

# Building Department Policies and Procedures

Updated April 14, 2015

## Our Directive

The primary function of The City of Thomasville Building Department is to ensure the public health, safety and welfare of all building occupants and protect citizens' investments in homes and businesses through enforcement of adopted codes and standards. Ideally, these standards and codes work behind the scenes without impinging on day to day activities. It is our goal that compliance with these standards is as seamless as possible within the building process. We have created a series of tutorials and handouts that can answer many questions that arise about what is required during the process.

## Departments Involved

There are several City of Thomasville Departments involved in the plan review/inspection process. These may include the local Fire Marshall with the City of Thomasville Fire Department, The City of Thomasville Engineering Department, The City of Thomasville Water and Electric Departments, The City of Thomasville Sewer Department, City Boards of Review, et al. For your convenience, all applications for permits of any type along with any and all documents pertaining to construction activities to be reviewed for permit applications, fees or inspections should be delivered to The City of Thomasville Building Department (229-227-6983) at 413 West Jackson Street, Thomasville Georgia 31792. The Building department will distribute all pertinent information to the correct outlet or arrange contact with the correct individual for questions.

## Getting Started

We are often asked, "Do I need a Permit?" The short answer is that most construction activities require a permit. Some site activities also require permitting. Obtaining permits allows legal permission to start construction activities and allows for the enforcement of codes and standards which have been adopted as law by the City of Thomasville and the State of Georgia. Most questions about the permitting process may be answered within this text, but we also encourage you to contact The Building Department with questions you may have. We want you to fully understand the process before you begin a project.

Our second most frequently asked question is, "Do I need a Contractor?" Most work that is wide in scope, that pertains to structure or that is commercial in nature will require a State Licensed Contractor. There are few occasions that do not require a contractor to perform the scope of work permitted. Small repairs that are not structural in nature can be performed by individuals with a License issued by the City of Thomasville Handyman's License. Homeowners are allowed to perform work on their primary residence or future primary residence. There are limits to how often this work can occur. Homeowners are still required to follow all applicable codes and standards and must directly supervise all work.

## **What Type of Permit is Required?**

The first step is to determine if the permit needed is residential or commercial in nature. In short, residential construction is limited to one or two family dwellings 3 stories or less and all other work is considered commercial. Beyond this designation, there are multiple categories covered with explanations in Permit Types. For convenience, all applications are available from this web site by clicking the Permit Types link, or you can pick them up at The Building Department office.

Any Georgia State licensed trade activity, such as HVAC, Plumbing, Electrical, Gas piping require separate permits whether or not a Building permit has been issued. No individual or entity without a State of Georgia License is allowed to perform these activities.

With any commercial building, a change of tenant or change of occupancy class will require a commercial walk through with an official from the Building Department and the City of Thomasville Fire Marshall. Permits for changes may be required.

Some site activities such as tree cutting, clearing, concrete or paving, fencing, signage, etc. will require a permit application to ensure activities do not conflict with City of Thomasville Municipal Codes or Zoning Ordinances.

There are also specialty applications within historic districts for any exterior modifications as well as applications for any zoning changes or variances. Front, rear and side set backs are set forth in the zoning set back chart along with the maximum percentage of impervious coverage allowed within a zoning designation.

Information provided to the Building Department, et al with any application must be accurate and truthful in nature to ensure a successful process. Incorrect information can result in delays and the possibility of increased fees. Permit fees are based upon an established fee schedule with a 20% plan review fee added

## **Inspection Process**

Throughout the constructions phases of any project, periodic inspections of work is required to insure adherence to approved plans, specifications and other applicable codes. The frequency and total number of onsite inspections depends on the type of permit issued. You should confirm what specific required inspections, with the permit issued, must be performed on your project. A complete list of the types of inspections needed will be included, however some large projects may require that the same type of inspection is performed several times. Inspections should be phoned in 12-24 hours before needed and can often be scheduled "AM" or "PM". Onsite inspections are typically completed during normal business hours between 8AM and 5PM Monday through Friday excluding holidays. After hours or specialty inspections can be provided with advanced notice and with an added fee.

Once the project is completed, a final inspection will be done and a *Certificate of Completion* or *Certificate of Occupancy* will be issued to allow permanent power and other utility connections and allow occupation of the building.

## **Other Policies**

**Temporary utility agreements** are necessary and may be initiated for various reasons. Any commercial structure that has been without power, a residential structure without power for more than 6 months, any new structure construction and some large additions or renovations of unoccupied houses are some of the circumstances in which these agreements are issued. A property maintenance inspection will be completed on any structure where the power has been off to inspect for deficiencies. Corrections and/or repairs must be made before power will be restored. Permanent connections are not available until all work is complete.

**Complaints against Contractors** may be filed with the Building Department if deemed justified. A formal complaint should be submitted to the Building Department Official in writing. A copy will be placed on file with the Building Department and the Contractor will be informed in writing of this action and the nature of the complaint. The Building Department can assist with filing procedures to the State Contractors Licensing Board for review. Licenses issued by the local jurisdiction can be reviewed by the Building Contractors examining Board for disciplinary action or revocation. Complaints against unlicensed individuals will result in a "Notice of Violation" to that party from the Building Department.

**A Change of Contractor** during construction can occur for many reasons. The Contractor of record may be changed by request of the owner or Contractor by submitting a "Change of Contractor" application. The application will supply information to identify the new Contractor and reasons for the change. The new Contractor will be required to submit an application for a new permit along with an outline of the remaining scope of work and contractual agreement with the owner.

**Stop work orders** may be issued by Inspectors or Code Enforcement Officers if work is being performed without a permit or work is proceeding that is not in compliance with approved plans or adopted codes. Once these stop work orders have been issued and posted on the job site, any additional work before the matter is resolved can result in fines and penalties.

**Permit fees** for commercial structures are typically established based upon the construction cost. For residential projects they are based upon the contract amount or minimum value table established by The City of Thomasville Building Department, whichever is greater.

## **Adopted Codes and Standards**

International Building Code (ICC) 2012 Edition with Georgia Amendments (2014)(2015)(2016)

International Residential Code (ICC) 2012 Edition with Georgia Amendments (2014)(2015)(2016)

International Fire Code (ICC) 2012 Edition with Georgia Amendments (2014)

International Plumbing Code (ICC) 2012 Edition with Georgia Amendments (2014)(2015)(2016)

International Mechanical Code (ICC) 2012 Edition with Georgia Amendments (2014)(2015)(2016)

International Fuel Gas Code (ICC) 2012 Edition with Georgia Amendments (2014)(2015)(2016)

National Electric Code (NFPA 70) 2014 Edition

International Energy conservation Code 2009 Edition with Georgia Amendments (2011)(2012)

Life Safety Code (NFPA 101) 2012 Edition

International Property Maintenance Code (ICC) 2012 Edition with Georgia Amendments (2015)

ADA Standards for Accessible Design 2010 edition

City of Thomasville municipal Ordinances governing:

- Zoning

- Tree and landscape requirements

- Impervious surfaces coverage maximums and storm water control

- Swimming pools

- Signs and advertising

- Fencing

- Historic Districts

- Demolitions

- New Business applications

- Restaurant Sewer requirements

Land Disturbance Compliance (LIA) (EPD)

# Do I Need a Permit?

This list is an outline of items that require permitting. Although this list is as comprehensive as possible, it is not intended, and should not be considered to be all inclusive. If you have questions as to whether or not a permit is required, please contact the Building Department at 229-227-6983.

## **Construction work requiring permits in the City of Thomasville**

- Fences; wood, masonry, vinyl, PVC, chain link, metal, etc.
- Masonry work (brick or stone)
- Foundations
- New or replacement siding or stucco
- Doors and/or window replacements
- Roofing; new or replacement
- Mechanical or HVAC systems
- Electrical systems
- Plumbing systems
- Gas piping
- Decks
- Storage buildings (over 200 sq. feet residential) (over 200 sq. feet commercial)
- New homes, commercial buildings or structures
- Additions
- Exterior remodeling or renovations
- Interior remodeling or renovations
- Carports or garages
- Prefabricated structures
- Temporary buildings
- Demolitions
- Driveways or sidewalks
- Water heater replacements
- Swimming pools or hot tubs
- Retaining walls over 4' in height

## **Work not requiring permits**

- Exterior painting
- Interior painting, wallpapering and similar finish work
- Cabinets and counter tops
- Swings and playground equipment (commercial is required)
- Storage buildings less than 200 sq. feet (still requires zoning review)

# Do I Need a Contractor?

The State of Georgia issues three type of licenses to Building Contractors:

**Residential** -Limited to one and two family dwellings three stories or less

**Residential and light Commercial**-Any residential or commercial properties three stories or less

**General Contractor**-Any residential or commercial construction

For any property owner who wishes to improve his or her property, it is advisable to secure a Georgia State Licensed Contractor to perform the work. Home owners may still secure permits for a primary residence or a structure soon to be a primary residence on a schedule of not more than one 24 months from the date of a previous Certificate of Occupancy. However, there are inherent risk with this choice.

- The homeowner must complete the work themselves or directly supervise all work and may not secure a third party to manage the project or sub-contractors.
- The work must still comply with all applicable and adopted codes and all information submitted with the permit application.
- The homeowner assumes the same responsibilities and liabilities as would a Contractor.

Any other structure such as property not occupied by the Owner and/or is used as rental property require a Contractor. Triplexes or multi-family residential properties require at least a Residential-Light Commercial Contractor. Any structure over three stories requires a General Contractor.

The State of Georgia also Licenses other Trades;

**Mechanical or HVAC**

**Plumbing**

**Electrical**

Any work completed in these trades **must** be completed by a State Licensed Contractor.

# City of Thomasville Building Department

## Sub-contractor Licenses

There are currently 5 local City of Thomasville licenses provided for the following trades:

**Demolition contractor and Wrecking contractor-** Those who are qualified to demolish and remove structures, such as dwellings, commercial buildings and foundations.

**Handy-Man-** Those who are limited to repair and maintenance of a single family dwelling only. Repairs will be limited to a project cost of **\$3,000**. Projects permitted by license holder shall be limited to three sub-contractor trades on a single given project. **No structural work shall be allowed under this license.**

**Roofing Contractor-** Those who are qualified to install, repair or replace roof coverings. Work may include but shall not be limited to, roof deck insulation, roof coating, painting and covering, including use of sheet metal and installation of other sheet metal products incidental to roofing work or other material in connection therewith, or any combination thereof, and including installation of non-structural decking and siding.

**Sign Contractor-** Those who are qualified to install, repair, alter, add to, or change any type of sign.

**Swimming pool contractor-** Those who are qualified to excavate, construct, fabricate, install and equip swimming pools, including the pumps, pool heaters, solar pool heaters, filters and chlorinators, and that piping incidental to the recirculation system, and may do the slab incidental to the pool.

# Permit fees

## Gas Permit fee structure

	Fees	# of Units	TOTAL
For issuing each permit	25.00		25.00
Heaters, Furnace, & Water Heaters under	3.50		
50,000 – 100,000 BTU Each	9.00		
100,000 – 150,000 BTU Each	12.00		
Over 150,000 BTU Each	15.00		
Boilers	18.00		
Pipe Repairs or Extensions Each	6.00		
1-4 Outlets \$6.50	6.50		

## Plumbing permit fee structure

	Fees	# of Units	Total
For issuing each permit	25.00		25.00
Commodes	3.00		
Lavatories	3.00		
Bath Tubs	3.00		
Shower Stalls	3.00		
Clothes Washers	3.00		
Dish Washers	3.00		
Sinks	3.00		
Urinals	3.00		
Water Cooler or Fountain	3.00		
Water Heaters	3.50		
Floor Drains or Taps	3.50		
Building Sewer / General Repairs	6.50		
Septic Tank and Drainfield	13.00		
Vacuum Breakers (1 to 5)	3.50		
Back Flow Protective Devices <b>*Note:</b>	3.00		



## Electrical Permit Fee Structure

	Fees	# of Units	TOTAL
For issuing each permit	25.00		25.00
Temp Pole	25.00		
1 – 100 Amp. Service	20.00		
101 – 200 Amp. Service	25.00		
201 and Larger	35.00		
0 – 50 Outlets and Receptacles	13.00		
Each Additional Outlet	.25		
Additions & Alterations and Repairs	10.00		
Heaters	1.50		
Dryers	1.50		
Fans	1.50		
Motors < 5 HP	5.00		
Motors 5- 25 HP	15.00		
Motors 26- 100 HP	25.00		
Lighted Sign	6.50		

## HVAC Permit Fee Structure

For issuing each permit	25.00		25.00
Up to \$1,000.00 of valuation of installation	25.00		
For each additional thousand or fraction	3.00 per		

## Building Permit Fee Structure

Total valuation	Fee Calculation
<b>\$5,000 and less</b>	<b>\$48.00</b>
<b>\$5,000 to \$50,000</b>	<b>\$20.00 for the first \$1,000.00 plus \$7.00 for each additional thousand or fraction thereof, to and including \$50,000.00</b>
<b>\$50,001 to \$100,000</b>	<b>\$363.00 for the first \$50,000.00 plus \$5.50 for each additional thousand or fraction thereof, to and including \$100,000.00</b>
<b>\$100,001 to \$500,000</b>	<b>\$638.00 for the first \$100,000.00 and \$4.00 for each additional thousand or fraction thereof, to and including \$500,000.00</b>
<b>\$500,000 and up</b>	<b>\$2,238.00 for the first \$500,000.00 plus \$2.75 for each additional thousand or fraction thereof</b>

**\*note A plan review fee of 20% will be added to all residential or commercial building permits**

## Other Fees and Permits

Plan revision fee	\$47.00
Temporary power extension fee	\$25.00
Second temporary power extension fee	\$50.00
Demolition permit fee	\$150.00
Sign or banner permit	\$25.00
Fence permit or application	\$25.00
Building relocation permit fee	\$250.00
Change of occupancy (business license)	\$25.00
After hours inspection fee	\$225.00
HPC (historic area application)	\$25.00
Zoning Application	\$150.00 (similar zoning) \$500.00 (re-zoning)
Zoning variance application	\$100.00
Tree and landscape variance application	\$25.00
Builders board of appeal application	\$25.00
Property maintenance Fee	\$25.00
Re-inspection fee	\$25.00
Swimming pool permit	Follows the Building permit fees

*\*individuals operating without a permit are subject to a penalty of DOUBLE to stated rates*

### Residential Minimum Value Chart (Enacted June 18, 2007)

\$75.00 per square foot of heated space for residences up to 1,599 square feet

\$95.00 per square foot of heated space for residences 1,600 square feet or more

\$35.00 per square foot of garages, porches or other unheated areas (attics excluded)

#### **Example:**

Home of 1,790 square feet with a garage and two small porches totaling 620 square feet

Permit calculations: first \$100,000 is \$638.00; then \$92,000 at \$5.50 per thousand or \$506.00 for a subtotal of \$1,144.00 plus a 20% plan review fee ( $\$1,144.00 \times .20$ ) is \$228.80 = grand total of \$1372.80

$$(1,790 \times \$95) + (620 \times \$35) = \$191,925.00 \text{ total value}$$

<b>ZONING DESIGNATIONS</b>									
	Minimum	Minimum	Minimum	Minimum	Minimum	Minimum	Maximum	Maximum	
			Setback	Setback	Setback	Setback	Lot	Structure	
	Lot Area	Lot Width	Front	Rear	Side	Corner	ISC*	Height	
<b>A</b>									
Agricultural	15,000 sf	100 ft	40 ft	40 ft	10 ft	30 ft	30%	35 ft	
<b>R-1A</b>									
Single Family Residential	15,000 sf	100 ft	40 ft	40 ft	10 ft	30 ft	30%	35 ft	
<b>R-1B</b>									
Single Family Residential	10,000 sf	80 ft	30 ft	30 ft	8 ft	22.5 ft	30%	35 ft	
<b>R-1</b>									
Single Family Residential	7,500 sf	60 ft	30 ft	30 ft	8 ft	22.5 ft	30%	35 ft	
<b>R-2A</b>									
Multifamily Residential									
<b>one family</b>	6,000 sf	60 ft	20 ft	20 ft	8 ft	15 ft	40%	35 ft	
<b>two family</b>	7,000 sf	60 ft	20 ft	20 ft	8 ft	15 ft	40%	35 ft	
<b>multifamily</b>	3,630 sf	60 ft	20 ft	20 ft	8 ft	15 ft	40%	35 ft	
<b>Non-residential</b>	6,000 sf	60 ft	20 ft	20 ft	8 ft	15 ft	40%	35 ft	
<b>R-2A</b>									
Multifamily Residential									
<b>one family</b>	6,000 sf	60 ft	20 ft	20 ft	8 ft	15 ft	40%	35 ft	
<b>two family</b>	7,000 sf	60 ft	20 ft	20 ft	8 ft	15 ft	40%	35 ft	
<b>multifamily</b>	3,630 sf	60 ft	20 ft	20 ft	8 ft	15 ft	40%	35 ft	
<b>Non-residential</b>	6,000 sf	60 ft	20 ft	20 ft	8 ft	15 ft	40%	35 ft	
<b>C-1A</b>									
Limited Business Districts									
<b>one family</b>	6,000 sf	NA	20 ft	20 ft	8 ft	15 ft	50%	NA	
<b>two family</b>	7,000 sf	NA	20 ft	20 ft	8 ft	15 ft	50%	NA	
<b>multifamily</b>	3,630 sf	NA	20 ft	20 ft	8 ft	15 ft	50%	NA	
<b>Non-residential</b>	6,000 sf	NA	20 ft	20 ft	8 ft	15 ft	50%	NA	
<b>C-1</b>									
Commercial									
<b>one family</b>	6,000 sf	NA	NA	**12 ft	*12 ft	5 ft	NA	NA	
<b>two family</b>	7,000 sf	NA	NA	**12 ft	*12 ft	5 ft	NA	NA	
<b>multifamily</b>	3,630 sf	NA	NA	**12 ft	*12 ft	5 ft	NA	NA	
<b>Non-residential</b>	6,000 sf	NA	NA	**12 ft	*12 ft	5 ft	NA	NA	
<b>C-2</b>									
Commercial									
<b>one family</b>	6,000 sf	NA	NA	**12 ft	**12 ft	5 ft	NA	NA	
<b>two family</b>	7,000 sf	NA	NA	**12 ft	**12 ft	5 ft	NA	NA	
<b>multifamily</b>	3,630 sf	NA	NA	**12 ft	**12 ft	5 ft	NA	NA	
<b>Non-residential</b>	NA	NA	NA	**12 ft	**12 ft	5 ft	NA	NA	
<b>M</b>									
Manufacturing									
<b>one family</b>	6,000 sf	NA	NA	**12 ft	*12 ft	NA	NA	NA	
<b>two family</b>	7,000 sf	NA	NA	**12 ft	*12 ft	NA	NA	NA	
<b>multifamily</b>	3,630 sf	NA	NA	**12 ft	*12 ft	NA	NA	NA	
<b>Non-residential</b>	NA	NA	NA	**12 ft	*12 ft	NA	NA	NA	
<b>M-1</b>									
Manufacturing									
<b>Non-residential</b>	NA	NA	50 ft	***25 ft	25 ft	37.5 ft	NA	NA	
*on one side only    **unless property abuts a public alley									
*** except where property adjoins a railroad									
<b>Section 22-22, Non-Residential Districts-Side</b>									
and rear yards not required next to railroad									
<b>Special denoted zonings such as "Limited Use" "Town-house Districts" "Cluster Housing" "Traditional Neighborhoods"</b>									
<b>have guidelines established for per recorded development</b>									
<b>NOTE: THESE ARE GUIDELINES ONLY, PLEASE CONTACT THE ZONING ADMINISTRATOR FOR ALL APPLICABLE REGULATIONS</b>									

# Required Onsite Inspections

(As demanded by scope of work)

## **BUILDING INSPECTIONS**

EPD best practices for erosion control

Footing and setbacks

CMU grout fill 48" or higher

Re-bar

Concrete to be poured

Lintels

Roof

Slab and pest control

Exterior sheathing

Floor framing

Framing

Sprinklers systems, risers and FDCs

Insulation

Drywall layers in fire wall construction

Pool steel and pool wall

Pool fences

Steel erection

Curb cuts and driveway on city ROW

Final building

## **ELECTRICAL INSPECTIONS**

Temporary power

Electrical rough-in

Rough in over ceiling

HVAC change out

Service change out

Pool electrical bonding

Underground service or conduit

Mobile home

Final electrical

## **PLUMBING INSPECTIONS**

Building sewer or septic connections

Slab rough in

Rough in or top out

Tub-set

Gas pressure test (gas piping)

Underground gas

Gas vents

Final gas

Grease trap

Final Plumbing

## **MECHANICAL INSPECTIONS**

Ductwork test

Range hood

Ventilation and bath vents

Smoke or fire dampers

Envelope test

Final Mechanical

# Permit Types

Below is a comprehensive list of all permits issued through this department. There are links to permit applications and the “packets” link will generate a package of information to guide you through the permit and construction process with explanations of each step and examples. We also invite you to phone our office M-F 8:00am until 5:00pm at 229-227-6983 with any questions.

## Commercial Building Permit

New Building, Additions, New Multi-family, Renovations, Interior Renovations, Fire Sprinkler

## Commercial Site Plan Application

Infrastructure construction, Development, Paving, concrete or impervious surface, Accessory Structures

## Residential Building Permit

New Home, Additions, Renovation, Interior Renovation, Hardscape or impervious surfaces, Accessory

## Residential Energy Code Compliance

### Electrical

### Plumbing

### Mechanical

### Gas

### Signs

### Demolition

### Swimming Pool

### Roofing

### Fence

### Temporary Utility

### Land Disturbance

### Owner Affidavit

### Change of Contractor

### Change of Occupancy

### Authorized Agent