



# McKenzie County

## Building Department Information

201 5th Street NW  
Watford City, ND 58854  
701-444-3616 ext. 1045

Welcome to the McKenzie County Building Department. The Building Department provides plan checking, permitting, and inspection services for new construction, additions, remodels, alterations, and demolitions. Please contact us with any questions you have regarding a permit application, permit status, inspection requirements, and status of an inspection, building code questions, or building complaints. **A permit is required for all new construction projects within the jurisdiction of McKenzie County after July 8, 2012.**

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### **What Is A Building Permit?**

To insure the health and safety of the public, McKenzie County requires that certain construction work can be performed only after a permit is obtained. Plans are reviewed for compliance with the current building codes prior to issuance of the permit. The work is then inspected during construction to confirm adherence to the approved plans and codes. A Certificate of Occupancy or approved final inspection is issued when the work is completed and found to be in substantial compliance with code requirements.

### **Resources**

[www.ansi.org](http://www.ansi.org)  
[www.iccsafe.org](http://www.iccsafe.org)  
[www.utahicc.org](http://www.utahicc.org)  
[www.iccbonn.org](http://www.iccbonn.org)  
[www.nfpa.org](http://www.nfpa.org)

### **Why Do I Need A Permit?**

The primary advantage of obtaining a permit is that it offers you the services of a building inspector, who inspects each phase of the construction process. Inspectors can advise you on your options if you have difficulties. Remember that inspection is the

process that is intended to ensure that minimum standards for health and safety have been met; it does not involve assessing quality or aesthetic standards of work.

There are legal and financial liabilities that you can face when you don't get a permit. Work without a permit is illegal and can pose serious complications for you when you try to sell your house. Your property insurance could be invalidated if you do work without a permit. For example, if there is a fire in your house, the insurance company could view the illegal work as a reason to invalidate your claim.

### **When Do I Need A Permit?**

There are multiple types of building permits to meet different needs including:

1. Residential Construction: Standard building permit required.
2. Commercial Construction: Standard building permit required.
3. Modular Construction: Standard building permit required.
4. Manufactured Construction (Real Property): Setting permit required. No permit required for "Titled" (non-real) property:
5. Temporary Housing including skid units, industrial modular buildings, park model trailers (trailer homes), manufactured homes, etc. - Man camps: Temporary housing is regulated by the State of North Dakota, AND must also be permitted with the County. Temporary housing permits MUST BE RENEWED AND FEES PAID TO MCKENZIE COUNTY ANNUALLY.
6. Recreational Vehicles: No permits of fees required.

Call the building department at 701-444-3616 ext. 1045 to discuss your plans with the code official before beginning construction if you are uncertain whether or not you need a permit. Even if a permit is not needed, the code official will answer code questions and may provide valuable advice. All work regardless of permit requirements must be completed in accordance with all applicable state and local codes.

### **What Work Requires A Permit?**

All structural and some nonstructural work on your home or business require a permit. Specifically, North Dakota State Building Code requires a permit before you erect, construct, enlarge, alter, repair, move, improve, remove, convert, or demolish any building. For example, you must obtain a permit before you do any of the following:

- *Erect a new structure such as garages, storage sheds (over 120 square feet), carports, patios, etc.*
- *Set or relocate a modular or manufactured home.*
- *Build an addition on any existing building.*
- *Remodel the interior or exterior of any existing building.*
- *Change out a furnace or air conditioning unit, modify or add any new ductwork.*

- *Hard surface an area; installing a driveway; parking area or patio.*
- *Demolish a building.*
- *Move a building*
- *Construct or remodel a sign.*
- *Change the use or convert a building to another use (i.e., change you home to an office or add an apartment in the basement, etc.).*

### **How Do I Submit Plans For Review?**

Permits are relatively simple to obtain. Fill out the appropriate permit application and submit it with the necessary drawings to the Building Department. Please be aware that, depending on the degree of difficulty, 1st time plan reviews can vary from 2 days to 2 weeks (for larger commercial buildings). When in doubt the best way to find out if you need a permit is to call the McKenzie County Building Department (701) 444-3616 ext. 1045. If you would like to meet directly with an Inspector, call the Building Department to schedule an appointment

When you submit plans are logged in at the Building Department for review, your plans will be reviewed by both the planning and Building department staffs. All plans are signed in and out thru the Building Department Permit Technician. As each department reviews the plans, review comments will be documented. Once the reviews have all been done, the listed contact person will be notified to pick up plans and comments, make the appropriate corrections, and resubmit. Once all requirements have been met, your plan will be stamped approved, issued a permit number, fees assessed, and the permit will be released for construction. Each department has other duties besides plan review so our review process could take a day or two or up to ten working days for the first review. *Please plan ahead.* Each department reviews plans in the order in which they are received. If you need to make changes and resubmit your plans, the plans will be forwarded to the department who asked for the corrections. They in turn will re-review the plans as they receive them.

### **What Are The Current Codes?**

CURRENT CODES ADOPTED BY MCKENZIE COUNTY AND THE STATE OF NORTH DAKOTA:

- *2009 International Building Code*
- *2009 International Residential Code*
- *2009 International Mechanical Code*
- *2009 International Fuel Gas Code*
- *2009 International Energy Conservation Code*
- *2009 International Property Maintenance Code*
- *2009 International Fire Code*
- *2003 ANSI A117.1 and Americans with Disability Act Accessibility Guidelines*

***Note: Plumbing and electrical codes are inspected and enforced by the State of North Dakota plumbing and electrical boards.***

## **What Are the Office Hours of the Building Department?**

Owners and Contractors may apply for permits at the McKenzie County Courthouse Building, second Floor, 201 5th Street NW Watford City, ND 58854 between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. Monday thru Friday.

## **How Much Are the Permit fees?**

Most fees are calculated individually for each project based on valuation and proximity. This valuation is generally calculated based on square footage, or based on *“the total value of all construction work for which the permit is issued as well as all finish work, painting, roofing, heating, air conditioning, elevators, fire-extinguishing systems and other permanent equipment.”* (1997 UAC)

## **What Are the Required Design Criteria?**

- Frost Depth – 60”
- Elevation – 2400’
- Snow load – 30 psf
- Ground Snow Load 30
- Wind Speed – 90 mph, Exposure B or C. (Usually C)
- Seismic Design Category – B
- Air Freezing Index – 4000
- Mean Annual Temperature – 40 F
- Ice Barrier Underlayment Required – Yes
- Winter Design Temp - Neg. 21 F

**GEOTECHNICAL:** All commercial projects require site-specific geotechnical reports. The report shall include as a minimum: field investigation; description of on site soil conditions; ground water elevation; soil preparation recommendations; allowable soil bearing; suitability of soils for proposed foundation system; and recommended remedial action if required; recommended site class see IBC Table 1615.1.1. McKenzie County recommends that all projects obtain a site-specific geotechnical report.

## **What Building Inspections are Required?**

The following inspections are required for construction or remodeling of most buildings:

**Footing inspection:** When excavation for the footing is complete and footing forms and reinforcing steel are in place, but before any concrete is poured.

**Foundation inspection:** When forms and reinforcing steel are in place, ready for concrete.

**Framing inspection:** When all roof, walls & floor framing, fire stopping and bracing is complete. All rough electrical, plumbing and mechanical work must be complete.

**Reinforced masonry inspection:** When vertical reinforcing steel is in place and other reinforcing steel distributed & ready to be placed.

**Heating and Refrigeration Inspection:** Before wall or ceiling cavities are concealed and rough heating and refrigeration ducts, and equipment are installed. (Usually completed jointly with the framing inspection)

**Insulation:** Before wall or ceiling cavities are concealed and insulation has been installed.

**Final Inspection:** When all systems and construction is complete, all fixtures are installed and building is ready for use.

**Electrical and Plumbing Inspections:** The State of North Dakota Electrical and Plumbing Boards require their own permits and inspections of all plumbing and electrical systems. Contact the State Electrical Board at (701) 328-9522 and State Plumbing Board at 701-328-9977 for permitting and inspection.

### **What Can I Do About Problems With My Builder?**

From time to time, property owners run into conflicts with their contractor. McKenzie County will not interfere with the contractual relationship that exists between you and your builder. During construction periodic inspections will be made for compliance with the Code. Once all required inspections have been completed a Certificate of Occupancy will be issued. This certificate is not a warranty or guarantee that every aspect of your project is in compliance with the code. The Certificate of Occupancy simply represents completion of the required inspections to the satisfaction of the County . Following the issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy all aspects of the project become a civil matter between the property owner and the contractor. The city will perform visual inspections upon request, if it is suspected that code violations exist. Non-compliance findings typically will result in a Correction Notice addressed to the property owner. Remember that the County can only address code violations and cannot address issues related to perceived quality or craftsmanship. Generally Correction Notices require that the violations be corrected within a specified time frame. The overall responsibility to correct the problem remains with the property owner who can seek recourse with the responsible contractor.

County inspectors have authority to issue permits, perform inspections, stop construction, demand corrections, and issue Certificates of Occupancy. Building officials do not have the authority to force contractors to perform work, force contractors to complete projects, speed up construction or enforce civil contracts.