

# Seattle Permits

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

## Street Use Utility Permitting Requirements

Utility permits are issued for the installation of underground and overhead utility services in the public rights-of-way (ROW). These include power, communication, gas, steam, water, sewer, drainage, and privately owned facilities such as oil pipelines and side sewers.

SDOT Utility Permits fall into three categories depending on impacts to the City of Seattle infrastructure and public mobility: Annual Vehicle, Utility Over the Counter (OTC) and Utility Major permits. This Client Assistance Memo (CAM) is intended to define each permit type and describe how to apply for each type of permit.

Permit applications may be submitted in person by visiting the Street Use Counter located in the Seattle Municipal Tower (SMT), 23<sup>rd</sup> Floor. Applications for Annual Vehicle Permits and Utility OTC Permits may also be submitted using the online permitting system at:

[http://www.seattle.gov/transportation/stuse\\_permits\\_online.htm](http://www.seattle.gov/transportation/stuse_permits_online.htm)

Required submittals as outlined in this CAM must be submitted at the time of the permit application in person at the Street Use Counter, via email to [SDOTPermits@seattle.gov](mailto:SDOTPermits@seattle.gov), or by fax to (206) 470-6988.

These are general guidelines; additional site specific information may be required depending on the exact location of work and the type of work proposed.

Work within the public right of way shall not commence without a valid Street Use Permit. Unpermitted work within the public right of way may be subject to enforcement actions resulting in fines up to \$1,000 per day in which the violation(s) occur. A copy of the issued Street Use Permit and all permit related documents (i.e. approved traffic control plan(s),

approved utility plans, approved restoration plans, etc.) must be kept at the permitted work locations available for inspection by the SDOT Street Use Inspector.

### I. ANNUAL VEHICLE PERMITS

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. Work under the annual vehicle permit must not involve 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). Refer to CAM 2108 for more information regarding the Annual Vehicle permit.

### II. UTILITY OTC PERMIT

Utility OTC permits may be obtained when the work involves installation, repair or extensive maintenance on a utility that impacts infrastructure and does not exceed the minimum requirements for a Utility Major permit. Please refer to Section III to determine if the proposed work requires a Utility Major permit.

The following documents must be submitted when applying for a Utility OTC permit:

- Completed Permit Application Plan – Refer to Section IV
- Traffic Control Plan – A traffic control plan is required for work on arterial streets and streets within a designated High Impact Area

Unless otherwise noted at the times of intake, complete permit application submittals are typically processed within 15 business days.

### III. UTILITY MAJOR PERMIT

All Major Utility permit applications must be submitted in person by visiting the Street Use Permit Counter located on the 23<sup>rd</sup> floor of the SMT Building.

[www.seattle.gov/transportation](http://www.seattle.gov/transportation)



A Utility Major Permit is required when the proposed work meets one or more of the following criteria:

- Work that results in 100 or more **contiguous** lineal feet of ground disturbing activity
- Work that results in 300 or more **cumulative** lineal feet of spot ground disturbing activity
- Work that results in ground disturbing activity within a marked or unmarked crosswalk or within an intersection
- Construction that includes new curb or sidewalk and/or modifications to an existing curb
- Alterations of existing grades
- Projects where the scope and/or location trigger a SEPA review
- Installations involving directional drilling; regardless of length
- Utility work that requires review(s) from agency(s) other than SDOT, such as Seattle Public Utilities, Seattle City Light, King County, etc.

The following submittals are required to obtain a Utility Major permit:

- Completed Utility Major Transmittal Form
- Completed Utility Permit Application
- Completed Utility and Pavement Restoration Plan Checklist
- Site Photos
- Plans (3 copies) – Refer to Section IV B
- Profile (if required, 3 copies) – Refer to Section IV B
- Restoration Plan (3 copies) – Refer to Section V
- Traffic Control Plan (2 copies) – A traffic control plan is required for work on arterial streets and streets within a designated High Impact Area.

The following submittals may also be required if the utility is being installed to service new development, new infrastructure will be constructed that is beyond the requirements of the PORR, the work includes green infrastructure, or the permittee is a private owner or contractor installing a public utility.

- Review Deposit
- Liability Insurance naming the City of Seattle as additional insured
- Surety Bond
- Inspection Deposit
- Documentation of design approved by Seattle Public Utilities

Unless otherwise noted at the time of intake, complete Utility Major Permit application submittals are typically reviewed within 6 weeks.

**IV. PLAN REQUIREMENTS**

Plans are required on all utility permit applications showing details of the work being proposed in the public ROW. The level of detail needed for each type of utility permit varies. Please see the requirements for each type of utility permit below.

**A. UTILITY OTC PERMIT PLAN REQUIREMENTS:**

Plans for Utility OTC Permits must include the following information:

- Permit number on the upper right hand corner
- North arrow shown pointed up or to the left of the plan
- Proposed improvements are shown
- Existing conditions are shown
- Existing utilities are shown in the vicinity of the proposed work
- Dimensions of existing and proposed improvements are shown
- Street names on all abutting and surrounding streets are shown.
- Property line(s) and addresses in the vicinity of the work are shown.

**B. UTILITY MAJOR PERMIT PLAN REQUIREMENTS**

Plan requirements for Utility Major Permits can be found in the Utility and Pavement Restoration Plan Checklist attached to this CAM.

**V. RESTORATION PLAN REQUIREMENTS**

Restoration plans are required for utility permits if the ground disturbing utility work is 100 or more contiguous lineal feet; 300 or more cumulative lineal feet; or within a marked or unmarked crosswalk within an intersection. If the ground disturbing utility work is 300 or more contiguous lineal feet, the restoration plans must be stamped by a Licensed Professional Engineer within the State of Washington.

Restoration plans must comply with the requirements set forth in the Street and Sidewalk Pavement Opening and Restoration Rule (Director’s Rule 5 -2009), the Right of Way Improvements Manual and the Utility and Pavement Restoration Plan Checklist attached to this CAM. Incomplete submittal requirements will delay the processing of your permit application.

**VI. ANNUAL PERMIT (NON-CONSTRUCTION)**

An annual permit may be required in addition to the utility permit if the utility being installed will not be owned by a public or franchise utility company or if the utility crosses a right-of-way and connects between private properties.

## **VII. EMERGENCY WORK IN THE PUBLIC RIGHT OF WAY**

When a street opening is necessary for health or safety reasons that could not be anticipated, a permit is still required for which application shall be made on the same day or the next business day after the opening is started.

When emergency work occurs in the public right of way:

1. Respond to the emergency.
2. Notify SDOT.
  - a. During work hours:  
Street Use Division at (206) 684-5283
  - b. During non-work hours:  
Charles Street Shop at (206) 386-1218
3. Submit a permit application to Street Use on the same day or by the end of the next business day after the opening is started.

Once the initial emergency work has been completed, contact the Street Use Inspector to determine which, if any, follow up actions need to take place:

- If the work is complete, no other information is required.
- If the work is still underway,
  - And the work is expected to take more than five (5) days to complete, a traffic control plan and other documents as required by the Inspector must be submitted to Street Use.
  - Work may continue if the traffic control setup is safe and the work can be completed in a safe and timely manner.

## **VI. REFERENCES**

1. Utility Permit Application  
[http://www.seattle.gov/transportation/stuse\\_permits\\_online.htm](http://www.seattle.gov/transportation/stuse_permits_online.htm)
2. City of Seattle Traffic Control Manual for In Street Work  
<http://www.seattle.gov/transportation/trafficcontrolmanual.htm>
3. Seattle Department of Transportation Client Assistance Memos  
[http://www.seattle.gov/transportation/stuse\\_docs.htm](http://www.seattle.gov/transportation/stuse_docs.htm)
4. Street and Sidewalk Pavement Opening and Restoration Rule (PORR)  
[http://www.seattle.gov/transportation/stuse\\_pavementopen.htm](http://www.seattle.gov/transportation/stuse_pavementopen.htm)