

ZONING PERMIT PROCEDURES FOR PORTAGE COUNTY ZONING

PORTAGE COUNTY PLANNING AND ZONING DEPARTMENT

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The [Portage County Zoning Ordinance](#) requires property owners to apply for a Zoning Permit issued through the Portage County Planning and Zoning Department before moving forward with a number of activities. Below is a summary of procedures required to obtain a Zoning Permit; see Section 7.1.6.2 for complete requirements.

What does that mean? If you live in the Towns of Alban, Almond, Amherst, Belmont, Buena Vista, Carson, Dewey, Eau Pleine, Hull, Lanark, Linwood, New Hope, Plover, Sharon, and Stockton, you will need to secure a Zoning Permit before proceeding with your project. Residents of the Towns of Grant and Pine Grove will also need a Portage County Zoning Permit if their project is located within Shoreland or Floodplain areas.

Zoning Permits are required to approve a proposed use of property, based on the Portage County Zoning Ordinance requirements for the property. It is not a “building permit” which is required separately by the State of Wisconsin for actual construction of a structure, and is available through Building Inspectors who are retained individually by each Town in Portage County (see below).

When is a Zoning Permit **NOT REQUIRED**:

- For any interior remodeling, improvements, or alterations, unless you increase floor area, such as adding a loft or converting an attic space to living space, which may impact septic system requirements;
- For any exterior alterations, improvements or remodeling provided there is not an increase in floor area constructed to the existing building;
- For any accessory building less than 100 square feet, provided such building conforms to all the setbacks, yard and open space requirements of this Ordinance;
- For farm buildings and structures not for human habitation which are not permanently fixed to the ground and are readily removable in their entirety; provided that this regulation shall not apply to roadside stands or permitted signs.

When is a Zoning Permit **REQUIRED**:

- For construction of new homes and commercial, agricultural, and industrial buildings;
- Additions, exterior alterations, or remodeling of an existing building that increases the floor area;
- Placement of campers in Agricultural, Conservancy and/or Rural Limited Zoning Districts (prohibited in other Districts);
- Installation of signs;
- Installation of ponds or other extractions and excavations;
- Any new accessory building/structure 100 square feet in size or more (garage, shed, storage building, etc.);
- Change of land use, such as a new commercial use of the property;
- Structural changes to buildings in a floodplain;
- Soil disturbance greater than 1,000 square feet, including driveways.

When is a Stormwater Review Plan/Permit REQUIRED: (See #3 Below)

In addition to a Zoning Permit, a separate **Stormwater Review Plan/Permit** may be required and is determined on a case by case basis. Please call prior to submitting a Zoning Permit Application to inquire on the need for this permit.

We strongly recommend you identify the Zoning District for your property and review the list of [Permitted Uses - Special Exceptions](#) to see if your intended use is allowable in your zoning district prior to making application. Please contact our office with any questions, or utilize our [GIS Website](#) for Zoning District information.

Application Steps:

1. Submit a completed [Zoning Permit Application form](#) including Property Owners signature to our office using the contact information listed above. Return the completed application to our office at least 2 weeks prior to the intended start of construction. Construction start includes footings, foundations, basements and slab work.
2. Attach a [Drawing](#) showing the shape and dimensions of the lot to be built upon, the exact size and location of the building on the lot including setback from all property lines, the existing or intended use of the building, the distance between the nearest point on the building and the centerline of the road/road right-of-way, water body, well, septic tank and drainfield. (see [Zoning Standards and Setbacks](#)). **Property owner will also need to stake the location of any proposed structure to allow verification of compliance with setback requirements.**
3. Submittal of a separate [Stormwater Plan Review form](#) is required in the following instances:
 - Accessory building(s) greater than 2,000 sq.ft. proposed in any Residential zoning district (R1, R2, R3, R4, R5);
 - Commercial development proposed in any zoning district;
 - Any development proposed in the C1, C2, C3, C4, Ind, or PD zoning district;
 - New construction proposed within 300' of surface water or wetlands and drains towards surface water or wetlands;
 - New construction proposed which may increase stormwater or sediment onto an adjacent property.
4. Include [Fee](#) payment– depends on work being proposed. (see [Fee Schedule](#))
5. A [Sanitary Permit](#) is required before a Zoning Permit can be issued for new homes and additions to homes which increase the number of bedrooms or disrupt the existing building sewer line. A licensed plumber must submit a sanitary permit application to our office for any septic system with running water (see [Plumbers List](#)). Homeowners are allowed to apply for non-plumbing sanitary permits such as privies or outhouses.
6. A [property address](#) needs to be assigned to any new or vacant lot where construction is now proposed. Contact the [Town Clerk](#) in the town where construction is to take place to obtain the address number assignment.

You may also need....

A [Uniform Dwelling Code \(UDC\) Building Permit](#) is required for all new dwellings and may be required for other improvements. These permits are issued by the Town. Contact:

- Towns of Alban, Amherst, Lanark, Plover, Sharon and Stockton: Mike Bembenek (715) 570-8378,
- Town of Hull: Issued by Village of Plover Building Inspectors - Ethan Meddaugh; Eric Krug (715) 345-5312
- Towns of Carson, Dewey, Linwood, and New Hope: Bob Christensen (715) 297-6600
- Towns of Almond and Belmont: Ethan Meddaugh (715) 340-2611
- Towns of Buena Vista, Eau Pleine, Grant, and Pine Grove: Benjamin Grimm (715) 305-8814

[Driveway and Culvert Permits](#) may be required. Contact the appropriate agency depending on your location:

- Town Roads – Contact the [Town Clerk](#)
- County Roads - Contact the Portage County Highway Department (715) 345-5230.
- State or Federal Highway - Wisconsin State Department of Transportation (715) 421-8051

[Commercial Buildings](#) must have State approval for building and onsite waste treatment systems. State approvals allow for issuance of a Portage County Sanitary Permit. (see additional [commercial/industrial requirements](#))

- Towns of Amherst and Plover contact: Mike Bembenek, Building Inspector, (715) 570-8378
- Town of Hull contact: Village of Plover Building Inspectors, (715) 345-5312
- All other Towns contact: Jon Molledahl, WI Dept. of Safety and Professional Services (DSPS), (608) 225-6520

[Wetland Permits](#) are required for any activity in wetlands. Contact our office in addition to:

- Kyle Zibung, Army Corps of Engineers (715) 290-5877
- James Brodzeller, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (608) 574-0573

[Private Well Construction](#): Contact your [well installer](#) or the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to obtain a required Well Notification Number and pay the associated fee prior to well construction. Visit the DNR website at: <http://dnr.wi.gov/> and search keywords “private well construction”.