

# WHEN IS A PERMIT REQUIRED?

## CITY OF PLANO BUILDING INSPECTION DEPARTMENT

Permits are required when building, remodeling or enlarging a building. Permits are also required for other improvements to your property. Projects that are cosmetic, such as painting, wallpapering, carpeting, cabinets and trim work, etc., do not require permits. Additionally, permits are not required when replacing fixtures on existing wiring or plumbing.

The following is a list of projects for which a permit is **required**:

- Construction of a building:
  - Main building
  - Accessory building (including permanent and portable storage sheds, gazebos, carports, patio covers).
- Foundation repairs.
- Additions to a building.
- Remodeling of a building requiring the addition or replacement of walls or windows.
- Building or replacing a deck more than 30" above grade.
- Electrical work. (Repair work such as replacing switches, plugs and ballasts is exempt).
- Plumbing work.
- Water heaters (replacing or adding).
- Water softeners.
- Replacing water or sewer lines. (Repair work such as exchange of washers and faucets is exempt.)
- Irrigation systems (lawn sprinklers).
- Installing or replacing a furnace.
- Installing or replacing an air conditioning system.
- Building or replacing a fence. A permit is not required for alterations, additions or changes if repairs do not exceed 25% of the area of the fence over a 12-month period.
- Building or replacing a retaining wall over four feet in height measured from the bottom of the footing to the top of the wall.
- Replacing a roof.
- Installing or replacing a driveway approach (the portion of the drive connecting to the street).
- Installing a circular drive.
- Installing a satellite dish (more than 39 inches in diameter).
- Building a swimming pool, repairing or filling in a swimming pool.
- Building a spa (self contained portable plug-in type spas require electrical permit and shall comply with safety glazing requirements, Chapter 24 of 2003 IBC).
- Demolition of a building.
- Security bars.

This is not an all-inclusive list. Questions concerning your specific project should be forwarded to the Building Inspection Department.

### **NOTE:**

Please contact Homeowner's Association for additional requirements from Deed Restrictions and Covenants. (see reverse side)



# TIPS ON CONTRACTOR SELECTION

## CITY OF PLANO BUILDING INSPECTIONS DEPARTMENT

The Building Inspections Department frequently receives complaints from disgruntled citizens because of their displeasure with the performance of their contractors. Over the years we have heard a multitude of problems and sad stories and based on these we offer the following suggestions:

- ALWAYS get at least three bids on any project. The only exception to this should be for extremely minor, low-cost projects or emergency repairs made by trusted contractors.
- NEVER pay for a project in advance. If a contractor asks for total payment up front, you should immediately look for another contractor. Small retainer fees or payments for materials already on the job site may be appropriate.
- NEVER use a contractor who suggests that you not obtain required permits or inspections. More than likely, this contractor intends to do work contrary to established safety or structural standards. Additions or alterations to your home that are contrary to city ordinances can drastically affect any title transfers should you decide to sell your home. Be especially wary of contractors who suggest that you obtain permits for work that he is contracted to perform. If you obtain the permit for a contractor, and problems arise because of the work, the official permit record will show that you are the one that performed the work.
- ALWAYS use only licensed contractors. Insist on seeing evidence of a current license. The following trades require a license:
  - A. Electricians
  - B. Plumbers
  - C. Air Conditioning Contractors
  - D. Irrigation Contractors
- Within the City of Plano all other contractors doing any work requiring a permit must be registered with the city.
- ALWAYS ask for a list of previous jobs similar to your proposed project. Ask for references AND check them.
- It is a good idea to ask for the address of the contractor's place of business. Take time to drive by his place of business. This will give you a good idea of his business practices.
- It is a good idea to check with the Better Business Bureau or any business organizations that relate to the contractor's trade and check on any complaint records against the contractor.
- Before your project begins, insist on seeing evidence that the contractor has obtained a permit. During the course of your project monitor your contractor's inspection records. This procedure will protect you from being responsible for code violations that your contractor might commit on your property.
- When the project is complete, ensure that the City's Building Inspections Department has given final approval for the project.

NOTE: This list is not an exhaustive list. This list is merely suggestive and not legally binding on either party.

