

EL LAGO BUILDING DEPARTMENT PERMIT ISSUANCE PROCEDURES

November 26, 2002

PERMIT AUTHORIZATION

El Lago ordinances require the issuance of building permits as a method of enforcing minimum codes and standards for all applicable construction and remodeling within the city.

BENEFITS FROM THE ISSUANCE OF BUILDING PERMITS

Several direct and indirect benefits to the community are realized by the issuance and enforcement of building codes and standards.

The most obvious direct benefit to the community is maintaining an acceptable standard of health and safety for the citizenry. An example of maintaining a health standard as it relates to construction would be for a builder or remodeler to use the proper type of solder for copper piping, not the previously approved lead-based type. An example of maintaining a safety standard is to use the proper type of natural gas piping, which is not galvanized steel water pipe.

The first of the two most obvious indirect benefits of enforcing building codes is that property values are more apt to be maintained. The second indirect benefit is the elimination of unscrupulous or marginally competent contractors who will be required to be code compliant by the City's two professional inspectors. The professional designation is the highest designation for an inspector in the State.

Technical advice from the Building Official is always available for those citizens in the planning stage of construction.

WHEN PERMITS ARE REQUIRED

Generally, building permits are required for all new construction and additions, remodeling, electrical rewiring, natural gas replacement, and all other modifications or improvements that can be performed in an unsafe or unsanitary manner.

No permits are required for painting, replacement of non-structural components, such as exterior trim boards, or the replacement of like kind and capacity of HVAC or plumbing components, or the replacement of existing fences using the exact location and like materials, or the replacement of driveways or sidewalks using the exact footprint, or any other modifications that could not affect health and safety.

GENERAL NOTES

Each contractor or citizen who is performing their own work will conform to all applicable codes and city ordinances that apply to each type of construction detailed below, including easement restrictions.

The inspector should be contacted for a determination of how many and what kind of inspections will be required. A 24-hours notice for an inspection must be provided to the inspector by the person who was issued the building permit.

CONSTRUCTION DESCRIPTIONS

The following is an alphabetical listing and a general description of items that are typically questioned. Also included are general statements about the construction.

- ADDITIONS – GARAGE (permit required) – Two sets of construction plans are required when applying for permit. New garages are required to be at least 5' – 0 (including overhang) from the side lot line. Recreation rooms built above garages are permitted but garage must be at least 5' – 0 (including overhang) from the side lot line. Garage apartments for rent or lease are not permitted.
- ADDITIONS – HOUSE (permit required) – Two sets of construction plans are required when applying for permit. Post tensioned slabs are required to be wet stamped by a Professional Engineer. New homes are required to be at least 5' – 0 (including overhang) from the side lot line. Single story homes are required to be off the rear easement and at least 10' – 0 from the rear lot line. The finished floor elevation is a minimum of 15.7 feet. The builder is to provide the Building Official a Certificate of Elevation from a licensed surveyor prior to the pouring of the slab and foundation.
- AIR CONDITIONING REPAIR OR EXACT REPLACEMENT (See HVAC Repair / Replacement) (permit not required) – Exact replacement means replacement of the exact size, shape, capacity, location, et cetera.
- BASKETBALL GOALS (permit required, no fee) – All permanently mounted basketball goals must conform to code requirements that state that all structures are to be behind the building setback line, which is usually 25' – 0 on the front and 20' – 0 on the side of corner lots. Basketball goals that are not permanently mounted are not required to be permitted, but must be removed from within the building setback line while not in use.
- BOAT DOCK REPAIR / REPLACEMENT (See Dock Repair / Replacement) - Permit required for repairs or replacement except when minor (less than 51%) repairs are required, but all materials must be the exact size, shape, using the exact materials, in the exact location, et cetera.
- BOAT HOUSES (permit required) – Two sets of construction plans are required when applying for permit. Accompanying the plans will be authorization from the

- Corps of Engineers stating that the boat house is permitted. All wood used in the construction is required to be a minimum of 2” thick (nominally) and of a pressure treated nature to withstand the effects of a high moisture environment.
- BOAT PIER REPAIR / REPLACEMENT (See Dock Repair / Replacement) – Permit required for repairs or replacement except when minor (less than 51%) repairs are required, but all materials must be the exact size, shape, using the exact materials, in the exact location, et cetera.
 - BULKHEAD REPAIR / REPLACEMENT (permit required) - Two sets of construction plans are required when applying for permit. Accompanying the plans will be authorization from the Corps of Engineers stating that the bulkhead is permitted. All wood used in the construction is required to be a minimum of 2” thick (nominally) and of a pressure treated nature to withstand the effects of a high moisture environment.
 - CERTIFICATES OF OCCUPANCY (Commercial only) (permit required) – A Certificate of Occupancy is required when a commercial establishment is opening a business within the El Lago city limits. The charge for a Certificate of Occupancy is 1% of the cost of remodeling the business. Not to be included in the building permit fee is machinery required for the business. Two sets of construction plans are required when applying for permit. During construction, periodic inspections are required. The Certificate of Occupancy is issued at the end of construction. The business will not be permitted to open until a Certificate of Occupancy is issued.
 - DECKS – New (permit required) – Two sets of construction plans are required when applying for permit. The new deck must not be placed on any easement. Extreme caution must be exercised when digging the postholes to prevent damage to utility lines, especially power lines, which can cause death. Acceptance of the permit and an on-site inspection are required before any postholes are dug.
 - DECKS – Exact Replacement (permit not required) – Exact replacement means replacement of the exact size, shape, location, using the same materials, et cetera.
 - DOCK REPAIR / REPLACEMENT (permit required) – Two sets of construction plans are required when applying for permit. Accompanying the plans will be authorization from the Corps of Engineers stating that the dock is permitted. All wood used in the construction is required to be a minimum of 2” thick (nominally) and of a pressure treated nature to withstand the effects of a high moisture environment. Permit is not required for minor repairs (less than 51%), but all materials must be the exact size, shape, using the exact materials, in the exact location, et cetera.
 - DRIVEWAY REPAIR OR EXACT REPLACEMENT (permit not required) – Exact replacement means replacement of the exact size, shape, location, et cetera.
 - ELECTRICAL REPAIRS (permit required) – A building permit is required to replace the service panel, overhead drop, or underground service, et cetera. Extreme caution must be exercised. Death can result. A licensed master electrician is required to apply for the building permit. The City of El Lago recognizes electrical licenses issued by any local city. Coordinating the service

panel change-out with Reliant Energy and the electrician is recommended prior to the work being started.

- ELECTRICAL – Exact Fixture replacement (permit not required) – Exact replacement means replacement of the exact size, capacity, location, et cetera.
- FENCES – Exact Replacement (permit not required) – Exact replacement means replacement of the exact size, shape, height, materials, exact post position, fence location, et cetera.
- FENCES – New or different (permit required) – Two sets of construction plans are required when applying for permit. The new fence must not be placed within the building setback line. Extreme caution must be exercised when digging the postholes to prevent damage to utility lines, especially power lines, which can cause death. Acceptance of the permit and an on-site inspection are required before any postholes are dug.
- GARAGE ADDITIONS (See Additions – Garage) (permit required)
- GAS APPLIANCES (permit not required in some cases) – If you smell gas anywhere, inside or out, contact CenterPoint Energy Entex immediately from a different location. The simple spark of a light switch can trigger an explosion. If the problem is found to be in your portion of the gas system, CenterPoint Energy Entex personnel will remove the gas meter, cap the gas line, and will not re-set the meter until called by the Building Official. A building permit is not required to install a natural gas appliance – heater, stove, water heater, et cetera. – if the gas appliance is of same size, type, et cetera. However, a building permit is required if the meter has been removed, for changes in location, size, type of appliance, et cetera. The Building Official will inspect for the proper materials, proper installation, proper venting and witness the pressure test of the entire system. A licensed master plumber is required to apply for the building permit. The homeowner should be advised that CenterPoint Energy Entex will not usually re-install the gas meter during the weekend. Thursdays are usually the last day of the week to call CenterPoint Energy Entex for a meter replacement, which would be re-installed on Friday.
- GAS LINE REPAIRS (permit required) – If you smell gas anywhere, inside or out, contact CenterPoint Energy Entex immediately from a different location. The simple spark of a light switch can trigger an explosion. If the problem is found to be in your portion of the gas system, CenterPoint Energy Entex personnel will remove the gas meter, cap the gas line, and will not re-set the meter until called by the Building Official. A building permit is required to replace the underground natural gas line. The Building Official will inspect for the proper materials, proper depth, and to witness the pressure test of the entire system. A licensed master plumber is required to apply for the building permit. The homeowner should be advised that CenterPoint Energy Entex will not usually re-install the gas meter during the weekend. Thursdays are usually the last day of the week to call CenterPoint Energy Entex for a meter replacement, which would be re-installed on Friday.
- GREENHOUSES (See Storage Buildings) (permit required)

- HEATING REPAIR OR EXACT REPLACEMENT (See HVAC Repair / Replacement) (permit not required) – Exact replacement means replacement of the exact size, shape, capacity, location, et cetera.
- HOT TUBS (See Spas) (permit required)
- HOUSE ADDITIONS (See Additions – House) (permit required)
- HVAC REPAIR OR EXACT REPLACEMENT (permit not required) – Exact replacement means replacement of the exact size, shape, capacity, location, et cetera.
- NEW CONSTRUCTION (permit required) – All new construction requires a permit. Select the exact type of construction from the items in this list.
- OCCUPANCY PERMITS (See Certificates of Occupancy) (permit required for commercial property only)
- ON-SITE CONSULTATION (permit required) – On-site consultations are included in all of the permit fees stated in this listing. When only an on-site consultation is desired for a situation that is not being permitted, a minimum fee of \$10.00 is required, whether a citizen or contractor. No fees are required for telephone consultation.
- PATIOS - Exact replacement (permit not required) – Exact replacement means replacement of the exact size, shape, materials, locations, et cetera.
- PATIOS – New or different (permit required) – Two sets of construction plans are required when applying for permit. The new patio must not be placed on any easement. Extreme caution must be exercised when digging the grade beams to prevent damage to utility lines, especially power lines, which can cause death. Acceptance of the permit and an on-site inspection are required before any digging can begin. Concrete patios are not permitted over natural gas lines, per applicable safety codes.
- PIERS – (See Slab / Foundation Repairs) (permit not required) – A resident may purchase an On-site Consultation permit for \$10.00, but it is not required by the City.
- PLUMBING – Exact fixture replacement (permit not required) – Exact replacement means replacement of the exact size, shape, capacity, location, type of materials, et cetera.
- REINSPECTION FEE (permit required) – One on-site reinspection is included in all the permit fees stated in this listing. When a subsequent reinspection is required, the person issued the permit will be charged a fee of \$10.00 for a citizen or \$40.00 for a contractor. The reinspection fee will be collected by the City secretary before the reinspection is performed. A minimum of a 24-hour notice is required to schedule an inspection.
- REMODELING – Structural, electrical, plumbing, or HVAC changes (permit required) – A building permit is required for all new construction and additions, remodeling, electrical rewiring, structural change, egress change, natural gas replacement, and all other modifications or improvements that can be performed in an unsafe or unsanitary manner. For example, replacing kitchen counter tops

do not require a permit, but taking out a wall or modifying the electrical system would require a permit.

- REMODELING – Exact replacement (permit not required) – Exact replacement means replacement of the exact size, shape, materials, location, et cetera. No permits are required for painting, replacement of non-structural components, such as exterior trim boards, or the replacement of like kind and capacity of HVAC or plumbing components, or the replacement of existing fences using the exact location and like materials, or the replacement of driveways or sidewalks using the exact materials, or any other modifications that could not affect health and safety.
- ROOFING REPLACEMENT (permit not required) – A resident may purchase an On-site Consultation permit for \$10.00, but it is not required by the City. Cedar roofing is not allowed by Zoning Ordinance, Code 5.02 (5/23/96).
- SIDEWALK REPAIR OR EXACT REPLACEMENT (permit not required) – Exact replacement means replacement of the exact location, size, shape, materials, et cetera.
- SIDEWALK – New or different (permit required) – A building permit is required for pouring a new sidewalk or a sidewalk in a different location. The location, width, thickness, type of reinforcement, et cetera, will be inspected for code compliance.
- SIDING REPLACEMENT (permit not required) - A resident may purchase an On-site Consultation permit for \$10.00, but it is not required by the City. Cedar siding is not allowed by Zoning Ordinance, Code 5.02 (5/23/96).
- SIGNS – Commercial (permit required)
 - With Lighting – A building permit is required for the installation of any sign with lighting. The type and location of electrical conduit and circuitry, sign location, height, size, type of foundation, foundation reinforcement, et cetera, will be inspected for code compliance.
 - Without Lighting – A building permit is required for the installation of any sign without lighting. The sign location, height, size, type of foundation, foundation reinforcement, et cetera, will be inspected for code compliance.
- SIGNS – Residential (permit not required)
 - For Sale / Political / Construction Signs – Acceptable for on-site location at the applicable property. The maximum size is six square feet. All garage sale or carport sale signs are required to be located either on the property or in the designated places located at the entrances of the City.
- SLAB / FOUNDATION REPAIRS (permit not required) – A resident may purchase an On-site Consultation permit for \$10.00, but it is not required by the City.
- SPAS (permit required)
 - In-ground – Two sets of construction plans are required when applying for permit. The spa location, plumbing connections, gas line connections, electrical connections, et cetera, will be inspected per applicable codes and ordinances. A four foot fence is required to be installed around all spas

with at least 24” depth. All gates must be self-closing and self-latching. Permit fee is 2% of the cost of the construction.

- Portable – Two sets of construction plans are required when applying for permit. The spa location, plumbing connections, gas line connections, electrical connections, et cetera, will be inspected per applicable codes and ordinances. A four foot fence is required to be installed around all spas with at least 24” depth. All gates must be self-closing and self-latching. Permit fee is 1% of the cost of the construction.
- STORAGE BUILDINGS (permit required) - Two sets of construction plans are required when applying for permit. The storage building or greenhouse must have a permanent foundation, such as concrete or a tied down loose framed floor. The storage building or greenhouse location, plumbing connections, gas line connections, electrical connections, et cetera, will be inspected per applicable codes and ordinances.
- STRUCTURAL REPAIRS (permit required) - Two sets of construction plans are required when applying for permit. The structural repairs must be identified on the drawings and an on-site inspection must be performed prior to any work being started. The structural repairs will be inspected per applicable codes and ordinances.
- SWIMMING POOLS (permit required)
 - In-ground - Two sets of construction plans are required when applying for permit. The pool location, equipment location, plumbing connections, gas line connections, electrical connections, et cetera, will be inspected per applicable codes and ordinances. A four foot fence is required to be installed around all pools with at least 24” depth. All gates must be self-closing and self-latching. Permit fee is 2% of the cost of the construction.
 - Above Ground - Two sets of construction plans are required when applying for permit. The pool location, equipment location, plumbing connections, gas line connections, electrical connections, et cetera, will be inspected per applicable codes and ordinances. A four foot fence is required to be installed around all pools with at least 24” depth. All gates must be self-closing and self-latching. Permit fee is 1% of the cost of the construction.
- WINDOW REPLACEMENT (permit not required) - A resident may purchase an On-site Consultation permit for \$10.00, but it is not required by the City.