

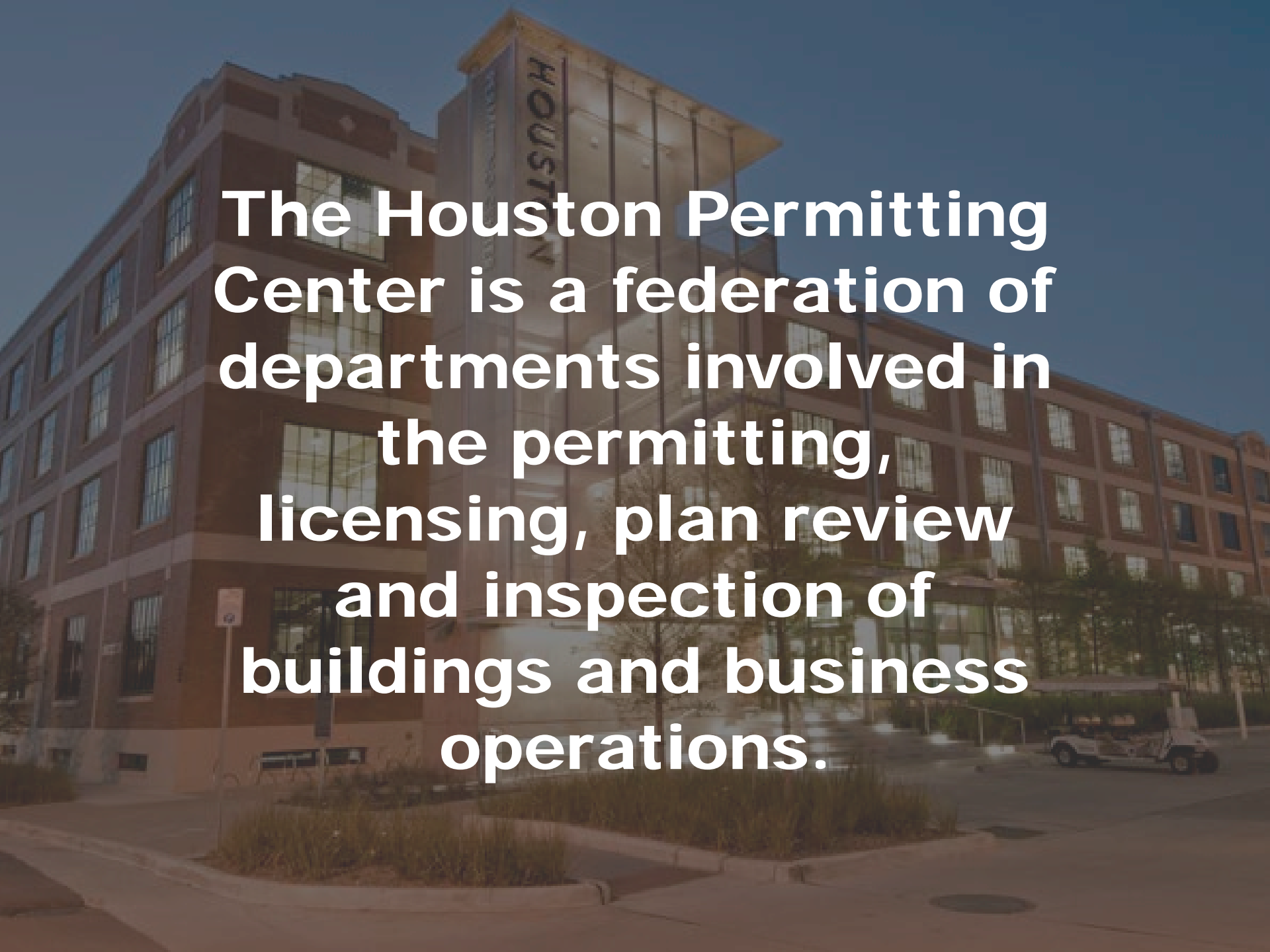
**CITY OF HOUSTON**

# YOU NEED A PERMIT FOR THAT?

**First Montrose Commons Neighborhood Association  
Tuesday, February 21, 2017**

**Presented by:  
Mark McAvoy, Houston Permitting Center**

**HOUSTON  
PERMITTING CENTER**

A photograph of a modern, multi-story brick building with large windows. The word "HOUSTON" is visible vertically on a glass-enclosed tower section of the building. The scene is set during the day with a clear sky. A utility vehicle is parked on the street in front of the building.

The Houston Permitting Center is a federation of departments involved in the permitting, licensing, plan review and inspection of buildings and business operations.

A large, modern brick building with a glass facade and a sign that says "HOUSTON". The building is multi-storied and features a mix of brick and glass. The sign "HOUSTON" is written vertically on a glass section of the building. The text "Our mission is to help our customers achieve their goals while complying with city regulations." is overlaid in white on the image.

Our mission is to help  
our customers  
achieve their goals  
while complying with  
city regulations.

# Before you begin, consider...

- ✓ Whether you can financially and legally build your proposed project
- ✓ Deed restrictions and property liens
- ✓ Survey and property lines (Ensure that your structure can be built in the proposed location)
- ✓ Utility availability (Assess if water and sewer capacity and utilities are available or if additional fees may be required)
- ✓ Platting (May be required if there is a change of use)
- ✓ Verify setback requirements
- ✓ Floodplain or floodway
- ✓ Historic districts and protected landmarks

# Historic District Boundaries



# Historic District Requirements

- The Planning & Development Department administers the Historic Preservation Ordinance through which it strives to preserve our historic structures, neighborhoods and archeological sites
- Alterations to a property located in a historic district require a **Certificate of Appropriateness** (COA) which are generally issued through the review and approval by the Houston Archaeological and Historic Commission (HAHC).
  - This includes restoration, rehabilitation, additions, exterior alterations, new construction in a historic district
  - Relocation and demolition of contributing structures in a historic district.
  - A COA may be administratively approved by the Planning Department for certain minor alterations
- **A COA is required prior to obtaining building permits from the Houston Permitting Center**
  - May be eligible for a 50% discount on building permit fees and for a City of Houston tax exemption

# Exemptions to COA

- Ordinary maintenance and repair work such as repairing or replacing small amounts of siding or trim
- Landscaping, HVAC units, light fixtures, porch ceiling fans, or re-roofing with in-kind materials with no change to the structure, shape, or pitch of the roof
- Installation of gutters, downspouts, storm windows and doors, window screens, screen doors, temporary emergency weatherization features
- Construction of fences
- Removal of burglar bars, antennae, satellite dishes, solar panels, free-standing signs, or accessibility ramps and lifts
- Installation of solar panels, antennae, satellite dishes, or other roof equipment installed **on the rear half of the roof**

Review the [Historic Preservation Manual](#) for full details on the COA process, exemptions, and other requirements.

# Permits are not needed for...

- Painting
- Carpet
- Tile
- Wood floors
- Cabinets\*
- Interior trim and similar finishes
- Uncovered detached decks under 30 inches
- Wood or metal fences 8 feet or less in height
- Detached storage buildings 200 sq. ft. or less

\* Although a permit is not required for cabinets, replacement of plumbing or electrical fixtures associated with cabinets require permits



# Permits are required for...

- Wood or metal fences greater than 8 feet or containing more than 2 feet of masonry
- New carports, garages, driveways, and sidewalks
- Solar panel installation
- Adding or expanding kitchens, bathrooms, bedrooms, game rooms, patios, etc.
- Replacing or repairing roof covering or decking
- Garage conversion to a residence
- Swimming pools
- Repairing electrical, mechanical and plumbing

# Design Preparation

## Does my project require an engineer or architect?

Refer to flow charts from the Texas Boards of [Architectural Examiners](#) & [Professional Engineers](#).

## What is the scope of the project?

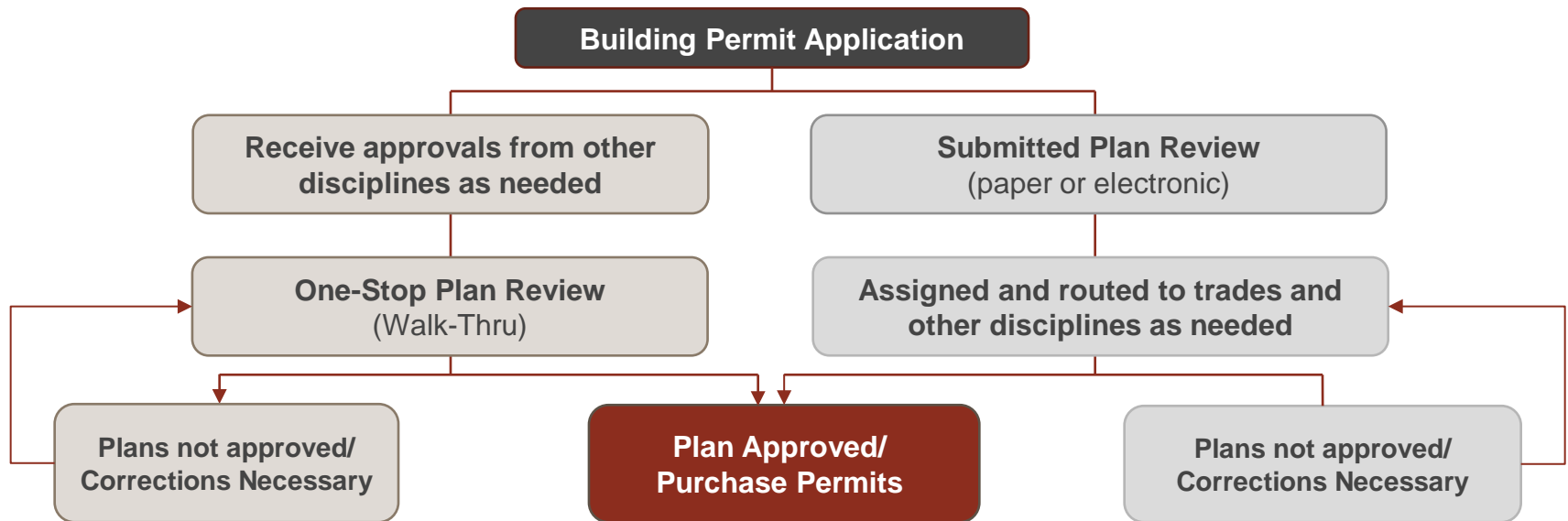
- New Construction (ground up, foundation move-in)
- Addition (new square footage)
- Remodel (alteration of the existing building)
- Repair (replacing like for like materials)

## What codes are in effect?

- 2012 International Residential Code
- 2014 National Electrical Code
- 2012 Uniform Plumbing Code
- 2015 International Energy Conservation Code
- City of Houston Code of Ordinances

**See also:** the [Houston Amendments](#) and the [Design Manual](#)

# Permit Process



# One-Stop Plan Review Service

- Most single-family residential permits are obtainable through the One-Stop process provided the review time is 30 minutes or less.

Follow these steps to complete the process:

1. Submit a completed [Building Permit Application](#) and Declaration in Support of Building Permit Application ([Individual](#) or [Corporate](#)) to the Permits Section on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor. The Permits Section will issue a project number.
2. If applicable, visit the Planning, Taps & Meters, Flood, and Traffic for the appropriate approvals.
3. Visit the Residential One-Stop Section on the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor and present your plans to the Plan Analyst.
4. If the plans are approved, you will be able to purchase the building permit at the Cashier's Booth on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor.
5. If the plans require corrections, a list of comments will be provided by the Plan Analyst. Make the necessary corrections to the plans and return to the One-Stop Section.

**See also:** the [Residential One-Stop Guidelines](#)

# Required Reviews

Project Type	Planning	Taps & Meters <sup>2</sup>	One Stop	Flood <sup>3</sup>	Traffic
New construction <sup>1</sup>	✓	✓		✓	
Addition	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Remodel		✓	✓	✓	
Garage/Carport (new)	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Repair			✓	✓	
Fence	✓		✓	✓	
Driveway/Sidewalk(new)	✓		✓	✓	✓
Driveway/Sidewalk (existing)			✓	✓	

<sup>1</sup> Plans must be submitted for review    <sup>2</sup> Applicable if plumbing is added    <sup>3</sup> Applicable if project is in a floodplain

# Application Tips

- Building Permit Application (with assigned project number)
  - Must include valuation – defined as the total cost of construction to the end user, excluding the land purchase costs and the overhead attributed to the land purchase. The value of donated goods and services is included.
- Deed Restrictions Compliance Unsworn Declaration
  - Verify if the property has Deed Restrictions and whether this project would be in violation. For more information [click here](#) or contact the Harris County Clerk's office at 713-755-6405.

**Remember:** Addresses are critical and must be verified for new construction!

# Residential Repairs

In most cases, plans are not required. Submit a [Building Permit Application](#) and a [Residential Repair Spec List](#). For additional assistance review the [Residential Repair Guidelines](#).

- Replace exterior siding, stucco or EIFS wall covering
- Replace doors/windows
- Replace existing stairs/steps
- Replace roof covering/decking
- Install smoke detectors
- Repair porch
- Repair electrical, plumbing, mechanical
- Re-frame walls and/or ceiling



# Planning Requirements

- Projects requiring review include adding a fence or an addition to the property
- Ensures that the project is within property lines and setback lines
- Verifies compliance with tree and shrub ordinance





# Taps & Meters

- Review required if plumbing is added to an existing structure – for example a new bathroom – and for new construction
- Responsible for managing water and wastewater demands and ensuring capacity
  - Assessment of impact fees
  - Waste Water Capacity Reservation Letter
  - Identification of connection points



# Floodplain Management Office

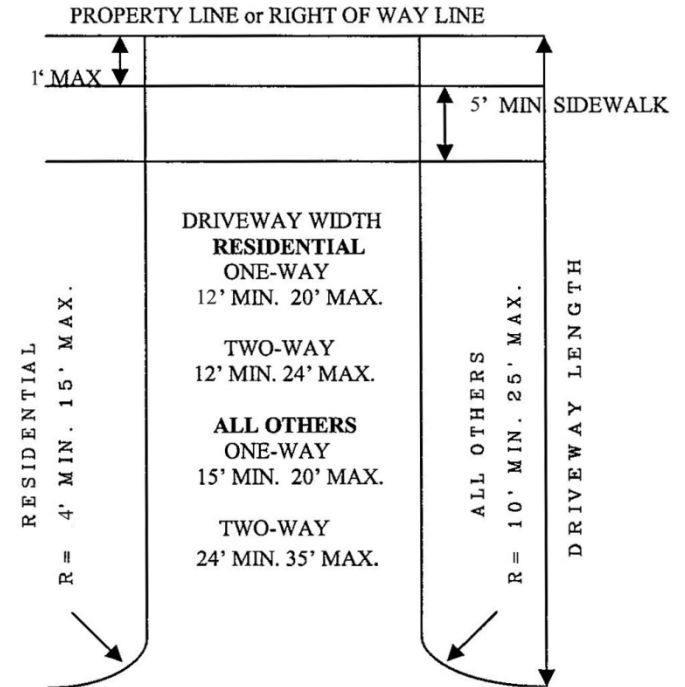
- Reviews projects located within the 100-year floodplain for appropriate mitigation
  - Dependent upon base flood elevation (BFE) and the elevation of the property
  - Finish floor elevations of all slabs
  - Cut and fill areas
  - Use of water resistant material)
  - Flood vents
- Responsible for maintaining flood maps and negotiating flood insurance rates



**Note: No permit shall be issued for development in the floodway except as stipulated in the City of Houston Ordinance Chap. 19-43 sec (b) & (c).**

# Traffic

- For work within the city's right of way
- Plans are required for new driveways, sidewalks, and culverts
- Repair or replacement of existing driveways and culverts
- Requires \$2,000 bonded contractor



# Residential Sidewalk Panel Replacement Program

- Homeowners may repair/replace portions of an **existing** sidewalk without a permit or bond if the area of repair/replacement:
  - Is within the homeowner's own property lines
  - Does not include any portion of the driveway, and
  - Is reconstructed in-kind and in accordance with City standards.
- Must to contact Houston Parks & Recreation Department's Urban Forestry if the sidewalk panel to is near existing tree roots.
- The work may be completed by the homeowner or a contractor.
- Must file a notice of replacement with the Office of the City Engineer's Traffic section at least 2 business days prior to work and a notice of completion no later than 5 business days after completion.
  - [Residential Sidewalk Panel Replacement Forms](#)

**This program does not apply to sidewalk panels associated with new construction, remodeling or rebuilding of a residential property.**

# Storm Water Review

- Required for all lots 15,000 sq. ft. or more
- Required when the lot has 65% or more of impervious cover – includes concrete (sidewalk, driveway, patio), building structures, swimming pools
- Ensures that site drainage complies with all mandated policies directing runoff to the city right-of-way and may not overflow to an adjacent property.



# Who can purchase a permit?

- The building permit may be purchased by the homeowner, agent, or contractor.
- Licensed contractors can purchase trade permits after the building permit has been sold.
  - Electrical
  - HVAC/Mechanical\*
  - Plumbing\*
  - Sprinklers
  - Driveway/Sidewalk\*



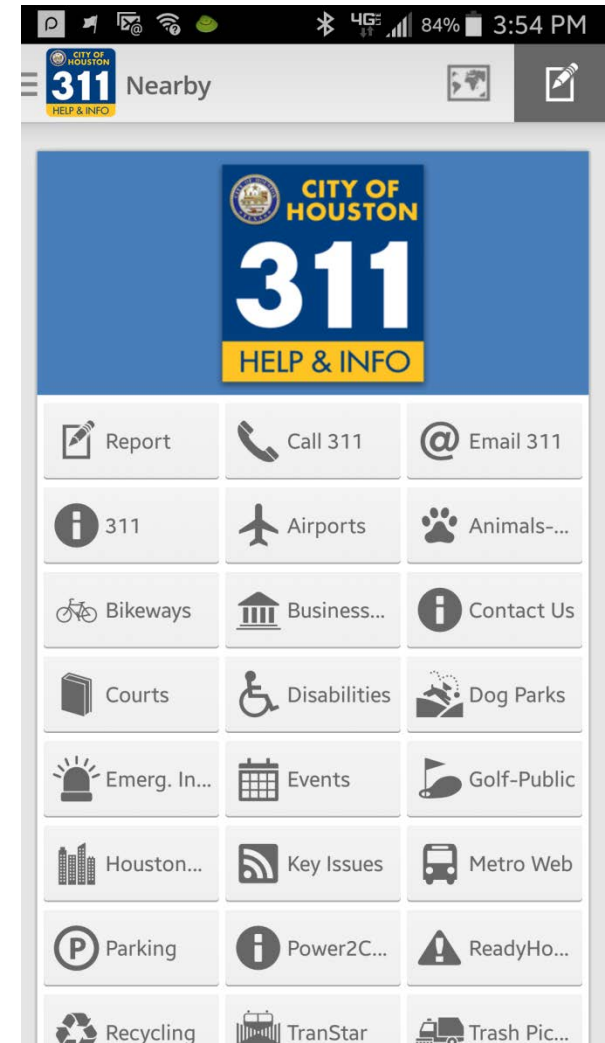
\* In some cases the homeowner may obtain these permits and complete the work. Field inspection may be required.

# Who should be licensed?

- General contractors are not required to be licensed.
- Master electricians must be licensed by the Texas Department of Licensing & Regulation and must be registered with the City of Houston.
- Air conditioning contractors must have a type A or B license from TDLR and must be registered with the City.
- Master plumbers must be licensed by the Texas State Board of Plumbing Examiners and be registered with the City.

# Unpermitted Work

- Report suspected cases of unpermitted work through the City's 311 program
  - Email: [311@houstontx.gov](mailto:311@houstontx.gov)
  - Phone: 713-837-0311
  - Mobile app for iPhone and Android
- Fines may be assessed for work done without a permit





# Online Permits Page

Welcome to the City of Houston's Online Permits Website

**iPermits - Customer / Contractor Portal**

[First Time User](#)

[Login](#)

For questions, please contact us at [rmcacd@houstontx.gov](mailto:rmcacd@houstontx.gov)

**Building Fee Estimator**

[Fee Estimator](#)

To download the Building Code Enforcement's Permit Fee Schedule, [Click Here](#)

**Schedule Building Code Enforcement Inspections**

[Schedule Inspections and View Inspections History](#)

To register for the Building Code Enforcement's Inspection Notification System to receive inspection results by e-mail or cell phone [Click Here](#).

**Check Permit Status**

**Plan Review**

[Plan Review Status \(Real Time Pages\)](#)

**Permits Sold**

[Search for Sold Permits \(sold permits for the last 3 years\)](#)

**Other Information**

[Building Code Enforcement Main Page](#)

**Purchase Permits  
(Certain restrictions apply)**

**Estimate Building  
Permit Fee**


**Schedule Inspections**

**Check the Status of Plans**

**Search for Permits Sold  
(In the last 3 years)**

**Code Enforcement  
Home Page**


# eSERVICES Page



## HPC eServices hpcservices.org

### Welcome to the Houston Permitting Center's eServices Web Portal

Convenience with a click!



eSERVICES is the Houston Permitting Center's self-service portal—designed to make it easier for you to achieve your goals while complying with the City's regulations.

Click on the tabs below to learn about our available eServices. More convenient self-service options will be added in the near future as we continue working to improve your customer experience.

**NOW AVAILABLE: Electronic Plan Review**

Electronic Plan Review (EPR) is currently available for:

- > Residential building construction projects (except One-Stop)
- > Commercial building construction projects (except One-Stop)
- > Projects within the City's right-of-way or tying to City utilities (Office of the City Engineer)

Use of EPR is voluntary, but a project must be submitted entirely online or entirely by paper. The two submission methods cannot be mixed.

Two online systems — **iPermits** and **ProjectDox** — are used to complete specific functions in the plan review process. Separate logins are required for each system; however, the same email address and password may be used to set up each system account.


- > iPermits Portal
- > Online Queuing Service
- > ProjectDox Portal
- > eServices Support

### Resources

- Commercial EPR User Guide
- Office of the City Engineer EPR User Guide
- ProjectDox Installation Guide
- Residential EPR User Guide

### Quick Links

- iPermits Portal
- ProjectDox Portal
- Online Permits Website
- Customer Satisfaction Survey



CHAT NOW!

December 2016						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17

EPR User Guides and ProjectDox Installation Guide

Quick Links to iPermits, ProjectDox, and Online Permits Page

Introduction to iPermits and ProjectDox Portals

Online Queuing Service (Schedule Appointment)

# Need More Information?

## **Please call us:**

Building Code Enforcement  
832.394.9494

Residential Plan Review  
832.394.8820

Planning Site Review  
832.394.9091

Taps and Meters  
832.394.8888

Inspections  
713.222.9922

Open Records  
832.394.8800

**Email us at [rmcacd@houstontx.gov](mailto:rmcacd@houstontx.gov)**

## **Visit us online:**

- [Building Code Enforcement](#)
- [Online Permits Page](#)
- [Planning & Development Department](#)
- [Houston Fire Department](#)
- [City of Houston 3-1-1 Services](#)
- [Flood Maps](#)
- [Houston Permitting Center Website](#)
- [City of Houston Website](#)



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