

Seattle Permits

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

Single Use Or Annual Vehicle? How to Determine Which Permit You Need.

November 15, 2011

Title 15 of the Seattle Municipal Code requires that anyone performing work in the City's Right-of-Way (ROW) obtain a permit prior to commencing work. Either a single use or an annual vehicle permit is required. The following guidelines have been developed to help determine which type of SDOT Street Use permit is required.

Single Use Permit: Single use permits are site and time specific permits that allow an individual or company to work within the City of Seattle's ROW. A single use permit is required if there will be any disturbance to improvements within the street ROW (e.g. trenching in the street or sidewalk) or a possibility of damage to the City's improvements (e.g. crossing a sidewalk with heavy equipment).

In addition, a single use permit is required if any of the following conditions apply:

- Arterial Streets
 1. A street closure is required.
 2. A traffic detour onto adjacent streets is required.
 3. The work will occur in whole or part during A.M. or P.M. peak hours.
 4. The work will impact vehicle or pedestrian access (parking lanes are excluded) and the work will take more than two hours to complete.
- Residential Streets:
 1. A street closure is required.
 2. The work will take place outside of the working hours for all noise levels as specified in the City of Seattle Noise Ordinance.

3. The work will take more than eight hours to complete.

The requirements for a single use permit vary depending on the type of work proposed. For specific requirements please visit the SDOT Street Use web page at http://www.seattle.gov/transportation/stuse_home.htm or contact the Street Use division at (206) 684-5253 for more information. In general, to obtain a single use permit you will need to submit the following:

1. A permit application.
2. A set of plans for the proposed work in the ROW showing existing City improvements and the proposed restoration of any improvements that may be damaged during construction. The plans should conform to the requirements in CAM 2201.
3. For work on arterial streets that meet the conditions for a single use permit, a traffic control plan must also be submitted and approved prior to permit issuance.

Annual Vehicle Permit: As of January 1, 2008, an annual vehicle permit will be required for all work performed within the City of Seattle ROW unless a single use permit has been issued for the work. The annual vehicle permit is intended for agencies, companies or individuals who will frequently be performing work at multiple locations and for short durations in the City of Seattle ROW. The annual vehicle permit will allow that holder to perform work within the City's ROW provided that none of the conditions listed above for a single use permit are met. When any work within the ROW meets any of the conditions for the single use permit, a single use permit must be approved by the SDOT Street Use Division prior to the start of work, even if the crews have an existing annual vehicle permit.

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When working in the ROW without a single use permit, an annual vehicle permit is required for every vehicle working in the ROW. However, the annual vehicle permit may be shared with multiple vehicles, provided that each vehicle working in the City of Seattle ROW at any given time has a vehicle permit displayed.

Whenever working in the ROW, your traffic control setup must conform to the City of Seattle, Manual for In Street Work. Street Use Inspectors may still monitor your work for conformance with the City's traffic control requirements and general safety for the public. If work is not in conformance with the Traffic Control Manual or causing a safety problem the inspector may require that you:

- Immediately conform to the requirements in the traffic control manual or adjust your traffic control plan to provide maximum safety.
- Stop work and obtain approval for the non-conforming traffic control setup, prior to continuing work.

Pedestrian access must be provided in accordance with Chapter VI of the City of Seattle Traffic Control Manual for In-Street Work.

No work under an annual vehicle permit shall occur near special events or within 3 lineal blocks of previously scheduled and permitted work in the public right of way. SDOT reserves the right to suspend any and all work authorized under the annual vehicle permit to provide for mobility or public safety.

The annual vehicle permit only applies to work that would normally be covered under a Street Use permit. A minimal amount of material storage will be allowed as long as it is an integral part of the work. For example a cable spool may be allowed in the ROW while pulling cable. All materials placed in the ROW must be removed within the time period allowed for working in the ROW under the annual vehicle permits. All other applicable City permits are still required. For example, meter hooding is still required when working in a restricted parking area.

To obtain an annual vehicle permit please submit the following documents:

1. A permit application. The application may be submitted at the SDOT Street Use counter or via the Street Use web permitting system at

http://www.seattle.gov/transportation/stuse_home.htm.

2. Proof of insurance. Please refer to Client Assistance Memo 2102 for insurance requirements.

Once the annual permit is approved you will receive a window decal which must be displayed on the lower passenger side of the windshield while working in the ROW.

Tree Service Trucks and Equipment: In addition to an annual or single use vehicle permit, all tree service providers must obtain a Street Tree permit prior to doing any tree maintenance or removal work on trees in the right-of-way. Refer to CAM 2303 for more information.

References:

1. Seattle Municipal Code (SMC) Title 15 – Street Use Ordinance
2. Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) Client Assistance Memo (CAM) 2201 – Plan Requirements for Construction in the Public Right of Way.
3. Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) Client Assistance Memo (CAM) 2102 – Certificate of Liability Insurance.
4. Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) Client Assistance Memo (CAM) 2303 – Tree Service Companies with an Annual Equipment Permit.