



## CITY OF CORNING CODE ENFORCEMENT - FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### **BUILDING PERMIT FAQ'S**

- The Main purpose of the Code Enforcement Office is to enforce the New York State Uniform Fire Prevention and Building Code. This is mandated by the State. This means enforcing rules and regulations with regards to the construction and alteration of buildings and structures within the City of Corning.
- This task takes up the majority of the work that the staff do day to day.
- The process begins with meetings of staff with to discuss your proposed projects. Then the applicant submits detailed plans with an application for a building permit. Those plans, especially the commercial projects, undergo an extensive plan review by staff, this process can take 2 weeks or more depending on the complexity of the project. This plan review takes so long because staff needs to verify that the design and construction of the building will be in compliance with the New York State Code. Staff also review the plans with the designer and discuss any changes that need to be made in the design.
- Once the plans are approved an Invoice is issued for the building permit fee. Once the fee is paid, a building permit can be issued. It is discussed with the applicant and the contractors what inspections need to take place prior, during and after construction.
- Building permit inspections are the main tasks that staff do day to day.

### **When is a building permit required?**

The City of Corning is responsible for enforcement of the City of Corning Code and the New York State Uniform Fire Prevention and Building Code. The Code requires a building permit for all work which must conform to the Uniform Code. If you are unsure if your project requires a building permit, contact the Code Enforcement Office at 607-962-0340 extension 4, or by email:

Steven McDaniel - <a href="mailto:codes@cityofcorningny.gov">codes@cityofcorningny.gov</a>	Jeremy Clarkson - <a href="mailto:codes2@cityofcorningny.gov">codes2@cityofcorningny.gov</a>	David Hensley - <a href="mailto:codes3@cityofcorningny.gov">codes3@cityofcorningny.gov</a>
---	---	---

### **How do I get a building permit?**

Applications can be submitted online. The following is a description of the steps required to obtain a permit:

1. Click the Online Applications link on the Code Enforcement page and Create an account and login.
  - a. Fill out a Permit Application.
  - b. Upload your project plans, a copy of the contract and any other applicable documents
2. Staff will review your submission.
  - a. If there is additional information needed or corrections need to be made, staff will contact you or your design professional to make the corrections.
  - b. If no additional information is needed, an invoice for the permit fee will be sent to the applicant.
3. Once the fee is paid, the Building Permit will be issued.

**Information to be submitted for approval** - Neat, clean, complete plans are essential. Plan should be to scale.

Typical plans that you will need: (This list is not all-inclusive of the drawings that may be required)

<p><b>1. Site Plan</b> Property lines, Setbacks proposed and required - Location of all buildings, structures driveways, etc. with dimensions - Location of electric, gas, water meters - Location of utilities above ground and underground - Location of curb cuts, driveways and sidewalks - The proposed finish grade at all corners of the building. - Finished elevation must provide a 6" fall in the first 10' - Other site information required by the City of Corning Zoning</p> <p><b>2. Foundation Plan</b> - Type of foundation concrete, block, wood, etc. - Section View of foundation - Reinforcement used, horizontal, vertical, type, spacing etc. - Waterproofing of foundation - Grade at foundation - Foundation Drainage systems - Anchor bolts: sill or floor system shall be anchored to the foundation</p> <p><b>3. Floor Plan(s)</b> - Floor plans of each story - Existing and proposed floor plans with dimensions and room labels - All door and window openings, egress windows, door swings, type and sizes. - All beam and header sizes, and location on plans - Fire Separations - Smoke Detectors. - Insulation, wall, ceiling, floor - Wall sections with details, framing, drywall etc. - Attic access location and size - Room names and dimensions</p>	<p><b>4. Electrical, Plumbing and Mechanical Drawings</b> - Devices, ducts, lines, sizes, locations, cleanouts - BTU ratings, efficiencies, - Panel schedules, etc. - Duct and pipe insulation</p> <p><b>5. Fire Protection - Sprinkler, Fire Alarm etc.</b> - Layouts and shop drawings</p> <p><b>6. Elevations</b> - Building Sections - Each exterior wall of the building - Elevations of interior spaces (kitchen, Bath, etc.)</p> <p><b>7. Stair Section Detail</b> - Riser and tread dimensions - Total rise and run dimensions - Ceiling height clearances - Handrails and guardrails</p> <p><b>8. Framing Plan</b> - Size, spacing, species and span of all structural members - Wall, floor and roof framing - All locations and sizes of supporting beams, walls, columns and headers - Wood species and grade of lumber - Connections and bolting details - Sheathing sizes, fasteners and spacing</p> <p><b>9. Roof and Floor truss drawings.</b></p> <p><b>10. Energy Code Compliance</b></p> <p><b>11. Signed contract between owner and contractor</b></p> <p><b>12. Statement of Special Inspections</b></p> <p><b>13. Flood Hazard information - areas, floodways, elevations, etc.</b></p>
--	---

### Why get a permit?

It's the law! A permit brings you the service of Plans Reviewers and Inspectors who are experts in their field. In addition to giving advice, they approve each phase of your project, checking to see that the work is done in accordance with the code and the approved plans.

Working without a permit is illegal and can result in fines and cause problems if and when you sell your house.

### What are the penalties?

Unless otherwise stated herein, the penalty for failure to comply with a lawful order of the Code Enforcement Officer shall be not less than \$500 and not more than \$1,000 per offense per day.

The penalty for failure to obtain a building permit prior to commencement of any work shall be deemed a violation and any person or entity and/or agents thereof found guilty of this violation shall be subject to a fine as described below:

- (1) First offense within a twelve-month period: a fine of not less than \$200.
- (2) Second offense within a twelve-month period: a fine of not less than \$750.
- (3) Third offense within a twelve-month period: a fine of not less than \$1,000.
- (4) Fourth and subsequent offenses within a twelve-month period: a fine of not less than 2,000 per offense.

### How long does it take to get a permit?

Permits applications and plans are processed between 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. as time allows Monday through Friday. Depending on the size and scope of the project a permit could be issued immediately. For larger, or more complex projects it can take several weeks for the initial plan review to take place.

### How will I know when I need inspections?

Inspections depend on what is involved in the project.

Simply stated, an inspection is required prior to covering up any part of the construction.

Typical inspections include but are not limited to;

1.Site / Setbacks / Survey	14.Plumbing Rough Inspection & Tests	19.Fire Protection System Inspection
2.Demo – Initial, Foundation, Utilities	15.Air Sealing Inspection	20.Solid Fuel Burning Appliance
3.UFPO – Underground utilities	16.Duct Sealing / Insulation Inspection	21.Fence & Pool Inspections
4.Underground MEP Inspection	17.Fenestration Inspection	22.Fence Gate and Meter Locations
5.Footings and Foundations before pouring	18.Insulation Inspection	23.Pool Bonding and Fencing
6.Slabs before pouring	19.Plumbing Pipe Insulation Inspection	24.Electrical Final Inspection
7.Foundation reinforcement	16.Wall / Ceiling Covering before taping	25.Blower Door Testing Inspection
8.Deck Ledger connection, Post holes	17.Fire Separation Inspection	26.Commissioning Report Inspection
9.Special Inspections	14.Roof, Siding, Window installations	27.Mechanical Final Inspection
10.Framing Inspection	15.Roof Sheathing/Decking Inspection	28.Plumbing Final Inspection
11.Above Ceiling Inspection	16.Ice and Water Inspection	29.Exit / Emergency Lighting Inspection
12.Electrical Rough Inspection	17.Roof Covering Inspection	30.Final Inspection - after all work is finished before the building is occupied
13.Mechanical Rough Inspection	18.Elevator Inspection	

### How and when are inspections performed?

Inspections are performed from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. Your plans and permit must be at the construction site and properly posted and visible from the street. The job to be inspected must be accessible. The hours to call for an inspection are from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday. To request an inspection, please call: (607) 962-0340, extension 4.

### Do I need insurance for anyone helping me with the construction?

It is the owner's responsibility to obtain insurance for all contractors on the job. Check with your insurance agent. Your homeowner's policy may provide coverage, or you may need a rider to your policy to cover your liability. Contractors are required by State Law to carry Workers' Compensation Insurance if they have one or more employees or are acting as a general contractor.

### For how long is a building permit valid?

A building permit is valid provided that work has started within 6 months of its issuance and is valid for 12 months.

### Can I draw my own plans?

Plans and specifications shall bear the signature of the person responsible for the design and drawings, and where required by §7202, §7209 and §7302, as amended, of Articles 145 or 147 of the Education Law of the State of New York, the seal of a licensed architect or a licensed professional engineer. The Code Enforcement Officer and other enforcement officials may waive the requirements for filing plans and specifications for minor construction.

## **Get to know your Contractor**

Are there any early warning signs that I may be dealing with an unscrupulous contractor?

Yes. Early warning signs could include:

- A large down payment is requested before work begins.
- Many requests for money during early phases of construction.
- A verbal contract only, as person is not willing to put all terms in writing.
- You are asked to make your check payable to an individual's name or asked to make payment in cash or to make the check payable to "cash."
- The contractor suggests doing the work without permits or asks you, as the homeowner, to obtain the permit.

## **What should I do before making a final payment to the contractor?**

The contractor should provide you proof that all final inspections have been approved by the Code Enforcement Office or provide a Certificate of Completion or Certificate of Occupancy issued by the Code Enforcement Office. If you want to verify that all inspection approvals have been obtained, you may call the Permit Records Section at 962-0340 Ext: 4

Additionally, you should request final release of liens from any individuals or firms who have provided labor, material or supplies, especially those who have sent you a "Notice to Owner" letter.

---

## **FIRE INSPECTION AND MULTIPLE DWELLING INSPECTION FAQ'S**

### **Fire Safety Inspections**

- The Code Enforcement Office is responsible for the administration and enforcement of fire safety inspections of public assembly and all other commercial buildings and facilities throughout the city, including daycare and elder-care centers, foster homes, restaurants, hospitals, hotels and motels, and other buildings upon request or complaint.
- The inspections that are conducted can be broadly grouped into two categories: Annual and Tri-Annual.
- Assembly occupancies are inspected on an annual basis, all other occupancies are inspected on a Tri-Annual basis. The inspections are conducted by Fire Department staff and reports are returned to the Code Enforcement office.
- Fire Department staff will contact you to set up the initial inspection of the property. If violations are found you will be provided with a list of items to correct. The Fire Department staff will set up a time for reinspection.
- Failure to correct items on the list will result in enforcement actions that could include fines or the posting of the building to not be occupied.
- Once inspections are completed, the paperwork is turned back to the Code Enforcement Office and a bill is generated for the inspection. The fees for inspections are based on the size of the building starting at \$200 for structures up to 25,000 square feet. Once the fees are paid an Operating Permit is issued.

### **Multiple Dwelling Inspections**

- There are two parts to consider regarding Multiple Dwellings.
- The first is that the common areas are required to be inspected once every three years. This is a New York State requirement. The Code Enforcement Office is also responsible for the administration and enforcement of fire safety inspections of Multiple Dwellings throughout the city. The inspections are conducted by Code Enforcement staff who will contact owners of Multiple Dwellings to set up the inspection.
- The second is that every multiple dwelling is required to register with the City annually and pay the registration fee. The fee for registration is \$15 per dwelling unit. Letters are sent to the owners of record of each multiple dwelling in August indicating the amount due for the registration.

### **Common Questions**

- **I just received a bill for an inspection. Why am I getting called for another inspection?**  
In most cases you are receiving a bill from the previous years inspection and are being contacted for the current years inspection. Inspection lists are generated at the beginning of the calendar year and Fire Department staff set up and conduct inspections throughout the year. If your last inspection was completed in the later part of the previous year, you may receive a bill and in a very short period of time be contacted for another inspection.
- **I received a Multiple Dwelling bill stating that I have more units than my building has?**  
The letters generated from the Code Enforcement Office are based on the records of the property. If you have converted the building without a building permit from a 4 unit to a 3 unit, the records will still indicate that you property is a 4 unit building. It is important to obtain a building permit for any conversion or alteration of the building.
- **I sold my property on a land contract, Why are you sending me the letter?**  
The City records will still list you as the owner of record even when you sell your property on a land contract and you are still responsible for the inspections.

- **I recently sold my property, why am I receiving this letter?**

It currently takes approximately 4 or 5 weeks for the City to receive information from the County regarding the sale and new ownership information. Until this information is received you will still be listed as the owner of record.

- **The Building is vacant? Or All the Utilities have been disconnected?**

Just because the building is not occupied or does not have the utilities connected does not automatically mean that the use has changed. Therefore, you are still required to be inspected based on the current classification of use.

It is important to note that the discontinuance of use of a property may require the new use to comply with the current laws. For example;

- If you own a Multiple Dwelling in a Residential Zone that has sat vacant for a period of one year, the property can no longer be used as a Multiple Dwelling because the Zone prohibits Multiple Dwellings. This means that the property would have to be converted to a single family or two family dwelling through the issuance of a valid building permit.

---

## **PROPERTY MAINTENANCE INSPECTION FAQ'S**

First implemented in the City of Corning in 1999, the Property Maintenance Code is an ongoing process designed to bring all 4,500 properties in the City into Code compliance. Properties are inspected from the public right of way, as weather and time permit.

For most people, a home is the largest single investment they will ever make. One of the most important functions of the Code Enforcement Division is to protect this investment. By enforcing building standards and zoning codes, property values are protected, neighborhood appearances are maintained, and the safety of our citizens is assured.

### **Common Property Maintenance Issues**

The most common Code violations are high grass, garbage accumulations, peeling paint, deteriorating roofs and outbuildings (especially garages) which are in poor condition. These are, of course, not the only problems which may be cited under the Code.

### **The Process**

If Code violations are found, a violation letter is issued to the property owner notifying them of the noncompliance and outlining the violations and giving a date when the violations are to be corrected by.

Should you receive such a letter and are unable to comply before the inspection date noted, you are encouraged to contact the Code Enforcement Office as soon as possible to discuss your situation. Failure to comply could result in fines and/or liens, but such actions are viewed by the City as a last resort to mitigate problems.

The Code Enforcement Office is much more interested in compliance than prosecution and often work with owners on extensions when circumstances allow.