

## The Six Basic Permitting Steps

1. Decide exactly what your project entails.
2. Evaluate potential zoning concerns.
3. Determine whether you need a building permit.
4. Submit plans, and apply for a building permit.
5. When all requirements have been met, a building permit will be issued.
6. Post your permit and start building.

### Information Communication Cooperation

The easiest way to resolve potential zoning conflicts is to find out the zoning requirements for your property and then determine concurrently whether your existing structure as well as your planned improvements, are in conformance.

### Other handouts that may also be helpful:

- PROCEDURES FOR ACQUIRING A RESIDENTIAL OR COMMERCIAL BUILDING PERMIT
- INSPECTION REQUIREMENTS
- PROCEDURES FOR ACQUIRING A MANUFACTURED HOME LOCATION PERMIT

These documents are available at the Building, Zoning and Development Office

## Whitfield County Building, Zoning and Development

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Handy guide to  
the building  
permitting process

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**1407 Burleyson Drive  
Dalton, GA 30720**

Telephone  
706-275-7401  
706-275-7474

Fax 706  
-275-7443

[www.whitfieldcountyga.com](http://www.whitfieldcountyga.com)

## We're here to help make getting a building permit hassle-free.

### Here's how the process works

#### Why am I required to have a building permit anyway?

For one reason, the law requires building permits. These laws are the result of efforts to help monitor and insure that buildings are structurally and mechanically sound and safe for human occupants. The permitting plan, review, and inspection processes protect you from unsafe structures.

#### 1. How do I get started?

First, decide exactly what your addition or remodel job is going to entail. Possibly consult with a licensed builder or designer. They are usually very knowledgeable as to the requirements of the code, zoning considerations, and the costs of construction. All of these issues should be considered at the onset of the project because, as you will see, all are necessary in determining exactly how you proceed through the permitting process.

#### 2. You mention zoning concerns; what do you mean?

As part of your initial planning, you must look into the zoning requirements of the land on which your project is being built. Every piece of land in the unincorporated area of Whitfield County is "zoned" for certain uses. These zoning requirements also include certain specifications for how and where structures can be built on the land. For example, most lots in the county have "set-back" requirements which specify how far your structure must be from the property lines.

#### 3. When do I need a building permit?

In the unincorporated area of Whitfield County, a building permit is required for all additions to an existing structure and for all new structures larger than 200 square feet.

Minor ordinary repair and maintenance work is exempt from permitting requirements.

However, if you are remodeling, a permit is needed if you perform any structural, electrical, mechanical, or plumbing work.

O.K., I do need a building permit.

#### 4. What do I need to do to get a building permit?

The nature of the project will determine exactly what documents are needed to begin the application process.

- The building and zoning clerk will attempt to locate the tax parcel and deed information associated with your property. Any additional information you can provide, such as property survey, will help with the application process.

- First, a zoning application will be completed. Your request will be reviewed for zoning compliance, flood hazard, and any other limited building locations.
- An approved erosion control plan and/or storm water management plan may be required if your planned land disturbance is one acre or greater or if your lot is part of a common development.

- Health Department approval for any new or existing on-site sewage management system will also be required if your lot is not served by public sewer.
- The Health Department requires a floor plan drawing for all residential construction (conventional built and manufactured homes).
- Additionally, a soil survey will be required for the installation of any new on-site sewage management system. The Health Department is located in the same building as the Building, Zoning and Development Office.

#### 5. I've gotten this far; what happens now?

Residential construction requires basically **four** reviews:

zoning  
flood hazard  
land disturbance  
(erosion control and storm water management)  
Health Dept (or Dalton Utilities)

The commercial construction review process additionally includes a building plan review by the building department and a fire protection plan review by the fire department.

When all requirements have been met, you may obtain your building permit and pay the necessary fees.

#### 6. Post your permit and start building.