

# DEVELOPMENT NEWS — FALL & WINTER 2025-26

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### Do I apply for the permit as the homeowner or does the contractor apply?

Township ordinances require that the *contractor*, if there is one, must apply for the permit. They must sign off on the permit application and provide a certificate of insurance (listing Whitehall Township as the certificate holder) showing their current workers compensation coverage policy or a notarized exemption form, pursuant to PA state law. This protects you as the homeowner from claims against your homeowner's insurance should a worker unfortunately get injured while working on your property. *Your* signature as the property owner is also required on building or zoning applications for new homes, additions, decks, patios, sheds, fences, driveways, and/or pool installations, because you as the property owner are responsible for guaranteeing that you know where your property lines are located.

How long does it take to have my plans reviewed and a permit issued? That depends on several things: the scope of your job, the thoroughness and timeliness of your plans and relevant information, the volume of work from other building projects (i.e., summertime tends to have a higher volume of permits compared to the winter months). Zoning permits will be issued or denied fairly quickly (3 to 7 business days), unless your submission requires additional information. Building, mechanical, electrical, and plumbing permit review shall take no more than 15 business days for residential and 30 business days for commercial, unless the township zoning officer or inspection agency requires additional information, then the clock will restart when this information is received.

### What inspections must my project undergo and how do I arrange for them?

**Zoning permits** typically require a final inspection only. The applicant must call the zoning officer at Ext. 1155 to set up the inspection. **Construction permits** are a lot more involved. A required inspections sheet is included with every building, mechanical, electrical, and/or plumbing permit. The applicant must call our third-party inspection agency to set up the inspection, only if the work is complete and there are no known code deficiencies. Inspections require at least 24-to-48-hour notice. *Please note that calls for inspections that are premature waste everyone's time – and may cost you extra money!* Permit fees are determined by the scope of work and number of inspections required throughout the job. Re-inspection fees are charged if/when additional inspections are needed due to not being ready, no shows, etc.

Does the township have specific information or instructions available for different types of jobs? Yes, the following guidelines and checklists are available for download on the "Forms and Documents" section of the website: Basement alterations guide, deck code guide, demolition checklist, driveway guidelines, fence guidelines, gas/pellet/wood stove and fireplace checklist, generator checklist, roof checklist, sign checklist, solar panel checklist, swimming pool and hot tub guide, temporary tent checklist... and coming soon... a retaining wall checklist!

How much will a permit cost? **Zoning permit fees** are determined by the estimated cost of the job. For **Construction permit fees**, please refer to our fee schedule for current building, mechanical, electrical, and plumbing permit pricing. These permit fees are based upon the contracted agent fees that are charged to the township plus any additional state surcharges. This is located on the website under forms and documents tab, as well as in Chapter 29 of the codified ordinances.

### Can I make a complaint about my neighbor anonymously or over the phone?

No, all complaints must be made in writing on the "Complaint Investigation Request" form. Please note that written complaints are not public record in accordance with the Right to Know Law P.S. §67.708.17(I) and will not be disclosed if a Right to Know request for same is filed.

## PERMIT APPLICATION PROCESS

The non-refundable permit application fee is \$60.00 for residential and \$150.00 for commercial. **Please know this fee is not the total permit fee and additional amounts will be due prior to permit issuance.** All applications can be found on our website under the "Forms and Documents" tab. **All applications must be brought in during business hours, mailed, or placed in the development office drop box located at the front of the municipal building (available 24/7).** Please keep in mind that review time can range from 1 to 3 weeks for residential and 2 to 4 weeks for commercial. Please plan accordingly!

## Important Numbers!

The Whitehall Township Bureau of Planning, Zoning & Development encompasses many varied areas. Here's a sample listing of some helpful numbers:

### **All Construction Inspections / Construction Questions:**

Keycodes Inspection Agency  
610-866-9663

**Zoning Officer / Code Enforcement:**  
610-437-5524 Ext. 1155

**Code Enforcement / Property Maintenance:**  
610-437-5524 Ext. 1133 or 1123

**Street Opening / Curbing & Sidewalk:**  
610-437-5524 Ext. 1158 or Ext. 1162:

**Bureau Chief / Development Issues:**  
610-437-5524 Ext. 1134

Or, you may want to speak to our excellent support staff. They can be reached by dialing Extensions 1128, 1131, or 1138.

## For New Property Owners...

A certificate of occupancy inspection is required any time a property changes ownership or tenancy.

Please note that it is the joint responsibility of both the *seller* and the *buyer* to have the property inspected and a new C-O issued. So, if you are purchasing a property, remember to ask the seller about the C-O status *before* you buy, or you will be held responsible for the lack of one.