



## GENERAL OPERATIONS

The Building Department of the City of Fairhope is charged with the administration and enforcement of the **International Codes 2012** (Residential and Commercial Building, Plumbing, Mechanical, Gas and Fire), the **National Electrical Code (NEC) 2012 (and all city supplements)**, and the **Fairhope Zoning Ordinance** to promote the public welfare and safety. The Codes generally provide that any requirement necessary for the stability of a building or the safety of the occupants not otherwise provided for in the text of these Codes shall be determined by the Building Official. If you have no previous experience with building in Fairhope, please feel free to consult with us about any particular requirements which may vary from that of other jurisdictions. We will do our best to assist you in any way we can.

*It is not our desire to engage in a detailed discussion of Code requirements in this writing. If you are in the business of construction or if you have assumed the role of contractor, we assume that, in as much as you present yourself as knowledgeable in construction methods, you are aware of the laws and regulations that govern your work.*

We cannot over emphasize the importance of using due care in the layout of the building site so as to avoid intrusion into setbacks and easements resulting in title problems which **CANNOT BE CURED BY GRANTING VARIANCES**. For this reason stake-out surveys by professional land surveyors are required for all primary structures. Additions and accessory structures can utilize a copy of an existing stakeout survey showing the location of proposed work.

The City Building Department's policy is to review all applications prior to the issuance of a building permit. All applications require plans that are of a detail that allow the plan reviewer to understand the project and conformity to code. Engineer or Architectural plans are required for all new residences, commercial buildings, any additions that increasing living area by 50% or more, and other projects as determined by the building official. The building official ultimately makes all decisions on the need of Engineer or Architectural plans. Please be aware that there will be a wait from the time a permit application is received until a permit is issued. Typically residential applications are processed in a week to 10 business days from the time of a complete submission. Commercial projects take longer. The wait will vary depending on the quantity of permits that are being processed, so please plan your work schedule accordingly.

It is the responsibility of anyone that obtains a building permit to ensure that **ALL SUBCONTRACTORS** are currently licensed by the City of Fairhope. The primary subcontractors (general contractor, plumber, electrician, heating and air) will be checked at the review process and are required to have current business licenses prior to the permit being issued. Failure of a subcontractor to obtain proper licensing prior to beginning work will result in a Stop Work Order being issued at the project site. If you have any questions regarding whether or not a contractor is currently licensed, you can call City Hall and ask to speak with the City Revenue Officer.

Inspections are scheduled on the building department inspection line, **251-990-0153**. This is a recorded line allowing you to request an inspection if staff is helping others in the office. To schedule you will need to know your permit number, physical address of your work, type of inspection that you need, and a contact name and number. Inspections called in prior to 4PM will be scheduled for the next business day. The recorded line is time stamped.

It is our practice to leave inspection reports noting approval or necessary corrections on the jobsite. Re-inspection fees will be assessed following a second "not approved" inspection. Re-inspection fees must be paid in the building department prior to subsequent re-inspections being scheduled. It is in the best interest of the owner or contractor to have a representative present during inspections to go over any corrections that may be necessary. If you choose not to, you must rely on posted notices to make all necessary corrections before you proceed or cover any work. In the event that excessive corrections are noted and the Inspector must make an additional trip to the site to confer with the contractor, re-inspection fees may apply.

Copies of Ordinances regarding items such as inspection and permitting fees, erosion controls, storm water management, installation of fences, and work on public property (ROW) and maintenance of construction sites are available on the City Web Site, [www.cofairhope.com](http://www.cofairhope.com), or through the City Clerk's Office 928-2136.