

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

Getting an OTC (Over-the-Counter) Permit

Updated November 8, 2010

Each year about 17,000 applications for permits that generally do not require plan review are taken in at DPD's Over-the-Counter (OTC) permit desk. This Client Assistance Memo (CAM) gives a general summary of the types of permits handled by the OTC team and the streamlined services they provide.

Types Of Permits Eligible

The vast majority of OTC permit applications are issued while the applicant waits, with no plan review required. These include:

- Electrical
- Fire alarms (see exception below)
- Boiler
- Pressure vessel
- Refrigeration
- Single Family/Duplex Mechanical*
- Side Sewer/Drainage/Sewer Capping

Permit types that do require plan review include sign permits, elevator permits, certain electrical permits, and permits for fire alarms with seven or more devices installed.

* For mechanical permits other than single family/duplex, please see CAMs 414, *STFI Mechanical Permits for Commercial and Multifamily Residential*, and 415, *Applicant Responsibilities and Plan Requirements for Mechanical Permits*.

Fees

Permit fees are established by the **Seattle Permit Fee Subtitle** available from the PRC, (206) 684-8467, or on DPD's fees page at www.seattle.gov/dpd/about.

Streamlined Service Features

All OTC permits are taken in by permit technicians in the DPD Applicant Services Center (ASC), located on the 20th floor of Seattle Municipal Tower at 700 Fifth Ave. The application process has been streamlined so that:

- no appointment is necessary;
- up to two permits can be taken in at a time; more permit applications are taken in at one time if no one else is waiting at this counter;
- application forms can be obtained online;
- applications for electrical permits and side sewer repair requiring no plans are accepted online (www.seattle.gov/dpd/permits);
- applications may be mailed in or faxed (when no plans are required);
- walk-ins are given priority and waiting time is usually less than 20 minutes;
- fees may be paid by cash, check, or Visa/Mastercard; and
- through a process called Advance Deposit Account.

Plumbing permits are approved by Seattle/King County Health Department staff at 401 5th Ave., Suite 1100.

General OTC Permitting Requirements

ELECTRICAL

In general a permit and inspection are required any time electrical wiring is installed, altered, extended, or connected to any electrical equipment. A permit is not required for replacing snap switches, fuses, lamp sockets, and receptacle outlets, nor electric ranges, cook tops or wall heaters, including baseboard heaters, as long as the circuit wasn't altered or changed, and met the code at the time of installation. A permit is also not required for some residential and minimally sized communications systems. Special events, such as street fairs that have temporary power installations, require an electrical permit.

The applicant must supply the following information:

www.seattle.gov/dpd

700 5th Avenue, Suite 2000
P.O. Box 34019
Seattle, WA 98124-4019
(206) 684-8600



- Work site address
- Applicant information
- Installer information
- Brief job description
- Itemized list of what is to be installed, for example, number of connections: receptacles, lights, switches, bath fans, washers, dryers, ranges and services

Fees: All OTC electrical permits have a base fee; additional fees are charged based on what is being installed and at what voltage and amperage. Rates for temporary power inspections vary depending on whether inspections are scheduled during or outside of normal working hours.

If your electrical work involves installation of a new service panel or meter, or involves relocation of your electrical meter, you need to contact Seattle City Light. If the site is **north** of Denny Way, call (206) 615-0600. If the site is **south** of Denny Way, call (206) 386-4200.

Electrical Plan Review

For small electrical projects, plans are usually not required. However, plan review **is** required for:

- Any proposed installation over 2,500 square feet
- All switches, fuses, circuit breakers and equipment rated at 400 amps or higher
- All electrical equipment operating at over 600 volts
- Services, feeders and power supplies for emergency, legally required, or fire pump systems
- Electrical work in hospitals, schools and institutions
- Unique or particularly complex projects or an installation that can't be adequately described on an Over The Counter (OTC) or online permit form

When plans are required, two sets of drawings (minimum size 11" x 17") and one set of specifications must be submitted as part of the permit application. The following information must be provided on the plans and specifications:

- Complete riser and one-line diagram including services and feeders showing wire sizes and conduit sizes
- Floor plans showing basic circuitry
- Switchboard and panel schedules
- Load calculations and load summaries showing demand factors
- Fault current calculation (provide this information on the application if the available fault current is known at that time; the calculation must be provided prior to the service inspection)

- Voltage—120/240 single phase; 120/240 three phase; 120/208 three phase; 277/480 three phase
- Key to symbols on the plans
- Fixture schedule
- Lighting summary schedule for compliance with the Seattle Energy Code
- Any other information that is significant or relevant for the plans examiner review of the drawings

Fees: Plan review fees are based on electrical construction value and include labor and materials whether or not furnished by installer and fixtures, furnishings and equipment provided by the owner.

FIRE ALARMS

Plans and specifications must be reviewed and approved prior to installation. The Fire Department will review the plans when seven or more devices are installed and the system is required to be installed. Three sets of drawings and specifications must be submitted as part of the permit applications; they must be on at least 11" x 17" paper. The applicant must supply the following information:

- Floor plan
- Riser diagram
- Location of all alarm-initiating and alarm-indicating devices
- Alarm control and trouble-signaling equipment
- Annunciation
- Power connection
- Battery calculations
- Voltage drop calculations
- Wiring types and sizes

For more information on fire alarms, call the Seattle Fire Department at (206) 386-1450 or (206) 386-1443.

Fees: There is a basic fee for fire alarms. Each fire alarm controller and each device (such as horn, strobe, speaker, etc.) costs an additional small fee. Additional Fire Department fees apply.

BOILER

All boilers installed in the City of Seattle require a permit and an inspection.

The applicant must supply the following information:

- Work site address
- Applicant information
- Owner/tenant of the work site
- Installer information

- Boiler information: manufacturer's name, boiler type—electric, steam, hot water, gas, oil, propane
- Identification number
- Heating surface in square feet

NOTE: All components external to the building must comply with the Seattle Noise Ordinance (SMC 25.08, Sections 25.08.410 and 25.08.420). For more information, visit DPD's Noise Abatement Program website at www.seattle.gov/dpd/noise.

Fees: Please refer to the Fee Ordinance or contact DPD staff.

PRESSURE VESSEL (UNFIRED)

A pressure vessel is a closed container having a nominal internal diameter exceeding six inches and a volume exceeding 1-1/2 cubic feet. Air compressors, expansion tanks, and air tanks are examples of pressure vessels.

The applicant must supply the following information:

- Work site address
- Applicant information
- Description of installation
- Installer information
- Pressure vessel information:
 - Type
 - Manufacturer's name
 - Identification number on the pressure vessel
 - Size: Diameter or maximum width in inches and length in inches
- Identification number

Fees: Please refer to the Fee Ordinance or contact DPD staff.

REFRIGERATION

A refrigeration permit is required whenever remote refrigerant lines are installed. In order to obtain a refrigeration permit, the installing refrigeration contractor must have a valid refrigeration contractor's license with the City of Seattle.

The applicant must supply the following information:

- Work site address
- Applicant information
- Description of installation
- Work site owner/tenant information
- Installer information including the City of Seattle refrigeration/contractor license number
- Hp rating of each compressor and number of units

NOTE: All components external to the building must comply with the Seattle Noise Ordinance (SMC 25.08, Sections 25.08.410 and 25.08.420). For more information, visit DPD's Noise Abatement Program website at www.seattle.gov/dpd/noise.

Fees: There is a base fee for refrigeration, plus an additional amount for each compressor.

SINGLE FAMILY/DUPLEX MECHANICAL

All new installs or relocation of a heating appliance require a permit. A heat loss calculation or equipment sizing form may be required. An appliance with an output less than 40,000 BTUs or with an efficiency rating of 90% or greater does not require a heat loss calculation.

Applicant must supply the following information:

- Work site address
- Applicant information
- Installer information
- Brief job to description
- Appliance Type
 - Efficiency Rating
 - Fuel Type
 - Manufacturer
 - Model #
 - Output in BTU or KW

The Heating Equipment Sizing form may be found on the DPD website at www.seattle.gov/dpd/publications/Forms.

NOTE: All components external to the building must comply with the Seattle Noise Ordinance (SMC 25.08, Sections 25.08.410 and 25.08.420). For more information, visit DPD's Noise Abatement Program website at www.seattle.gov/dpd/noise.

Fees: Please refer to the Fee Ordinance or contact DPD staff.

SIDE SEWER/DRAINAGE/SEWER CAPPING

Information and applications may be obtained at the Side Sewer/Drainage Review counter in the ASC or by calling (206) 684-5362.

Please refer to the following CAMs:

- 503, *Side Sewer Permits in Seattle*
- 504, *Side Sewer As-Built Plan Requirements*
- 506, *Side Sewer Permits for Temporary Dewatering on Construction Sites*

Fees: Please refer to the Fee Ordinance or contact DPD staff.

SIGN/AWNING PERMITS

A sign permit is required when a sign is erected, re-erected, constructed, painted, posted, applied, altered, structurally revised or repaired if it is visible or intended to be visible from the public right-of-way except when exempted by the Seattle Building Code. An awning permit is required when an awning is erected, constructed, altered or is structurally revised including the recovering of an existing awning with new fabric.

Electrical signs must be installed by a licensed and bonded electrical contractor, unless installed by the business owner.

Plans are required for all sign/awning permit applications. Drawings must be on 11" x 17" or larger paper. The applicant must supply the following information:

- Applicant information
- Work site address
- Three sets of drawings
- Description of work to be performed
- Square footage of sign or graphics/value of awning work
- Business name, contact name and telephone number
- Installer information, including state license number
- Street use permit number, if applicable
- Department of Neighborhoods approval number, if applicable
- DPD map page

Fees: There is a basic fee for signs for the first 100 square feet, plus an additional amount per square foot over that size. Awning fees are based on the development fee index.

ELEVATOR PERMITS

Elevator permits are required for installation of all elevators, escalators, moving walks, dumbwaiters, handicap lifts, and material lifts in public and private buildings and private residences.

Plan review (two sets of plans) is required for all elevator permits. The applicant must supply the following information:

- Work site address
- Name of building
- Applicant (permit holder) information
- Owner/tenant information

- Description of work

Fees: Elevator fees are complex. Please refer to the Fee Ordinance or contact DPD staff at (206) 684-8860.

Application Forms

Application forms are available on the DPD website at www.seattle.gov/dpd/publications/forms or contact the Public Resource Center (see details below).

Questions?

If you have any questions about OTC permits—other than sign, awning and billboard permits, which should be directed to the sign inspector in the ASC, (206) 684-8419—contact the OTC Permit Desk staff as follows:

OTC Permits

DPD Applicant Services Center
20th floor of Seattle Municipal Tower
700 Fifth Ave. (downtown Seattle)

Phone: (206) 684-8464

Fax: (206) 684-8113

Mailing Address:

DPD, OTC Permits
700 Fifth Ave., Suite 2000
P.O. Box 34019
Seattle, WA 98124-4019

(NOTE: If for OTC, please state on envelope.)

Access to Information

Links to electronic versions of DPD **Client Assistance Memos (CAMs), Director's Rules,** and **Forms** are available on the "Publications" and "Codes" pages of our website at www.seattle.gov/dpd. 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.