office. Residential drawings are usually kept in the permit box protected from the weather. Permit and plans are to be posted in a conspicuous location.

**Q** If I need to deviate from the approved set of plans, do I have to resubmit all new plans?

**A** Only if the deviation is substantial in nature. Check with the City inspector for minor changes.

**Q** How do I call for an inspection?

**A** By calling (561) 742-6355 you can schedule an inspection.

**Q** How come I called for an inspection and no one showed up?

**A** In most cases, the inspection will be made within 24 hours of your request. It is possible the inspection request was entered improperly. When calling in an inspection, supply permit number, address, contractor, type of inspection and contractor/owner's phone number.

**Q** How come I called for an A.M. or P.M. inspection and the inspector didn't make it?

**A** Inspections are performed within 24 hours of your request (the next business day). The A.M. or P.M. is a request only and our inspectors will try to honor it; however, sometimes their workload won't permit them to satisfy the request. Call your inspector at (561) 742-6350 between 7:30 and 8 A.M. to request an approximate time.

**Q** What time will the inspector be on the job?

**A** Most of the time we can only estimate within an hour. If an inspector deviates from his route too much, he may not complete his daily inspections. In special cases, the field inspectors try to accommodate and will try to schedule an inspection at the time requested. If you need a specific time, it is recommended you call the inspector directly (561 742-6350) the morning of the inspection in order to schedule an appointment. Please call between 7:30 and 8:00 A.M.

**Q** How do I find out the status of my inspection?

**A** Check your permit card or call the field inspector between 4 and 4:30 P.M. at (561) 742-6350.

**Q** I really need to talk to the inspector that was at my job site. When can I reach him?

**A** All of our inspectors are in the office from 7:30. to 8:00 A.M. and 4:00. to 4:30 P.M. For a copy of the Inspection directory, which lists all the direct phone numbers, contact the receptionist at (561) 742-6350.

**Q** I'm thinking about buying a home and would like to have it inspected. Will you send an inspector by to look at it?

**A** The Field Inspection Section inspects new construction work only. When purchasing a home, it is recommended that you hire a private inspection firm to make this type of inspection.

## **Site:**

**Q** Do I need a permit to remove a tree?

**A** In most cases, yes. Any tree 5" or larger in diameter measured at breast height potentially requires a permit for removal. There is a short list of trees that are exempt from the permitting requirements. For a copy of the list, contact the Forester/Environmentalist at (561) 742-6267.

**Q** Do I need a permit to fill my property? What about just grading?

**A** Yes. Any filling or grading that potentially changes the way storm water flows to or from the property requires a permit. This also applies to any trees on or off the property that may be impacted.

**Q** Do I need to get an inspection before I pour concrete or cover work in the right-of-way; i.e., driveway aprons, culverts, etc.?

**A** Yes. An inspection is required before any concrete is placed below or above ground in the right-of-way.



## **Structural:**

- Q** How come my roof passed inspection and now it leaks?
- A** Due to climatic considerations, inspections of shingled roofs and built-up roof systems are limited to a final inspection after the installation is complete. The final inspection is a limited inspection, which can only verify code compliance of the finish materials and cannot guarantee against any potential for roof leaks. If your roof begins to leak, please call the Field Inspection Section at (561) 742-6350 and an inspector will be dispatched within 24 hours to investigate and inform the owner of his/her course of action.
- Q** Do I have to complete and pass the electrical, plumbing, and mechanical rough-ins before I call for a framing inspection?
- A** Yes. You must obtain your sub trade inspections. It is the building permit holder's responsibility not to cover any work before it is inspected.
- Q** Do I need a drywall inspection?
- A** Yes.
- Q** Do I need a dry-in inspection on my roof?
- A** Yes, unless you and your contractor have decided to use the Re-Roof Inspection Affidavit form.



## **Plumbing:**

- Q** When doing a sewer replacement, how do we inspect it when it is in operation?
- A** The best way is to complete the sewer and secure the area. Call for the inspection for the following day.
- Q** Do I need a separate pool main drain inspection even though I had a pool steel inspection?
- A** Yes. This is a separate inspection done by the plumbing inspector and needs to be requested on the pool plumbing permit.

## **Electrical:**

- Q** How do you get a Florida Power & Light release of electrical power?
- A** Electrical power authorization is not released to Florida Power & Light until all permits have been inspected and approved and all fees have been paid resulting in the issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy. However, provisions for early electrical release on commercial projects and temporary power for commercial projects can be made (see below).
- Q** I need to get the power released to Florida Power & Light in order to test my A/C equipment, elevators, etc., but my commercial job isn't completed. Can I still get the power turned on?
- A** Yes. The electrical contractor needs to request in writing the specific need for temporary power and follow the procedures outlined in the "Temporary Power Pole Procedures." For more information, call the Electrical Section at (561) 742-6666.

## **Records:**

- Q** When do I need a Certificate of Occupancy (C.O.) or Certificate of Competency (C.C.) and how do I get it?
- A** You need a C.O. or C.C. whenever a new structure or building is built (new building or addition) or an existing building has changed its occupancy classification (home to office building). You may obtain the C.O. or C.C. when the job is complete, all permits have been inspected and approved and all impact fees are paid. You may request your C.O. or C.C. from the Records Division by calling (561) 742-6350.
- Q** My commercial job won't be totally ready but the owner needs to move in. Can I get a temporary or conditional C.O. or C.C.?
- A** Yes. Each is approved on an individual basis. Please check with the Field Inspectors for information on your particular project.
- Q** My new home will not be finished on time. I have nowhere to place my furniture and belongings. May I move them into my nearly completed home?
- A** No. We would like to assist you; however, due to liability reasons, we cannot allow you to use the home until you receive a Certificate of Occupancy.