

## State Fire Marshal Approval

Your project may require approval from the Maine Office of the State Fire Marshal. Below is some information regarding Construction Permits and Barrier Free Permits. Other permits may be required as well, please contact the SFMO at (207) 626-3870 for more information or visit their home page <http://www.maine.gov/dps/fmo/index.htm>

## About Construction Permits

No property owner, agent, or representative of the owner may construct, alter, or change the use of any structure to become a public building without first obtaining from the Commissioner of Public Safety a permit therefor. A request for a permit shall be accompanied by a true copy, (an accurate representation by dimensioned plans and specifications of the final construction documents), of the plans and specifications for that construction, reconstruction, or change of use. The Commissioner shall issue a permit only if the plans comply with statutes and lawful regulations promulgated to reduce fire hazards.

The term "public building" shall include any building or structure constructed, operated or maintained for use by the general public, which shall include, but not be limited to, all buildings or portions of buildings used for a schoolhouse, hospital, convalescent home, nursing or boarding home to be licensed by the Department of Human Services, Division of Licensing and Certification; theater or other place of public assembly, mercantile occupancy over 3,000 square feet, hotel, motel, or business occupancy of two or more stories or any building to be state owned or operated.

State of Maine Laws for the Fire Service may be referenced at [Fire Service Laws](#)

**Construction Permits are required for public buildings**, whether it is new construction, renovation work affecting fire safety elements, or change of use. The construction permit will be required regardless of the project cost. This list of "public buildings" below is not all-inclusive. Please call (207 626-3880) if you are not certain whether or not your project will require a construction permit from the State.

- **Educational** Occupancies such as schools, and day care centers (more than 12 children).
- **Health Care** Occupancies such as hospitals, convalescent homes, nursing homes, ambulatory care centers, and board and care facilities.
- **Places of Assembly** such as auditoriums, bowling lanes, churches, conference rooms, courtrooms, dance halls, drinking establishments, exhibition halls, gymnasiums, libraries, theaters, passenger terminals, pool rooms, recreational, piers, restaurants, auction halls, and skating rinks.
- **Mercantile** Occupancies such as shopping centers, department stores, auction rooms, and supermarket.

- Class A - 30,000 square feet plus, or 3 stories
- Class B - 3,000 to 29,000 square feet, or 2 stories
- **Hotel, Motel, and Dormitory** Occupancies two or more stories; more than 16 accommodations.
- **Lodging or Rooming** Occupancies providing more than 3 but not more than 16 accommodations. (Accommodation means the sleeping area for one person. A double bed or larger would constitute more than one accommodation. A fold-out couch in a room of a condo for lease would constitute a sleeping room and two accommodations.)
- **Business** Occupancies one story of 3,000 square feet or more, or two or more stories; such as: city halls, college instructional buildings, courthouses, dentist offices, general offices, research laboratories, ambulatory outpatient clinics, and town offices.

For more information please contact Licensing and Inspections at 207-626-3880.

#### **Submittal Criteria for Construction Permits**

1. Make **check** out to "Treasurer, State of Maine." Fee is based on cost of construction/renovation. See fee schedule.
2. Fill out **Construction Permit Application Form**. We can help you fill this out when you arrive for your appointment. If obtaining your permit by mail/fax, then please call if you have any questions regarding the application form.
3. Submit **blueprints/plans** that are clear, legible, accurate, and complete. A design professional such as an architect or engineer may be required. Call and ask if you are not sure. Either way, the office must obtain for the plan review (1) copy of each of the following:
  - A. **Site Plan** showing relationship to adjacent buildings, roads, and hazards. Indicate which building or part thereof is the one requesting a permit. Indicate true north. The site plan must be to an indicated scale or have measurements.
  - B. **Elevations** showing the side view of the building from each side. Label each elevation. (The south elevation is the side of the building that faces south). If the building is existing and the renovations to the exterior are minor, then a snapshot of each side view of the building may suffice.
  - C. **Floor Plans** of every level of the building, including the basement, (and parts that are not being renovated if this is an existing building).

When a part of a building is renovated/expanded, fire and life safety features of one section often affect other sections. It is the overall building that obtains the permit.

Floor plans must be to scale. Include at least one set at 1/2 scale. Indicate the scale used, such as 1/4" = 1 foot/ (This means 1/4" on paper represents 1 foot in real life. This is called 1/4" scale). Any scale can be used. Label outside dimensions.

Show doors and which way they swing. Show the location of windows in walls. Clear opening detail, and height of sill from floor may be required. Show stairs/ramps and provide details of them, such as riser height, tread depth, (nose to nose horizontally), handrail height, etc.

Label the intended use of every room compartment (such as "office," "bathroom," "sales area," etc.). We do not need to see what exists before demolition/remodeling, but rather the intended final plan.

Show any fire protection features that you intend to have, (such as emergency lights, exit signs, smoke detectors, portable fire extinguishers, etc.). During the plan review we will answer any questions you have about what may be required, and what is not.

Indicate door hardware type, door-closers and fire rating of any doors/walls.

Sprinkler details do not have to be provided to obtain the construction permit. The construction permit application form will indicate whether or not it will be sprinklered. We will confirm whether or not it is required to be sprinklered. If it is to have a sprinkler system, then the sprinkler contractor who will do the work will obtain a sprinkler permit from our office for you. At that time they will submit all sprinkler plan details to us.

In addition to the full set of normal sized dimensioned drawings a set measuring 11" x 17" shall be submitted for the following types of facilities:

- Health Care facilities
- Nursing Homes
- Limited Care facilities
- Residential Care facilities
- Assisted Living Facilities Level 1 and Level 2
- Day Care Centers
- Any other facility subject to inspection by the State Fire Marshal's Office or the Department of Public Safety

Once the fee is paid and application form submitted, then a file is opened for your project. At no extra cost, changes can be submitted before the construction permit is issued. With plans on file it is easy to answer future questions on the phone or by mail and fax. We need documentation for the project that indicates full compliance with the code and law before the construction permit can be issued. It will be evaluated by the 2006 NFPA Life Safety Code 101. (Call 1-800-344-3555 if you want to purchase your own copy.)

With this system it is easy for you to come in for a plan review with only 30% drawings and get feedback before you invest too much time designing something that may not meet compliance. Appointments can usually be made within 2 weeks. People who take the time to come in get scheduling priority over people who submit through the mail. Be sure to call first so that we may schedule you in.

Your plan review is done to the best of our ability, but the ultimate responsibility for code compliance is still retained by the design professional and the owner.

The above list is a general summary and is not intended to be all-inclusive. Depending on your project, other details may be required to be submitted. Please call if you have further questions.

### **Barrier-Free Construction Permits**

As of January 1, 1991, the Office of State Fire Marshal is authorized by the Maine Human Rights Commission to conduct mandatory and voluntary plan reviews and issue **Barrier-Free permits for places of public accommodation and/or places of employment.**

**New Construction\* projects.** As of January 1, 1996 regardless of cost or size, the following occupancies require a Barrier-Free permit and design professional:

- Educational
- Health Care
- Places of Assembly
- Mercantile
- Hotel, Motel, and Dormitory
- Lodging and Rooming
- Business

\* A renovation project is considered to be new construction by the Maine Human Rights Act, if the alteration affects at least 80% of the area of the building.

**A Design Professional**, licensed with the State of Maine, is required on projects over \$50,000 to certify compliance with state and federal accessibility laws. (This applies whether the project is new construction or an alteration).

**Renovation projects** (A Barrier-Free permit may be obtained on a voluntary basis).

**All projects applying for a Barrier-Free Permit are also required to apply for a Construction Permit.**

**A Barrier-Free permit is issued in conjunction with a construction permit. These state permits are in addition to any local permits that may be required.**

For more information please contact Licensing and Inspection at 207-626-3880.