

INSPECTION CONNECTION

**City of Kenosha
Department of Neighborhood Services and Inspections**

Fall/Winter 2008

New Inspectors Join Department

On June 16, 2008, Dennis Jantzen joined our department as a residential building inspector. Dennis will work out of the Building Inspection Division, and brings previous experience as a construction management specialist to the job, as well as a wealth of knowledge and enthusiasm. We're sure you'll enjoy working with Dennis, and if you have any questions or concerns regarding residential construction, please feel free to contact him at (262) 653-4267.

Building Permits Have New Look

After receiving several comments from customers who had trouble reading and interpreting their building permit, our clerical staff took the initiative to revise the permit appearance. It will still have all the pertinent permit information, however, we believe it will be much easier to read. Look for the changes soon.

Inflatable Swimming Pools

With the growing popularity of inflatable swimming pools, it is important to remember that an inflatable swimming pool

capable of containing 24" or more of water is required to observe the same safety rules as any other conventional type swimming pool.

The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission released a 2008 study which indicated that the recorded number of pool and spa submersion injuries of children under the age of five has averaged 2,700 per year for the last three years.

By ordinance, any swimming pool or spa capable of holding 24" or more of water, requires safety barriers, fences, and gates maintained in working order.

To get a complete list of code and permit requirements, visit us on-line or stop in and ask for a copy of the "Basic Code Requirements for Swimming Pools and Hot Tubs." Pools are to be enjoyed...please do it safely.

Plumbing

At this time, the City of Kenosha is still requiring an on-site test for the installation of all air admittance valves (mini-vents). The test will be conducted by the plumber in the presence of the

plumbing inspector at the time of the final plumbing inspection. If you have any questions, please contact the plumbing inspector at (262) 653-4270.

Construction Site Erosion and Sediment Control

After a severe winter, it is obvious that many tracking pads have been damaged due to weather conditions and lack of maintenance. Tracking pads are to be installed with a minimum of 3" to 6" stone, 12" deep, a minimum length of 50', or a length designated by your approved erosion control plan. State and local codes require that the contractor inspect, maintain, and repair any damaged or non-compliant erosion control measures throughout the course of construction to avoid tracking mud or diverting sediment onto the streets where it can be conveyed to the storm sewer system. Failure to maintain the tracking pad or any portion of erosion and sediment control measures could result in reinspection fees, possible withholding of inspections, or the issuance of a "Stop Work" order until such time that the violation is corrected.

Non-construction Site Erosion and Sediment Control

It is not only active construction sites that require strict erosion and sediment control measures.

It is prohibited by City Ordinances to blow or deposit any of the following materials on the sidewalk, lawn park area, driveway approach, street, gutter, or storm sewer:

Dirt
Snow
Sand
Mulch
Litter
Debris
Gravel
Leaves
Oil/Grease
Gas/Anti-freeze
Grass Clippings

Your cooperation will help maintain our lakes, streams, and waterways for our enjoyment.

Land Disturbing Erosion and Sediment Control Ordinance – Chapter 33

Due to changes in the Department of Natural Resources and the Department of Commerce erosion and sediment control requirements implemented in 2007, we have re-written our local ordinance to achieve the compliance levels required by those changes.

The new ordinance replaces the now defunct “Wisconsin Construction Site Handbook” which most of you are familiar with.

You'll find that the BMP's (Best Management Practices) remain virtually unchanged, but some of the more notable changes are:

- Scope is broadened to include all land-disturbing activities, not just construction sites
- Establishes minimum design criteria, standards, and specifications
- Establishes a reduction rate of 80% of sediment load runoff on an average annual basis
- Clarifies plan submittal and permitting requirements
- Addresses permit conditions and responsibilities
- Addresses developer responsibility for installation, repair, and ongoing maintenance of BMP's
- Establishes the requirement for cash assurance relative to mass graded sites
- Authorizes the City to approve transfer of permits due to ownership change
- Establishes minimum requirements to obtain occupancy of a new building
- Clearly addresses penalties and enforcement procedures for non-compliance

The ordinance is going through the final stages of approval and adoption, and should be available on-line in late October or early November.

PermiTrack (ESC) – Erosion Control Permit Tracking

Some of you are already aware that Kenosha is in the process of installing the PermiTrack inspection monitoring program for projects which are required to have an erosion control permit. This is a web-based inspection reporting system which monitors City inspection activities as well as the developer/contractor inspections which are mandated by State building codes.

PermiTrack is an interactive site, which allows for the recording of all inspections, offers e-mail capabilities to notify permit holders of violations, has the capability of uploading pictures to document violations as well as compliance photos, and will be available to the public and for filing complaints. It is a unique and efficient method of erosion control compliance verification which has been successfully employed in other communities for several years.

PermiTrack is currently being used by Kenosha inspectors, but will become a mandatory use in the near future for contractors and developers. If you wish to voluntarily participate in a trial period for any of the projects you are starting or will be starting soon, please call Chris Pagels at (262) 653-4247 or e-mail him at cpagels@kenosha.org for details.

Post Construction Storm Water Management Ordinance

Another requirement resulting from DNR and Department of Commerce rule changes is the requirement for the creation of a post construction storm water maintenance plan and permit. This will be an additional plan review process conducted during your Conditional Use Permit or Site Development review.

This ordinance, "Chapter 36, Post Construction Storm Water Management," is currently in the process of being reviewed and approved. Copies should be available on-line in late October or early November.

When completing an application for a Conditional Use permit or Site Development approval, you will be required to submit certain information for your post construction management of storm water control measures and installations, for the Storm Water Utility to review, approve, and permit. These requirements will also affect the issuance of building permits, as well as the approval of your final occupancy permits.

If you have any questions regarding this portion of the review, please call Shelly Billingsley at (262) 653-4150 or e-mail her at sbillingsley@kenosha.org.

Illegal Residential Conversions

The problem of illegal conversions of residential buildings is a persistent and pervasive one that places many of our residents in danger and puts tremendous strains on community resources.

An illegal conversion is the creation of one or more additional dwelling units within a home without first receiving permits from the City of Kenosha. Such conversions often involve the alteration or modification of an existing one- or two-family home by adding an apartment to the upper floor, attic, or in the basement.

An illegal conversion is a serious offense under the City of Kenosha Zoning Ordinance. Illegal conversions reduce the quality of life in our neighborhoods by crowding more people into an area than was originally intended. This unplanned growth causes a severe strain on municipal services, and frequently results in school overcrowding, reduced parking, understaffed police stations, and increased sewer and sanitation problems. In addition, illegal conversions are frequently done in violation of existing fire and building codes, and constitute a significant danger to tenants and other individuals living in the buildings.

Failure to obtain required permits seriously impacts the property owner when illegal dwelling units and construction work are revealed. In addition

to fines, the owner is required to reconstruct the dwelling to its former legitimate status. Also, units that may have been accepted as "nonconforming" (in existence prior to 1984), would have to be eliminated to comply with existing ordinance standards.

It should be noted that there are circumstances whereby it is permissible to add an apartment to a home:

- The building must be in an area which is zoned to allow additional dwelling units.
- The property lot and building size must meet the zoning requirements.
- Building and mechanical permits must be obtained to add the new dwelling unit.

Illegal dwelling units may temporarily benefit the individual property owner but harm the community financially by providing services (waste collection, police, fire protection) to a property that is not adequately assessed to pay for City services.

Scheduling of Inspections

Inspection requests are taken by clerical staff. Because of the volume of inspections, it is not possible to schedule an inspection for a specific time. Also remember that we can only take an inspection request for the following day. In the near future we hope to be able to accept inspection requests for several days in advance and schedule them accordingly.

To ensure that your inspection request is processed properly, please furnish the following information:

- Permit number
- Address of inspection
- Contractor name
- Type of inspection
- Contact person and phone number
- Any access information (lock box number, "back door open," etc.)

Crucial information to remember when scheduling inspections:

1. For the most part, inspections will be scheduled accordingly:

Footing: For the day they are scheduled.

Exterior sewer and water: For the day they are scheduled.

Rough-in: 48 hours from the time it is ready for inspection.

Final: Five (5) days from the time it is ready for inspection.

Occupancy: Five (5) days from the time it is ready for inspection; but, none are conducted on Friday.

2. When planning an occupancy inspection, remember the scheduling sequence. At times an occupancy inspection is requested the day before or the day of a closing; those requests will be denied, thereby creating a potential hardship for the home buyer.

Be Sure to Get All the Permits You Need!

When planning your project, getting all the permit applications and approvals from our department is only part of the process. Depending on the scope of the project, approvals and permits may be required from other departments and agencies.

In our application packets and on our website, we try to provide you with as much information as possible regarding other departments' requirements for your project.

The following additional permits and approvals may be needed for your project:

- Site-plan review from the City Development Department
- Parking lot, sidewalk, and driveway approach permits from the Public Works Department
- Sign, trash enclosure, and fence permits from the Zoning Division
- Structural plan approval from the State Department of Commerce
- Plumbing plan approval from the State Department of Commerce
- Various licenses from the City Clerk's office
- Licensing by the County Health Department
- Erosion control or floodplain permits from the State Department of Natural Resources

Another reminder is to make sure that all of your subcontractors are properly licensed.

Keeping all of the above in mind is one way to make sure your project runs smoothly.

Permit Information Packets and Brochures

With our permit application packets, you will receive information relative to permit and inspection requirements. Please read all of the information provided. You will find information on permit timelines, code requirements, inspection processing, and minimum requirements to take you to successful completion of your project. By reading and understanding this information, you could avoid possible delays or reinspection fees during the course of construction. As always, if you have any questions regarding any of the information provided to you, please call us and we'll be glad to assist you.

Pay Permits On-line or by Telephone

Remember...you may pay your permit fees on-line or by telephone through Official Payments Corporation (OPC). (NOTE: There will be a fee to OPC for this service). OPC accepts Discover, Mastercard, Visa, and American Express cards. You can access the official website from your home or office computer, or utilize the on-line payment station located in our office.

On-line Payments:

Access the web site at <http://www.officialpayments.com>

Have the following information available: (if multiple permits, you must enter each permit number separately)

1. Permit Number(s)
2. Credit Card Information
3. The Amount of the Permit Fee

Follow on-line instructions.

Telephone Payments:

Call 1 (800) 272-9829

Have the following information available: (if multiple permits, you must enter each permit number separately)

1. Permit Number(s)
2. Credit Card Information
3. The Amount of the Permit Fee
4. Jurisdiction code #5864

Follow the prompts.

Neighborhood Services and Inspections' Web Site

Commercial Occupancy Status Available On-line: If your project is covered under a Conditional Use Permit or a Site Development review, the status of your occupancy permit is now available on-line. When you enter our website, go to the "Permits Status/Inspection Results" link, and if you enter the project address or permit number, a screen will appear indicating which departments have signed off on the project, and whether the approval is for temporary or permanent occupancy. The screen will also display any escrow amounts required by a department. So far, the feedback on the availability of this information has been positive, as it has reduced the number of phone calls on behalf of the contractor to find the status of his/her project.

Erosion Control: The Erosion Control website is now up and running. Just go to our Neighborhood Services and Inspections home page and you'll find the link. You'll find much information, many forms, and useful links to the Department of Commerce and the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources websites.

If you have any suggestions or comments on how we can improve our site to better serve you, please contact us at nsi@kenosha.org

Contact Numbers

City Assessor's Office	(262) 653-2545
Department of City Development	(262) 653-4030
Fire Prevention Bureau	(262) 653-4110
Department of Neighborhood Services and Inspections	(262) 653-4263
Parks Department	(262) 653-4080
Department of Public Works	(262) 653-4050
Storm Water Utility	(262) 653-4050
Kenosha Water Utility	(262) 653-4300

You may also contact our website at www.kenosha.org

Inspection Division Contacts

Commercial Building Inspector	(262) 653-4268
Residential Building Inspector	(262) 653-4266
Residential Building Inspector	(262) 653-4267
Commercial Electrical Inspector	(262) 653-4272
Residential Electrical Inspector	(262) 653-4271
Plumbing Inspector	(262) 653-4270
Erosion Control Inspector	(262) 653-4247

