

Unity Township Residential Building Permits



Unity Township
Department of Building Safety
154 Beatty County Road
Latrobe, PA 15650
724-539-2546
724-539-1716 - Fax

***** Notice *****

The following is required for all applications:

1. Permit applications received by this office will be processed in accordance with the time specified by the Uniform Construction Code. For residential applications, this will be within 15 working days. Commercial applications will be within 30 working days. Applications that are incomplete, substandard or lack the required materials will be rejected within the times specified above. Applicants will receive a telephone call from the township for approved applications. Applicants who have had their applications rejected will be contacted by mail or fax. Do not call or email to check the status of an application. *(Note: Applications must be legible and completely filled out. If an item is not applicable, indicate with N/A.)*
2. **No work shall begin on any project until the application is approved and permit is issued and paid for.**
3. **NO TELEPHONE CALLS WILL BE ACCEPTED TO SCHEDULE ANY INSPECTION.** All inspections must be scheduled on the required Inspection Request form. This form may be faxed to this office (724-539-1716) or forwarded to the Township. **No less than five (5) working days is required for all inspection requests.**
4. The Uniform Construction Code can be found on the Department of Labor and Industry's website. The 2015 International Building Codes are available from the International Code Council. All structures must be constructed in accordance with these codes. In order to assure that your application is not returned, please design your building in accordance with these codes.
5. Any failed inspection will be assessed a \$50 reinspection fee. If an inspection results in a failure, a Stop Work Order will be issued. No work with the exception of making the required changes can be done until a new inspection has been completed. Any reinspection must be scheduled by the builder on the required Inspection Request form.
6. Occupancy Permits will only be issued for structures that have **PASSED** all of the required inspections. To obtain an Occupancy Permit, applicants must submit the required form to the Township after the final inspection has been completed. Please be advised that it may take up to five business days for issuance.

Sincerely,

Merle Musick
Building Code Official

Residential Information Only

The guidelines in this brochure only apply to single-family dwellings, two-family dwellings (duplexes, twins, houses with separate dwelling units on first floor and second floor), townhouses and structures that are considered to be “accessory” to these types of residential structures.

Any other uses or proposed construction would be considered a “Commercial” and must comply with the requirements for commercial buildings. Please contact the Building Code Official for more information on how to determine the requirements for any proposed commercial construction.

Words of Caution...

Please keep in mind that doing work regulated by the UCC without a permit will result in an enforcement action being taken against you by Unity Township. Upon conviction, you may be subject to fines and penalties up to and including \$1,000 per day of each violation.

Also, occupying any structure without a Certificate of Occupancy issued by the Building Code Official is a serious violation and will also result in enforcement action. Please do not occupy or begin using any structure without a Certificate of Occupancy.

If you fail to obtain permits, inspections and Certificates of Occupancy, it is very likely that you will have serious difficulties when you eventually try to sell your house or property, as all structures built since April 9, 2004, must have a legal Certificate of Occupancy.

Required Residential Permits

By state law, a building permit, inspections and a Certificate of Occupancy is required for:

- Any new house (one or two-family dwelling).
- Any addition to an existing house:
 - Constructing one or more new stories on top of an existing house.
 - Increasing the perimeter of the existing house.
- Installing a new manufactured home (HUD Code).
- Installing a new modular home.
- Relocating and installing a used manufactured home.
- Any garage or carport that is attached to the house.
- Any garage, carport, shed or greenhouse that is not attached to a **single-family dwelling** and is 1,000 square feet or larger (measuring the perimeter).
- Any garage, carport, shed or greenhouse that is not attached to a **two-family dwelling** or townhouse and is 120 square feet or larger (measuring the perimeter).
- Enclosing a porch or patio.
- Installing/building a sunroom or “three-season” room.
- Installing any deck that is more than 30” above ground level at any point around the perimeter of the deck.

- Installing any deck less than 30" above ground level if it has a roof/covering above it.
- Installing an indoor or outdoor hot tub or spa.
- Constructing an in-ground swimming pool (inside or outside).
- Constructing an above-ground swimming pool (deeper than 24 inches).
- Installing any fence higher than 6 feet.
- Installing any retaining wall higher than 4 feet.
- Structural alterations to an existing dwelling unit (Building Code Official will determine if the work you intend to perform involves structural alterations).
- Changes to an existing means of egress (exit door, stairs, handrails, guard systems, ramps).
- Demolition.
- Any portion of a dwelling or residential accessory structure that will be used for commercial purposes (open to employees or the public). Examples include:
 - Professional offices
 - Business offices
 - Notaries
 - Beauty shops, nail salons and barber shops
 - Car or equipment repair

For clarification, the following definitions are contained in the UCC:

- **Addition** – An extension or increase in floor area or height of a building or structure.
- **Alteration** – Any construction or renovation to an existing structure other than repair or addition.
- **Repair** – The reconstruction or renewal of any part of an existing building for the purpose of its maintenance.
- **Residential Building** – Detached one-family and two-family dwellings and multiple single-family dwellings which are not more than three stories in height with a separate means of egress which includes accessory structures.
- **Utility and Miscellaneous Use Structures** – Includes sheds, carports and detached garages that are less than 1,000 square feet. But this definition specifically excludes pools or spas.

Permits must be applied for and issued before any work may begin. All work performed on residential buildings and their accessory structures must comply with the most current edition of the International Residential Code, published by the International Code Council. This code is republished every three years with changes and additions. We are currently utilizing the 2015 International Residential Code in Pennsylvania. The Pennsylvania Uniform Construction Code can be found on the Department of Labor and Industry's website. All structures must be constructed in accordance with these codes. In order to assure that your application is not returned, please design your building in accordance with these codes.

You may ask to inspect a copy of the International Residential Code at the Unity Township Department of Building Safety.

Zoning, Land Use and Other Municipal Approvals

Keep in mind that Unity Township Zoning and Land Use Ordinances may restrict or prohibit structures that are allowed by the UCC. Your Building Code Official can help you determine whether your proposed work requires zoning or other municipal approvals.

Zoning approval and other municipal approvals or permits (when required) must be obtained and presented to the Building Code Official before a building or building-related permit under the UCC may be issued.

Manufactured Home Installation

Any manufactured home (HUD Code insignia) that is installed in Pennsylvania must be installed **ONLY** by an installer that has been currently certified by the DCED. In addition, upon completion of the installation, the certified installer must complete a Certificate of Compliance. This must be provided to DCED, the purchaser and the Township. The name, signature and certification number of the installer must appear on the top of the form. All certified installers will have been provided an identification card by DCED.

This regulation **PROHIBITS** Unity Township from issuing a Certificate of Occupancy for any new manufactured home if a Certificate of Compliance has not been completed by a certified installer.

UCC Required Inspections

All construction regulated by the UCC is required to be inspected by certified inspectors. The Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry certifies inspectors in nineteen different certification categories after an inspector has demonstrated knowledge in that construction category and has passed a national standardized test.

Building permit holders must contact Unity Township's Department of Building Safety to schedule inspections. The Inspection Request form can be forwarded or faxed to the Township. All inspection requests must be received at least five (5) working days prior to the date the inspection is requested.

On a new residential structure or addition, there are normally inspections required for the footer, foundation, framing, electrical, mechanical, plumbing, wall board and the final inspection. There are typically two inspections required for residential in-ground pools: one inspection for the bonding and grounding and the final inspection. Above ground pools typically requires one inspection. Mobile homes or modular homes require inspections for the footer, foundation, electrical and final.

The above referenced inspections are not only a requirement of the code; they also are a good idea for the homeowner. By assuring a project is done correctly, they have the peace of mind of knowing that the construction is safe, they have a Certificate of Occupancy for homeowners insurance and if the property is ever sold they have proof that the construction was done in compliance with a nationally accepted building code.

For more information, please refer to the attached UCC Inspection Procedures Statement.

Required Residential Building Permit Attachments

Residential Building Permit Applications that are incomplete, substandard or lack the required materials will be rejected. The following guide identifies the required materials that must be completed and submitted for approval:

New Home Construction

- Completed Building Permit Application Form including UCC Inspection Procedures Statement, Application Checklists.
- 2 Copies of Building Plans.
- Copy of Sewage or Septic Permit.
- Survey (Professional or Hand Drawn – Must be to Scale).
- PennDOT Highway Occupancy Permit (If Applicable).

Additions

- Completed Building Permit Application Form including UCC Inspection Procedures Statement, Application Checklist.
- 2 Copies of Building Plans (Can be Hand Drawn).
- Survey (Professional or Hand Drawn – Must be to Scale).

Remodeling

- Completed Building Permit Application Form including UCC Inspection Procedures Statement, Application Checklist.
- 2 Copies of Building Plans (Can be Hand Drawn).
- Survey (Professional or Hand Drawn – Must be to Scale).

Garages

- Completed Building Permit Application Form including UCC Inspection Procedures Statement, Application Checklist.
- 2 Copies of Building Plans (Can be Hand Drawn).
- Survey (Professional or Hand Drawn – Must be to Scale).

Porch / Patio / Deck

- Completed Building Permit Application Form including UCC Inspection Procedures Statement, Application Checklist.
- 2 Copies of Building Plans (Can be Hand Drawn).
- Survey (Professional or Hand Drawn – Must be to Scale).

Swimming Pool (Above and In-Ground)

- Completed Building Permit Application Form including UCC Inspection Procedures Statement, Application Checklist.
- Survey (Professional or Hand Drawn – Must be to Scale).
- Brand of Pool.

- Manufacturers Specifications.

Mobile Homes

- Completed Building Permit Application Form including UCC Inspection Procedures Statement, Application Checklist.
- Foundation Plans.
- Survey (Professional or Hand Drawn – Must be to Scale).
- Manufacturer Specifications.
- Copy of Sewage or Septic Permit.
- PennDOT Highway Occupancy Permit (If Applicable).

Sheds / Storage Buildings

- Completed Building Permit Application Form including UCC Inspection Procedures Statement, Application Checklist.
- 2 Copies of Building Plans (Can be Hand Drawn).
- Survey (Professional or Hand Drawn – Must be to Scale).

Demolition

- Completed Demolition Permit Application Form including completed Checklist and Construction Guidelines.
- 2 Copies of Site Plans clearly describing the structure(s) being demolished including the location, distances to property lines and distances to sidewalks, pavement and curbs where they abut property lines. Plans must also show the size and location of any existing buildings or structures that will remain on the site.
- Documentation that states all utilities have been disconnected.

The following checklist was prepared to assist you with the required documentation that is required to be submitted with every Building Permit Application. Please complete this list and submit all of the applicable items with your Building Permit Application. Applications that are not accompanied by this checklist or any required item will be rejected.

Two (2) sets of plans must be prepared and submitted showing the following:

- ☐ Energy Calculations Type _____
Include U factors of Windows and Doors. Type and R factor of Insulation.
- ☐ Wall Details _____
Include type of finish of interior wall (i.e. wallboard, plaster, etc.) Exterior finish (i.e. brick, stucco, etc.)
- ☐ Depth Type of Foundation _____
Include Thickness of Foundation, Height and Type (i.e. Block (CMU), poured, cast, etc.)
- ☐ Size of Footer _____
Include depth and width
- ☐ Size of Windows _____
- ☐ Wall Bracing _____
Type of wall bracing must be shown (i.e. T bracing, etc.)
- ☐ Truss Specifications _____
Must be Supplied for Manufactured Trusses
- ☐ Smoke Detector Locations _____
- ☐ Plumbing Details _____
- ☐ Mechanical Details _____
- ☐ Fire Wall Details _____
- ☐ Optional Details Listed _____
- ☐ Stair Geometry _____
- ☐ Foundation Anchorage _____
- ☐ Crawl Space _____
Show Vent Location and Size, Vapor Barriers, etc.
- ☐ Framing Details Needed _____
 - ☐ Size and Species of Lumber
 - ☐ Joists Spacing
 - ☐ Spans
- ☐ Chimney and Fireplace _____
Show All Details, Including Type of Fuel, Size of Flue, etc.
- ☐ Slab Details _____

In addition to the required two sets of plans, the following must be submitted:

- ☐ Highway Occupancy Permit for Any New Driveway Off of a State Highway
- ☐ Septic or Sewage Permit
- ☐ Plot Plan Showing Building, Property Lines, Existing Buildings, Gas Wells, etc.

Name of Applicant _____

Date _____

Unity Township Department of Building Safety

UCC INSPECTION PROCEDURES STATEMENT

I hereby certify that I will comply with all applicable inspection procedures specified below:

1. **FOOTING INSPECTION** is to be performed after footing is dug and ready for pour. (If rods are required, they must be in place.) **The permit applicant is required to contact the Unity Township Department of Building Safety on the required form requesting an inspection no less than five (5) working days in advance of the desired inspection date.**
2. **FOUNDATION INSPECTION** is to be performed before framing work begins or backfill is installed. Grease traps (if applicable), cleanouts, foundation and building drains must be in place; foundation coating must be applied, anchor bolts and top plate shall be installed. All underground plumbing, mechanical, and electrical trenching must remain open and all piping, sleeves and/or conduit required for underground utilities shall be in place and provided with rodent-proofing. **The permit applicant is required to contact the Unity Township Department of Building Safety on the required form requesting an inspection no less than five (5) working days in advance of the desired inspection date.**
3. **FRAMING/PLUMBING/MECHANICAL/ INSPECTION** is to be performed as one inspection unless prior approval has been obtained from the Building Code Official. **The permit applicant is required to contact the Unity Township Department of Building Safety on the required form requesting an inspection no less than five (5) working days in advance of the desired inspection date.**
 - **Framing Inspection** is to be performed before insulation is installed and after all rough-in work is complete on plumbing, electrical and mechanical systems. ***Note: The framing may not be approved until the plumbing, electrical and mechanical rough-in work has been approved by the Building Inspector.***
 - **Plumbing Inspection** is to be performed after the roof, framing, fire-blocking, fire-stopping and bracing are in place and all sanitary, storm and water distribution piping is roughed-in. This inspection is required before the installation of wall, ceiling or flooring membranes.
 - **Mechanical Inspection** is to be performed after the roof, framing, fire-blocking and bracing are in place and all ducting and other components to be concealed are complete. This inspection is required before the installation of wall, ceiling or flooring membranes.
4. **FIRE PROTECTION SYSTEMS** (for commercial structures) is to be performed after fire alarm systems and/or fire suppression. Systems are installed and functioning. The Building Code Official has the option to accept installation and test certificates from the installing contractor(s) in lieu of witnessing the testing of fire protection systems. Please note that, if they were not submitted with the initial application, shop drawings must be submitted for Building Code Official review and approval no less than five (5) working days before the projected installation date. **The permit applicant is required to contact the Unity Township Department of Building Safety on the required form requesting an inspection no less than five (5) working days in advance of the desired inspection date.**
5. **FINAL BUILDING INSPECTION** is to be performed after all items pertaining to the issued building permit have been completed. These items include, but are not limited to:
 - Plumbing Work
 - Mechanical (HVAC) Work
 - Emergency Lighting System
 - Fire Extinguishers
 - Egress
 - Fire Protection Systems (Including Required Fire-Rated Construction Components)
 - Grading
 - Site Plan Compliance
 - Accessibility
 - Energy Conservation

The permit applicant is required to contact the Unity Township Department of Building Safety on the required form requesting an inspection no less than five (5) working days in advance of the desired final inspection date.

Please note that accessibility provisions and verification of compliance with the International Energy Conservation Code shall be inspected as part of other identified inspections.

NO WORK MAY BE CONCEALED FROM VIEW UNTIL IT HAS BEEN APPROVED BY THE BUILDING INSPECTOR.

I fully understand that it is my responsibility to contact the Unity Township Department of Building Safety on the required Inspection Request form for inspections; and if inspections are not made according to this procedure, I may be in violation of the UCC and may be subject to prosecution. I also understand that no one may occupy the structure (or portion thereof) until a Certificate of Occupancy is obtained.

Signature of Permit Applicant _____ Date _____

Building Street Address _____