

Got a Permit For That?

Obtaining the proper building permit protects you, your horses and your equity.

It's time to add to or upgrade your horse facilities. Many people at this crossroad wrestle with whether they should obtain a permit for their project.

You may ask yourself, "Why should I have to get a permit to build on my own property?"

Certainly, it's tempting to not expend the effort to get a building permit. Obtaining the proper permit can be an arduous process filled with frustration, unknowns, and delays – but skipping the permit can be a mistake many people later regret.

There is truth to many common perceptions about building permits. In addition to delays, the permit process can put limits on your building design and location, impact your property tax assessment, and cause significant fees and other costs.

Why Get Permits?



There are, however, many reasons to obtain the required building permit(s) and inspections for your construction project:

- **It's the law** - City and/or county ordinances require work to have a permit. Work without a permit may be subject to removal or other costly remedies.
- **Helps protect property value** - If your project does not comply with the codes adopted by your community, the value of your investment could be reduced.
- **Protects you in insurance claims** - Property insurers may not cover work or damages caused by work done without permits and inspections.
- **Ensures a successful future sale** - If you decide to sell a home or building that has had modifications without a permit, you may be required to tear down the addition, leave it unoccupied or do costly repairs. Also, many financial institutions will not finance a purchase without proof of a final inspection.

- **Improves safety** - By following code guidelines, your completed project will meet minimum standards of safety and will be less likely to cause injury to you, your family, your friends or your horses.

- **Licensed Contractors** - By law, a licensed reputable contractor requires that permits are in place. "Hiring a licensed contractor gives you legal protection against shoddy workmanship," said Kathy Cvelbar, FCP Barns and Buildings Design Consultant.

How do I know whether I need a permit?

Building permits are generally required for any barn structure over 120 square feet. Many owners may also have to obtain approvals from homeowner associations or are subject to other restrictive covenants.

The Process

Whether you tackle the process yourself or use a permit service, understanding the permit process can reduce anxiety and delay so you can efficiently move forward with your plans.

1. Talk to your local code official - They will tell you what is permitted in your specific area and zoning. You may also be referred to other departments for approvals. You'll learn the requirements for building size, height and setbacks from your property lines.



Permits are common for barns over 120 sq ft.

2. Collect information for your barn manufacturer to properly design the structure: building code, wind speed requirement, seismic zone, roof load requirement, allowable soil bearing and more.

3. Submit Application - In addition to detailed barn drawings and engineering, a detailed, to-scale plot plan must be submitted. Cvelbar said her company can provide most of these requirements. "FCP has been providing

customers the drawings and engineering required to expedite the permit process for almost 15 years," she said.

4. Review Process - If your plans are found to be in compliance, a permit is issued. If not, the code official may suggest solutions to help correct the problem.

5. Receive Permit - Now that you have been approved for a permit, you have legal permission to start construction.



Permits and approvals can limit the size, design, and placement of a barn.

You should expect on-site inspections during construction to make certain the work conforms to the permit, local codes and plans. Usually, a one-day notice is needed when requesting these inspections. When construction is completed, the code official will provide documentation and code compliance is determined. Always note the name and department of each person that provides you information for future reference.

Use a Permit Service

While the permit process may seem overwhelming, you can hire a specialist that can help you secure the required permits. A professional in this field should know the local process and requirements which will save you from having to go through the learning curve.

FCP is the only barn manufacturer that offers a permit service to customers in most areas. Cvelbar says it's a natural extension of the company's philosophy. "FCP offers customers complete service from concept to completion, and we believe the permit process is part of that." ♦

To learn more about the building permit process or barn design call FCP at 1-800-807-2278 or visit www.FCPBuildings.com.