

Richardson Inspection is in compliance with the Uniform Construction Code, Act 45 of 2004, requires Building Permits. Further, certain construction exempted by the Code requires a zoning Permit issued by the municipality. Check with the Township before beginning any new construction.

## **PERMIT REQUIREMENTS UNDER THE PENNSYLVANIA UNIFORM CONSTRUCTION CODE**

### **Residential Buildings:**

**NEW CONSTRUCTION:** A permit is required whenever an owner or agent intends to construct, move, re-locate, enlarge, alter, or demolish any residential dwelling. This would include work such as:

- New dwellings and structures, including modular home and mobile home installation (new or used)
- Additions of any size
- Most decks that are over 30-inches in height at any point above the ground
- Sunrooms



**\*Under the Code, an addition is defined as any extension or increase in floor area or height of any building.**

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** *Building sites for new or replacement dwellings to be served by an existing individual on lot sewage disposal (septic) systems, including privies and holding tanks, must be tested, field verified and*

*approved by the municipal Sewage Enforcement Officer PRIOR to making an application for a Building Permit*

### **REMODELING, REPAIRS, AND ALTERATIONS:**

Generally, a Permit is not required for most remodeling and repair projects. However, a Permit is required if:

- The project involves the cutting of any structural beam or header or any load-bearing support wall.
- The project changes any existing means of egress (exit).
- The project involves work or service to the electrical service to the dwelling, which will require a permit and inspection by the power company.

A Permit is not generally required under Pennsylvania law when finishing or remodeling an existing basement. **IF IN DOUBT AS TO IF A PERMIT IS REQUIRED, PLEASE CALL AND ASK.** Sleeping rooms/bedrooms in the basement require a permit and inspections.

### **DETACHED RESIDENTIAL ACCESSORY BUILDINGS:**

The code in Pennsylvania allows for an exception to the UCC Permit requirements for certain accessory structures that are not attached to a dwelling. Utility and miscellaneous structures, such as sheds and garages, which are **smaller than 1000 square feet and NOT attached to the dwelling**, do not require a UCC Building Permit.



**\*HOWEVER, OTHER PERMITS ARE REQUIRED BY THE MUNICIPALITY FOR THESE TYPES OF STRUCTURES. PLEASE CONTACT THE MUNICIPALITY TO DETERMINE IF OTHER PERMITS, SUCH AS A ZONING PERMIT(S) ARE REQUIRED.**

Even though these recreational cabins, small sheds and garages are exempt from the UCC, they may still require a zoning permit. Zoning permits typically regulate where a certain type of building may be built, local laws governs where the structure may be built. A building permit on the other hand regulates how the building is actually constructed or built.

### **CAMPS AND OTHER RECREATIONAL CABINS:**

Certain structures that are used solely by an individual or family for seasonal recreational use, such as hunting / fishing camps, may be excluded under Pennsylvania law from certain construction requirements of the code. In order to be excluded from these construction requirements, a sworn Affidavit must be filed with the Building Code Official indicating the structure will be used solely as a "recreational cabin". **When filing a Recreational Cabin Affidavit, all other regulatory requirements must be met, including Zoning and sewage permit requirements.**



Under state law, a "Recreational Cabin" is defined as a structure that is:

- Utilized principally for recreational activity ONLY
- NOT utilized as a residence for any period of time.
- NOT utilized for any commercial purposes, including rental units
- NOT greater than two stories in height.
- NOT utilized by the owner, or any other person, as a place of employment.

- NOT a mailing address for bill or other correspondence.
- NOT listed as an individual's place of residence or a driver's license, tax record, car registration, passport, or voter registration.

Approval of this Exclusion is contingent upon the installation of at least one smoke detector, one fire extinguisher and one carbon monoxide detector in BOTH the kitchen and sleeping quarters of the cabin. **AN INSPECTION OF THIS INSTALLATION IS REQUIRED PRIOR TO OCCUPANCY OF THE CABIN**

**It is very important to note that once a dwelling is declared as a Recreational Cabin, the limitations described above will follow the building to subsequent owners of the property. The Affidavit is recorded at the County Courthouse. Owners should be aware that claiming a structure as a recreational cabin may lessen the value of the building for resale purposes.**

If a recreational cabin is subject to the exclusion, upon transfer of ownership of the recreational cabin, written notice must be provided in the sales agreement and the deed that the recreational cabin:

- I. Is exempt from the Uniform Construction Code
- II. May not be in conformance with the Uniform Construction Code
- III. Is not subject to municipal regulation.

Failure to comply with the deed notice requirement shall render the sale voidable at the option of the purchaser.

**Persons considering this Cabin exemption are urged to carefully consider their options**

### **AGRICULTURAL BUILDINGS:**

Certain agricultural buildings (barns) are specifically excluded from the permit requirements of the Pa. Uniform Construction Code. Under the Code, an agricultural building is defined as a structure used to store farm equipment, hay, seed, grain, or other agricultural or horticultural products. Or, any building used to house poultry, livestock, horses, or other farm animals. Persons proposing to construct a permit-exempt agricultural building (or barn) must complete an "Exemption Form" and file the completed form with the appropriate municipality. There is no fee for filing this form; however the form must be notarized.

Even though these agricultural buildings are exempt from the UCC, they may still require a zoning permit.

### **Storm Water Management:**

Instances of Earth disturbance that may affect storm water runoff are subject to the regulation of this Ordinance. These "regulated activities" include (but are not limited to) land development, subdivision, construction of new buildings and diversion of piping or any natural or man-made stream channel. The plans submitted to the Township will require Engineer review. Please note that the Ordinance provides for costs incurred by the municipality to be passed onto the land developer.

### **Zoning Permits:**

Examples of assessment permits include (*but are not limited to*)

- Agricultural Structures
- Garages less than 1000 square feet
- Decks lower than 32 inches from the ground

Forms for all permits and exemptions can be found at:

[http://richardsoninspectionsservices.com/Applications\\_Procedures.php](http://richardsoninspectionsservices.com/Applications_Procedures.php)

### **PROTECT YOURSELF FROM HOME IMPROVEMENT FRAUD**

Effective July 1, 2009, contractors who perform home improvements totally \$5,000 or more per year must register with the Office of Attorney General. The law requires the contractor to display their official registration number on all contracts, estimates, proposals, and advertisements distributed within the Commonwealth. To verify a contractor's registration number for additional information, visit the Pennsylvania Office of Attorney General's website at [www.attorneygeneral.gov](http://www.attorneygeneral.gov) or call toll free 1-888-520-6680.