

The What, When and Why of Permitting

As the spring building season ramps up, the Jo Daviess County Planning & Development Department would like to take this opportunity to provide continuing education to the public regarding the building permit process.

What Requires Permits

If you live in the unincorporated area of Jo Daviess County, you will need to get your building permit from the County Planning & Development office. If you reside within a municipality, you should always check with your local officials regarding their rules of construction. Some of the things that would trigger a permit in the unincorporated areas of the County are:

- Any New Structure (over 120 Sq. Ft.)
 - House
 - Accessory Building
 - Deck
 - Ag Structure
- Remodeling or Additions
 - Any structural change or reinforcing
 - Any work that involves electrical wiring and/or plumbing
 - Any conversion of existing accessory space to new living space or other use, not previously permitted
- Finishing the basement

When You Apply For A Permit

The permitting process can take ten (10) to fourteen (14) business days to complete a review of your application and our office will need to have a completed application with owner, parcel and contractor information. In addition, two copies of a site plan showing where the new structure is going on the property and how far it is to lot lines, other buildings, power lines and waterways, along with two sets of building plans, showing size, support structures, electrical information, entrance and window information should be submitted. Additional information may be requested during the review process.

Why Permits Are Required

We understand the investment made when you begin a construction project. The County review and permitting process can help protect that investment through site review, plan review and construction oversight. Code adoption helps to reduce potential hazards of unsafe construction and ensure public health, safety and welfare. This is especially important when remodeling the interior of an existing accessory building not intended for permanent occupancy to one that will include living space.

The office number for the Department is 815-591-3810. Information can also be found on the County web site at www.jodaviess.org .