

# ***BUILDING INSPECTION NEWSLETTER***

**City of Kenosha  
Department of Neighborhood Services and Inspections**

**Building Inspection Division**

**Spring 2007**

## **MEETING NOTICE**

A meeting addressing changes to the erosion and sediment control portions of the State and local building codes has been scheduled.

**DATE:** Thursday, May 24, 2007

**TIME:** 4:00 p.m.

**PLACE:** Kenosha Transit Center, 4303 39<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Conference Room

### **Pay Permits Online or by Telephone**

Remember...you may now pay your permit fees online or by telephone through Official Payments Corporation. (NOTE: There will be a fee to OPC for this service). OPC accepts Discover, Mastercard, Visa, and American Express cards. You can access the official website from your home or office computer, or utilize the on-line payment station located in our office.

#### On-line Payments:

Access the web site at <http://www.officialpayments.com>

Have the following information available: (if multiple permits, you must enter each permit number separately)

1. Permit Number(s)
2. Credit Card Information
3. The Amount of the Permit Fee

Follow on-line instructions.

#### Telephone Payments:

Call 1 (800) 272-9829

Have the following information available: (if multiple permits, you must enter each permit number separately)

1. Permit Number(s)
2. Credit Card Information
3. The Amount of the Permit Fee
4. Jurisdiction code #5864

Follow the prompts.

### **Be Sure to Get All the Permits You Need!**

When planning your project, getting all the permit applications and approvals from our department is only part of the process. Depending on the scope of your project, approvals and permits may be required from other departments and agencies.

In our application packets and on our website, we try to provide you with as much information as possible regarding other department's requirements for your project.

The following additional permits and approvals may be needed for your project:

- Site plan review from the City Development Department
- Parking lot, sidewalk, and driveway approach permits from the Public Works Department
- Sign, trash enclosure, and fence permits from the Zoning Division
- Structural Plan approval from the State Department of Commerce
- Plumbing Plan approval from the State Department of Commerce
- Various licenses from the City Clerk

- Licensing by the County Health Departments
- Erosion Control or Floodplain permits from the State Department of Natural Resources

Another reminder is to make sure that your contractors are all properly licensed.

Keeping all of the above in mind is one way to make sure your project runs smoothly.

### **New City of Kenosha Stormwater Utility**

The new City of Kenosha Stormwater Utility became effective January 1, 2007, with the passage of Ordinance 51-06. Under the new utility, measures are being implemented to further reduce water run-off and improve water quality before water flows into local rivers, lakes, and streams. More stringent erosion control measures will be required of contractors/ developers at their jobsites. As part of the City's general permit with the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, the City will require each company seeking a construction permit to "develop, implement, and enforce a program to reduce the discharge of sediment and construction materials from construction sites." If you have any questions on compliance with these requirements, please contact the Public Works Department at 653-4150 or Neighborhood Services and Inspections at 653-4263.

### **Department of Commerce Code Changes – Erosion and Sediment Control:**

In a cooperative effort with the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, the Department of Commerce has instituted changes to the erosion control requirements affecting any ground-disturbing activity. The changes will be in effect April 1, 2007.

The major changes affecting your project(s) will be:

- The requirement to submit a Soil Loss Analysis, indicating a soil loss rate of not more than either 5 tons a year or 7 ½ tons a year depending on the soil types encountered, along with a detailed erosion control plan with your permit application.
- The requirement to stabilize all areas of a mass graded site where no construction is imminent.
- The requirement to monitor and maintain a weekly report on the condition and maintenance of the erosion control practices on the project site.
- The submittal of a NOT (Notice of Termination) form when all land-disturbing activity is completed, the temporary erosion control practices removed, and the site is completely stabilized.

- The submittal and approval of a Post-construction Stormwater Management plan in compliance with the standards set in NR 151.12.

### **New Department Position**

In the effort to achieve the required goal of helping to protect our streams, lakes, and waterways, we are pleased to announce the addition of Chris Pagels, Soil Erosion Inspector to our staff. Chris was formerly employed by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, and brings a wealth of knowledge and experience to our Department. Chris's primary job will be managing the soil and sediment control program, including plan review, inspections, enforcement, and education.

### **Illegal Residential Conversions**

The problem of illegal conversions of residential buildings is a persistent and pervasive one that places many of our residents in danger and puts tremendous strains on community resources.

An illegal conversion is the creation of one or more additional dwelling units within a home without first receiving the approval of, and permits from, the City of Kenosha. Such conversions often involve the alteration or modification of an existing one- or two-family home by adding an apartment on the upper floor, attic, or in the basement.

An illegal conversion is a serious offense under the City of Kenosha Zoning Ordinance. Illegal conversions reduce the quality of life in our neighborhoods by crowding more people into an area than was originally intended. This unplanned growth causes a severe strain on municipal services, and frequently results in school overcrowding, reduced parking, understaffed police stations, and increased sewer and sanitation problems. In addition, illegal conversions are frequently done in violation of existing fire and building codes, and constitute a significant danger to tenants and other individuals living in the buildings.

Failure to obtain required permits seriously impacts the property owner when illegal dwelling units and construction work are revealed. In addition to fines, the owner is required to reconstruct the dwelling to its former legitimate status. Also, units that may have been accepted as “nonconforming” (in existence prior to 1984), would have to be eliminated to comply with existing ordinance standards.

It should be noted that there are circumstances whereby it is sometimes permissible to add an apartment to a home:

- The building must be in an area which is zoned to allow additional dwelling units.
- The property lot and building size must meet the zoning requirements.
- Building and mechanical

permits must be obtained to add the new dwelling unit.

Illegal dwelling units may temporarily benefit the individual property owner, but continually harm the community financially by providing services (waste collection, police, fire protection) to a property that is not adequately assessed to pay for City services.

### **Changes to City of Kenosha Building Code**

Changes to the City of Kenosha Building Code which became effective on March 16, 2007, are:

**Permit refunds** which are requested due to error by the applicant for the wrong work, wrong premises, or for work which has not commenced, are subject to a refund (minus administrative fees) providing that the refund request is received within one (1) year of the original date of issuance.

**Accessory building** exemption for a permit if the structure is less than one hundred and twenty square feet (120 sq. ft.) applies only to residential accessory buildings.

**Reinspection fees** are now assessed on a progressive basis as follows:

First offense: \$ 60.00  
Second offense: \$ 90.00  
Third offense: \$180.00  
Fourth and subsequent offense(s): \$360.00 each  
Recurring offenses will not require written notices.

**Electric service and risers** are limited to one per each residential property.

On any site where a **raze** has occurred and prior to receiving a final approval:

- **Driveway approaches** shall be removed and replaced with curb and gutter.
- **Damaged public sidewalks** shall be replaced.
- **Driveway aprons**, remaining **slabs**, and **private sidewalks** shall be removed.

### **Plumbing News**

With the use of air admittance valves greatly increasing, there are several things to remember if you decide to install them. The Department of Commerce requires that all air admittance valves installed be tested utilizing a manometer.

Because of the time involved in the testing process, and based on the volume of inspections requested from this department, the following testing process is now in place:

When testing multiple air admittance valves, no more than three air admittance valves are allowed on a test. For example, if you install seven air admittance valves, you must have three separate tests ready when the inspector arrives. The tests shall be conducted simultaneously. The inspector cannot wait for one set of three to be tested, the testing equipment to be disassembled, and another test of three air admittance valves to be set up.

This is a basic rule of thumb. If you feel you have another acceptable means to test multiple air admittance valves, or have any questions regarding the testing of them, please contact plumbing inspector Kevin Mikolas at (262) 653-4263.

### Swimming Pools

It's that time of year when swimming pools are planned to be installed. Some of the basic requirements you need to keep in mind are:

Setbacks:

- 4' rear and side yard
- 12.5' street setback (corner lot)
- 40' front yard
- 10' horizontally from overhead wires and 5' horizontally from underground utilities

Wiring requirements:

- 3' long 12/3 twistlock cord on the pump motor
- #8 solid copper bond from motor to poolframe
- GFCI protected circuit
- Receptacle required 10' to 20' from pool (GFCI)
- Twistlock receptacle for motor 5' minimum distance from pool
- PVC or rigid conduit to feed outlets

In addition, 24" to 48" pool walls require a 4' high fence located a minimum of 4' from the pool. The fence must be self closing and have a childproof latch.

These are basic requirements. For further information, please

contact electrical inspector Richard Baumann at (262) 653-4263.

### Scheduling of Inspections

Inspection requests are now being taken by clerical staff. At the end of each day, clerical staff will forward the following day's schedule to the appropriate inspector. Because of the volume of inspections, it is not possible to schedule an inspection for a specific time other than whether it will be conducted in the a.m. or p.m. Also remember that we can only take an inspection request for the following day. In the near future we hope to be able to accept inspection requests for several days in advance and schedule them accordingly.

To ensure that your inspection request is processed properly, please furnish the following information:

- Address of inspection
- Contractor name
- Type of inspection
- Contact person and phone number
- Any access information (lock box number, back door open, etc.)

Critical information to remember when scheduling inspections:

1. For the most part, inspections will be scheduled accordingly:

**Footing:** For the day they are scheduled.

**Exterior sewer and water:** For the day they are scheduled.

**Rough-in:** 48 hours from the time it is ready for inspection.

**Final:** Five (5) days from the time it is ready for inspection.

**Occupancy:** Five (5) days from the time it is ready for inspection, but never conducted on Friday.

2. When planning an occupancy inspection, remember the scheduling sequence. At times an occupancy inspection is requested the day before or the day of a closing; those requests will be denied, thereby creating a potential hardship for the home buyer.

### Neighborhood Services and Inspections Web Site

New change(s) to our web site:

- The ability to file a complaint on-line as long as pertinent information is filled out
- Updated permit applications, informational packets, and handouts
- Future changes will involve information on soil erosion and sediment control and applicable requirements

Visit our web site and we're sure you will find valuable information. If you have any suggestions or comments on how we can improve our site to better serve you, please contact us at <http://www.nsi@kenosha.org>

## **Contact Numbers**

City Assessor's Office	(262) 653-2545
Department of City Development	(262) 653-4030
Fire Prevention Bureau	(262) 653-4110
Department of Neighborhood Services and Inspections	(262) 653-4263
Parks Department	(262) 653-4080
Department of Public Works	(262) 653-4050

You may also contact our website at  
[www.kenosha.org](http://www.kenosha.org)

## **Inspection Division Contacts**

Commercial Building Inspector	(262) 653-4268
Residential Building Inspector	(262) 653-4266
Residential Building Inspector	(262) 653-4267
Commercial Electrical Inspector	(262) 653-4272
Residential Electrical Inspector	(262) 653-4271
Plumbing Inspector	(262) 653-4270
Erosion Control Inspector	(262) 653-4247