



CHARLESTON FIRE DEPARTMENT



Fire Marshal Division

Information Bulletin

Fire Plan Review & Permitting

The Charleston Fire Department Fire Marshal Division conducts plan reviews of fire protection systems and jointly reviews life safety and construction plans with the Building Inspection Division. Each plan submittal is important to us and we realize the need to provide timely feedback to you regarding your project.

Please be sure to plan appropriately and ensure adequate time for the review and comment period. We do not provide an expedited plan service and all plans will be reviewed in the order received. The payment and issuance of all permits will occur through the Permit Center. The following information is intended to outline the plan submittal process and ensure necessary documents are submitted.

Applications:

The most recent version of the published applications will be retained on the official City of Charleston website and are available for review and download at www.charleston-sc.gov/fm.

Plan Submittal

Plan submittals must include the current application and all supplemental information identified on the application in order to initiate a review and ensure a smooth and timely review process. Incomplete submittals will be placed on “hold” until all necessary information has been delivered. Sub-trade plans that are associated with a master building project cannot be accepted until the master building permit has been approved. Plans may be dropped off or mailed to: Permit Center, 2 George Street, Charleston, SC 29401.

Plan Reviewer

Upon receipt of a completed plan submittal package, plans will be assigned by the Fire Marshal Division to a reviewer. This is generally based on the location within the City, but may vary based on workloads.

Plan Review Goals

Plans will be reviewed during the intake process and assigned to one of five levels (identified on the next page) based on the type and size of the project. Each level includes a projected review time for initial and subsequent submittals. Review times will be extended based on workloads of the Fire Marshal Division.

Fire Permit Fees

Permit fees will be established by the City of Charleston and applied to Fire Permits. Fire Permits will be required for construction or operational permits as outlined by the International Fire Code and/or required by the Fire Marshal Division. The total value will be comprised of an application fee, plan review fee, inspection fee, with a multiplier applied based on the total number of floors of the work area unless each floor is permitted separately. See the following page for examples of project levels and fees.

The plan review fee covers the cost of the initial and one additional review of resubmitted documents (2 reviews). Plans requiring additional reviews will be assessed the same review fee again, granting up to 2 additional reviews. Re-inspection fees will be assessed for each failed inspection based on the rates on the following page.

Work Without a Permit

Permit fees will be doubled for work commencing without a permit. Payment of the fee shall neither relieve any person from complying with code requirements or other penalties for commencing work without approval.

The following outlines the projected review time for initial and subsequent submittals and the method to calculate the fire permit fee. Each plan will be assigned to one of five levels based on the criteria below.

Level 1		Goal – Initial submittal review: 4 business days.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Quick Permits” are intended for minor modifications, within the qualifying scope outlined on the application, to fire sprinkler and fire alarm systems. • Operational Permits (Short Term Rental, Kitchen Exhaust Cleaners, Tents, Temporary Standpipes, Special Events, etc.). • Mobile Food Vendors – Category: (A) No cooking or warming of food or portable power, (B) Warm or reheat food and/or utilize portable power or fuel, (C) Mobile food prep with cooking. 			
Operational & Quick Permit Fees: \$40 Application + \$32.61 Plan Review + \$32.61 Inspection			
Mobile Food Vendor Fee – Category: (A) \$40, (B) \$56.30, (C) \$72.61			
Re-inspection Fee (all level 1 permits) = \$32.61			
Level 2		Goal - Initial submittal review: 6 business days. Resubmittal review: 4 business days	
Existing Structures		Fire Permits & Systems	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minor interior renovations or non-structural changes to existing buildings. • No change of occupancy classification. • Does not alter the egress strategy, egress layout, or egress capacity. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Installation of limited fire protection systems (alarm panel monitoring sprinkler flow or elevator recall, kitchen suppression systems, or similar). • Fire service underground (new or modification). 	
Fire Permit Fee = \$40 Application + \$48.92 Plan Review + (\$65.22 Inspection x # of Floors Involved)			
Re-inspection Fee = \$48.92 x # of floors involved in the permit area			
Level 3		Goal - Initial submittal review: 12 business days. Resubmittal review: 6 business days	
Existing Structures		Fire Permits & Systems	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work area <5,000 square feet • Structural or non-structural and/or additions. • May include change of use, occupant load, or alter egress. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Addition of new fire protection systems in buildings protecting areas <5,000 square feet or alterations to existing fire systems that do not change the hazard class. • Site /TRC plans. • Emergency Responder Radio Coverage Systems. 	
Fire Permit Fee = \$40 Application + \$97.83 Plan Review + (\$97.83 Inspection x # of Floors Involved)			
Re-inspection Fee = \$65.22 x # of floors involved in the permit area			
Level 4		Goal - Initial submittal review: 24 business days. Resubmittal review: 12 business days	
Existing Structures		New Structures	Fire Permits & Systems
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work area >5,000 or <12,000 sq. ft. • Structural or non-structural and/or additions. • May include change of use, occupant load, or alter egress. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <12,000 sq. ft. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Addition of new fire protection systems in buildings protecting areas >5,000 sq. ft. and <52,000 sq. ft. or alterations to existing fire systems that change the hazard classification.
Fire Permit Fee = \$40 Application + \$130.44 Plan Review + (\$146.75 Inspection x # of Floors Involved)			
Re-inspection Fee = \$81.53 x # of floors involved in the permit area			
Level 5		Goal - Initial submittal review: 30 business days. Resubmittal review: 15 business days	
Existing or New Structures		Fire Permits & Systems	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work area >12,000 sq. ft. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Addition of fire protection systems in buildings or areas >52,000 sq. ft 	
Fire Permit Fee = \$40 Application + \$195.66 Plan Review + (\$195.66 Inspection x # of Floors Involved)			
Re-inspection Fee = \$97.83 x # of floors involved in the permit area			