

Seattle Permits

— part of a multi-departmental City of Seattle series on getting a permit

STFI Mechanical Permits for Commercial & Multifamily Residential

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If you have a simple commercial or multifamily residential Mechanical project, you can take advantage of SDCI's streamlined Subject-To-Field-Inspection (STFI) permit process. This Tip summarizes the scope of projects that qualify for the STFI permit process and the information required for permit applications.

Limitation of Scope

It is important to note that our STFI Mechanical permit process is limited in scope. STFI's are not available for projects that involve any work in shoreline and/or historical districts, or that require zoning or land use review that affects the exterior of the building (other than replacement of certain existing equipment as noted below).

You must apply for all mechanical projects requiring plan review using the Seattle Services Portal (<https://cosaccela.seattle.gov/Portal/>). For more information on mechanical and energy projects requiring plan review, see Tip 415, *Applicant Responsibilities and Plan Requirements for Mechanical Permits*.

How to Apply

You can apply for an STFI permit for qualifying mechanical work using the Seattle Services Portal. If you have questions and would like to speak to someone in person regarding submittal documents or the application process you may visit the ASC and speak to staff at the plans routing counter. The ASC is located on the 20th floor of Seattle Municipal Tower at 700 Fifth Ave. in downtown Seattle.

We require that all applications for STFI mechanical permits include plans depicting the area of work and any other pertinent information and all other required intake forms.

NOTE: If the SDCI inspector determines that the information provided is incomplete or inaccurate, we may revoke the issued STFI permit and require a complete plan review and approval for your project.

To apply for an STFI Mechanical permit you will need the following:

- Plan Set
- Contractor Disclosure Form

The disclosure form is available online at www.seattle.gov/sdci/permits/forms.

Use the Seattle Services Portal (<https://cosaccela.seattle.gov/Portal/>) to create a Mechanical record number, upload the required submittal documents, and submit your STFI Mechanical record for processing. The Seattle Services Portal Help Center article How to Apply for a Mechanical Permit (<https://seattle.gov.zendesk.com/hc/en-us/articles/360014851074-How-to-Apply-for-a-Mechanical-Permit>) provides step-by-step directions on this process if you need additional information.

STFI mechanical record applications are processed on a first-come, first-served basis. You do not need to make an appointment.

Fees

We base permit fees upon the valuation of the work to be performed as established in the current Fee Subtitle, available on our Fees page at www.seattle.gov/sdci/permits/how-much-will-your-permit-cost. A printed copy may be purchased at our Public Resource Center, 20th floor, Seattle Municipal Tower, 700 Fifth Ave., (206) 684-8467.

We assess your fees when your permit has been processed. Your fees must be paid before we can issue the permit. Once your fees have been paid your approved plans and permit will be available in your portal. You may pay your permit fees with a credit card through the Seattle Services Portal or with a check, cash, or by setting up an Trust Account with the SDCI Cashier on the 20th floor or the Seattle Municipal Tower.



Inspection Requirements

You should be aware that you must request and receive all required inspections. All STFI Mechanical permits require that plans, sketches, or relevant shop drawings depicting the area of work and any other pertinent information be made available to the inspector on-site. Include equipment size and efficiency, duct size and type, and Cubic Feet per Minute delivered at each duct termination. You must also have the completed application package available to the inspector on-site. To request a building inspection, call our 24-hour Inspection Request Line at (206) 684-8900. Same day inspections are provided for requests made by 7.00 a.m. If you have questions for your inspector call (206) 684-8950.

Work that **does not qualify** for an STFI Commercial/Multifamily residential permit includes:

- Work with a total value, per permit, that exceeds \$15,000
- Work on more than two adjacent floors. (Except Multifamily residential).
- Alterations related to a change of use as defined by the Land Use Code.
- Work in a hospital, clinic, or any lab (medical offices classified as Group B occupancies are okay).
- Work that involves adding new heating capacity to a commercial or multifamily building.
- Work that involves fire dampers or stair and elevator pressurization fans.
- Commercial kitchen hoods.
- Work that requires penetrations through tenant or occupancy separation walls.
- Work that requires penetrations to the exterior walls or roof (other than piping penetration) of any structure or affects the exterior walls or roof in any way.
- Adding electric resistance duct heater, or electric resistance strip heat to existing heat pump.
- Nail-station exhaust system.
- Heat Recovery Ventilation system.

Qualifying for an STFI Commercial Permit

Work that **qualifies** for an STFI Commercial permit must meet the following specifications:

- Ductwork is restricted to revisions and additions to existing duct systems, including registers, diffusers,

grille vents, and up to 2 VAV boxes (fan boxes/VAV boxes without new strip heat).

- Replacement of equipment in kind, e.g., same foot print, same fuel type, maximum total of 4 ton/48,000 BTU, weighing less than 400 pounds, within the building interior.

NOTE: You can replace exterior units in kind only if you use existing penetrations through the exterior walls or roof. Heat pump and electric resistance heat are considered different fuel types.

- New cooling-only units *located within the building interior and serving space which was permitted as heated space* and used only for computer, printing, refrigeration rooms, and elevator machine room for supplementary cooling and not for comfort cooling. Equipment is limited to 4 tons/48,000 BTU total and a maximum equipment weight of 400 pounds. Qualifying work is limited to installation of one unit only for each computer/equipment room per application. Seattle Energy Code section C503.2 requires you to bring the building envelope insulation into full compliance before changing the space conditioning.
- Replacement in kind of unit heaters.
- New bathroom exhaust duct connected to an existing, compatible environmental air exhaust system.
- Decorative appliances that meet the requirements of the Seattle Fuel Gas Code sections 602 and 603. The decorative appliance shall not be used as a primary heating device.

Qualifying for an STFI Multifamily Residential Permit

Work that qualifies for an STFI Multifamily Residential permit includes:

- Residential bathroom, kitchen, dryer, laundry room or closet exhaust fans (for type III, IV, or V structures with individual unit venting systems)
 - Each exhaust must terminate at the exterior wall of the structure
 - The project value may exceed \$15,000
- Decorative appliances that meet the requirements of the Seattle Fuel Gas Code sections 602 and 603
 - You shall not use the appliance as a primary heating device
 - You need a separate permit for each dwelling unit

- Heat pumps in townhouses or rowhouses (no limit on unit count) or in any other multifamily buildings with no more than four dwelling units
 - For townhouses, the entire system shall be within the footprint of each dwelling unit
 - You need a separate permit for each dwelling unit
- Furnaces in townhouses or rowhouses (no limit on unit count) or in any other multifamily buildings with no more than four dwelling units
 - For townhouses, the entire system shall be within the footprint of each dwelling unit
 - You need a separate permit for each dwelling unit
- Replacement of heating and cooling equipment in kind, e.g., same foot print, same fuel type, maximum total of 4 ton/48,000 BTU, weighing less than 400 pounds, within the building interior.

NOTE: You can replace exterior units in kind only if you use existing penetrations through the exterior walls or roof. You need a separate permit for each dwelling unit. Heat pump and electric resistance heat are considered different fuel types.

- New cooling-only units *located within the building interior and serving space which was permitted as heated space* and used only for elevator machine room for supplementary cooling and not for comfort cooling. Equipment is limited to 4 tons/48,000 BTU total and a maximum equipment weight of 400 pounds. Qualifying work is limited to installation of one unit only for each computer or equipment room per application. Seattle Energy Code section C503.2 requires you to bring the building envelope insulation into full compliance before changing the space conditioning.

Any work not meeting these requirements **does not qualify** for an STFI permit.

Reference

1. 2015 Seattle Energy Code
2. 2015 Seattle Fuel Gas Code

Access to Information

Links to electronic versions of SDCI **Tips**, **Director's Rules**, and **Forms** are available on the "Resources" pages of our website at www.seattle.gov/sdci. Paper copies of these documents are available from our Public Resource Center, located on the 20th floor of Seattle Municipal Tower at 700 Fifth Ave. in downtown Seattle, (206) 684-8467.