

BUILDING PERMIT – OWNER-BUILDER VERIFICATION

Helpful Tips for the Owner-Builder

When the property owner decides to act as their own building contractor, they are commonly referred to as “Owner-Builders.” The following tips are intended to assist owner-builders in successfully completing their construction projects. Because most owner-builders are homeowners who are not intimately involved in the construction and inspection process (as are most building contractors), the experience can be overwhelming. The helpful tips listed below will assist you in understanding many of the requirements and regulations that will impact your owner-builder project.

- √ **“What should I do with the dog?”** Most Building Inspectors have experienced problems with dogs. Even the “nice” dogs have been known to bite strangers. For the safety of the Building Inspectors, dogs must not be allowed to run loose in the area where the Building Inspector is to conduct inspections. Please make arrangements to communicate with the Building Inspector directly that the dog has been secured. If you will not be home at the time of the inspection, it is a good idea to leave a note on the front door or the gate that the dog has been secured and that it is safe to enter the fenced yard area to perform the inspection.
- √ **“Do I need to be present for the inspection?”** Most inspections will require that someone over 18 years of age be present. It is also advisable that the person doing the actual construction be present to interact with the Building Inspector should questions arise. Additionally, the Building Inspector can be a valuable source of construction information for the owner-builder. On some types of inspections the Building Inspector needs to have access to the interior of the building; on others, they can perform their inspection from the exterior. On those occasions when the Building Inspector does not need to inspect construction features on the interior of the building, an adult need not be present if the approved plans and Permit/Job Card are on the site and there are no dogs loose in the area and access to the area is available (i.e., no locked gates, etc.). Nevertheless, it is a good idea to communicate with the Building Inspector (via a phone call or a note on the front door) if you will not be available for the inspection.
- √ **“How can I get in contact with the Building Inspector?”** The Building Inspectors are best reached by phone between 7:30 a.m. to 8:00 a.m. in the morning or between 4:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. in the afternoon. During most of the day they are in the field at a variety of locations performing inspections and are not available by phone.
- √ **“Does the Building Inspector need to see the City-Approved plans?”** YES. The Building Inspector’s primary role is to assure that the project is constructed as shown on the plans that were approved by the City. When the permit was issued, you were provided with a set of plans that were stamped “Approved.” These are the plans that must be available to the Building Inspector for the inspection. Any deviations from the approved plans must be reviewed and approved by the City’s plan checkers before the Building Inspector will approve the work.
- √ **“What if I fail the inspection?”** Unfortunately, inspections are not always passed on the first attempt. The Building Inspector will let you know, either verbally or in writing what the problems are and in some cases, how to correct the particular problem. After the corrections have been made, you will need to schedule a re-inspection so that the Building Inspector can verify the corrective work. Please be sure to make all of the corrections before re-scheduling the re-inspection. If re-inspections are scheduled and the corrective work has not been done, the Building Inspector may assess a \$150.00 re-inspection fee which must be paid at City Hall before any additional inspections will be performed at the site.
- √ **“What about retrofit Smoke Alarms and Carbon Monoxide Alarms in my home?”** Most home improvement projects require that smoke alarms and carbon monoxide alarms be retrofitted into the existing home. The Building Inspector will need to verify that the alarms have been installed in bedrooms, hallways and stairways, etc. The homeowner may choose to complete the “Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarm Retrofit Verification Form” in lieu of having the Building Inspector perform the inspection. The specific requirements for the type and location of these alarms is contained in the “Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarm Retrofit Verification Form” available at City Hall.

**For more information, contact: City of Moreno Valley Building and Safety Division
Phone (951) 413-3350 or FAX (951) 413-3363**



BUILDING PERMIT – OWNER-BUILDER VERIFICATION

Disclosures and forms for Owner-Builders Applying for Construction Permits

IMPORTANT! NOTICE TO PROPERTY OWNER

Dear Property Owner:

An application for a building permit has been submitted in your name listing yourself as the builder of the property improvements specified at: _____ . We are providing you with an Owner-Builder Acknowledgement and Information Verification Form to make you aware of your responsibilities and possible risk you may incur by having this permit issued in your name as the Owner-Builder. **We will not issue a building permit until you have read, initialed your understanding of each provision, signed, and returned this form to us at our official address indicated.** An agent of the owner cannot execute this notice unless you, the property owner, obtain the prior approval of the permitting authority.

OWNER'S ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND VERIFICATION OF INFORMATION

DIRECTIONS: Read and initial each statement below to signify that you understand or verify this information.

- 1. I understand a frequent practice of unlicensed persons is to have the property owner obtain an "Owner-Builder" building permit that erroneously implies that the property owner is providing his or her own labor and material personally. I, as the Owner-Builder, may be held liable and subject to serious financial risk for any injuries sustained by an unlicensed person and his or her employees while working on my property. My homeowner's insurance may not provide coverage for those injuries. I am willfully acting as an Owner-Builder and am aware of the limits of my insurance coverage for injuries to workers on my property.
- 2. I understand building permits are not required to be signed by property owners unless they are *responsible* for the construction and are not hiring a licensed Contractor to assume this responsibility.
- 3. I understand as an "Owner-Builder" I am the responsible party of record on the permit. I understand that I may protect myself from potential financial risk by hiring a licensed Contractor and having the permit filed in his or her name instead of my own.
- 4. I understand Contractors are required by law to be licensed and bonded in California and to list their license numbers on permits and contacts.
- 5. I understand if I employ or otherwise engage any persons, other than California licensed Contractors, and the total value of my construction is at least five hundred dollars (\$500), including labor and materials, I may be considered an "employer" under State and Federal law.
- 6. I understand if I am considered an "employer" under State and Federal law, I must register with the State and Federal government, withhold payroll taxes, provide workers' compensation disability insurance, and contribute to unemployment compensation for each "employee." I also understand my failure to abide by these laws may subject me to serious financial risk.
- 7. I understand under California Contractors' State License Law, an Owner-Builder who builds single-family residential structures cannot legally build them with the intent to offer them for sale, unless *all* work is performed by licensed subcontractors and the number of structures does not exceed four within any calendar year, or all of the work is performed under contract with a licensed general building Contractor.
- 8. I understand as an Owner-Builder if I sell the property for which this permit is issued, I may be held liable for any financial or personal injuries sustained by any subsequent owner(s) that result from any latent construction defects in the workmanship or materials.

9. I understand I may obtain more information regarding my obligations as an "employer" from the Internal Revenue Service, the United States Small Business Administration, the California Department of Benefit Payments, and the California Division of Industrial Accidents. I also understand I may contact the California Contractors' State License Board (CSLB) at 1-800-321-CSLB (2752) or www.cslb.ca.gov for more information about licensed contractors.

10. I am aware of and consent to an Owner-Builder building permit applied for in my name, and understand that I am the party legally and financially responsible for proposed construction activity at the following address: _____.

11. I agree that, as the party legally and financially responsible for this proposed construction activity, I will abide by all applicable laws and requirements that govern Owner-Builders as well as employers.

12. I agree to notify the issuer of this form immediately of any additions, deletions, or changes to any of the information I have provided on this form. Licensed contractors are regulated by laws designed to protect the public. If you contract with someone who does not have a license, the Contractors' State License Board may be unable to assist you with any financial loss you may sustain as a result of a complaint. Your only remedy against unlicensed Contractors may be in civil court. It is also important for you to understand that if an unlicensed Contractor or employee of that individual or firm is injured while working on your property, you may be held liable for damages. If you obtain a permit as Owner-Builder and wish to hire Contractors, you will be responsible for verifying whether or not those Contractors are properly licensed and the status of their workers' compensation insurance coverage.

Before a building permit can be issued, this form must be completed and signed by the property owner and returned to the agency responsible for issuing the permit. Note: A copy of the property owner's driver's license, form notarization, or other verification acceptable to the agency is required to be presented when the permit is issued to verify the property owner's signature.

Signature of Property Owner: _____ Date: _____

Note: The following Authorization Form is required to be completed by the property owner only when designating an agent of the property owner to apply for a construction permit for the Owner-Builder.

AUTHORIZATION OF AGENT TO ACT ON PROPERTY OWNER'S BEHALF

Excluding the Notice to Property Owner, the execution of which I understand is my personal responsibility, I hereby authorize the following person(s) to act as my agent(s) to apply for, sign, and file the documents necessary to obtain an Owner-Builder Permit for my project.

Scope of Construction Project (or Description of Work): _____

Project Location or Address: _____

Name of Authorized Agent: _____ Tel No: _____

Address of Authorized Agent: _____

I declare under penalty of perjury that I am the property owner for the address listed above and I personally filled out the above information and certify its accuracy. *Note: A copy of the owner's driver's license, form notarization, or other verification acceptable to the agency is required to be presented when the permit is issued to verify the property owner's signature.*

Signature of Property Owner: _____ Date: _____