



# Commercial Inspection Procedures

## Building and Neighborhood Services

109 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue South

Franklin, TN 37064

615-794-7012 OFFICE 615-591-9066 FAX

**Step 1** – Read this document. It will help you avoid time delays and help us provide you with better service. **BE FAMILIAR WITH THESE PROCEDURES. THEY ARE DESIGNED TO HELP US FACILITATE GETTING YOU THROUGH THE PROCESS IN A TIMELY MANNER.**

**Step 2** – Obtain copies of the Adopted Codes, City of Franklin Zoning Ordinance, and amendments to the construction codes in the Franklin Municipal Code. If you don't have the code books, you have to take our word for any corrections required. Being familiar with the provisions of the code will speed up your project.

### Obtaining Permits

Permits are to be obtained before starting work. Working without a permit will result in work being stopped and “double fees” imposed when the permit is obtained. This will definitely cause a delay in the project while the permit is being processed.

Commercial projects require plan review and approval through the City's Electronic Plan Review website. It is the responsibility of the contractor to print an 'Approved' set of construction plans to keep onsite for the inspector's reference.

A Grading Permit is to be obtained from the Engineering Department before any land disturbance commences. Erosion control is to be maintained on jobsite until the job site is complete. If there are concerns regarding erosion and water control, contact the Engineering Department.

The Building Permit should be obtained prior to obtaining the Electrical, Plumbing, and Mechanical Permits. All work on Fire Sprinkler piping from the point of utility delivery into building shall be completed by a Plumber that holds the appropriate Fire Protection licenses through the State. Contact your Fire Inspector for details prior to commencing Fire Protection work.

Projects in the Historic Preservation Overlay are required to obtain a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) before obtaining other permits. Randall Tosh ([Randall.tosh@franklintn.gov](mailto:Randall.tosh@franklintn.gov) or 615 550-6987) is the point of contact for inspections in the Historic Preservation Overlay.

Projects in the Flood Fringe Overlay (FFO) or which are being graded to elevate the property out of the floodplain through cut/fill balance should also obtain a Flood Plain Development permit. Contact Shanna McCoy at 615 550-6631 ([shanna.mccoy@franklintn.gov](mailto:shanna.mccoy@franklintn.gov)) for details and clarifications.

Separate Permits are required for:

- Each Structure
- Each subcontractor where a permit is required for the work
- Each Electrical service (for purposes of coordinating with MTEMC)



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- Interior and Exterior Demolition (requires State Asbestos letter – see handout)
- Temporary Power
- Retaining Walls over 4 feet for each retaining wall
- Swimming Pools
- Fireplaces (masonry fireplaces will be under the main Building Permit through the GC)

The entire scope of work on the project shall be through the general contractor who will hire all of the subcontractors. The City will work through the General Contractor during the inspection process. The City of Franklin complies with the State of Tennessee Contractor's Licensing regulations.

### Electrical Permits:

- An Electrical subcontractor will obtain the primary Electrical permit
- A separate permit or inspection is required to be obtained by the Mechanical contractor for the HVAC connections. The electrical contractor will install the disconnect panel. The mechanical contractor may make up the connections from the equipment to the disconnect and will be held responsible for electrical code requirements.

### Low Voltage Permits:

- Low voltage permits are to be obtained for alarm systems. A Tennessee State Alarm Contractors license will be required to obtain a low voltage permit for alarm systems.
- Inspectors will work through the general contractor to obtain compliance for other low voltage installations that do not have a separate permit and that are not installed by the primary electrical contractor.
- Simple low voltage work in existing buildings involving 5 or fewer fixtures/wires does not require a permit unless it is alarm or security.
- A list of work that is required to have permits can be found in the IBC Section 105. Also check the Municipal Code Title 12 for any amendments to the adopted codes.



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### Inspection Request Checklist

- It is encouraged that you use the Online Inspection Scheduling system. Inspections scheduled online will be conducted if scheduled prior to 6 a.m. the same work day.
- The call-in inspection line (591-5603) is a voice mail line available 24 hours a day.
- Inspection requests via the phone line should be made by 2:00 p.m. each day in order to receive next day inspection service.
- The inspections that are scheduled for the day are posted on our website each morning. Do not call the office to ask if your inspection is scheduled as the volume of calls can be overwhelming. If you call asking about scheduled inspections, we will refer you to check the website.

Below are the two (2) items we need to schedule your inspection on the call in inspection line. Extraneous information is not documented. Contact the inspector assigned to your area for special cases.

1. Permit number
  2. Type of inspection requested
- ✓ Mistakes in reciting the permit number and inspection type will usually result in the inspection not being performed.
  - ✓ Double check the Scheduled Inspection list on our website to ensure the correct inspection is scheduled.

Before scheduling an inspection, double check the following items:



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### Commercial Pre-Inspection Checklist

- Be sure the work to be inspected is ready for inspection when the inspector arrives. This is best accomplished by the contractor/foreman visiting the site and ensuring the work is complete and punched out.
- All permits obtained should be posted on the jobsite at all times, usually in the job trailer at the start of the job. These serve as a reference for the inspectors when they are conducting inspections.
- Post the permit in a visible location if you are working in a suite inside a building to identify the jobsite to the inspector.
- The most current approved set of construction plans should be available near where the permits are posted. If the plans cannot be located, many times the inspection will have to be canceled.
- Portable toilet present
- The contractor is responsible to provide ladders or a buck hoist on larger projects to safely get the inspector to the work being inspected. Safe access to each building will be required for the inspectors to enter the structure. Walk-boards, make-shift ladders and situations where "pulling up" are required to enter the structure are not acceptable as safe entry to a building
- All construction sites are to be maintained in a safe and relatively clean condition. Materials scattered about the lot and in the streets will not be acceptable. When this condition is encountered, no inspections will be performed and failure to correct such situations may result in citations to court. Used/scrap materials are to be properly disposed of and materials that are to be used are to be kept in an orderly fashion. Inspections will not be performed on any property that is not properly and safely maintained.
- Siltation control is vital on each construction site. Silt fences are to be in place and are to be maintained at all times. Driving over silt fencing and failing to maintain such protection is not acceptable. Your material is to remain on your lot. Failure to do so will result in fines through the Engineering Department and work stoppage on the site.
- Streets are to be kept free of building materials, dumpsters (permit available from Streets Dept.) and portable toilets. Traffic lanes are to be kept open at all times. It is essential that emergency vehicles have access to all properties. Employees and sub-contractors should park on only one side of the street with no staggering from side to side. Ideally, there should be a staging area for materials and construction worker parking. Inspectors will not do your inspection if they do not have access to the property where the inspection is requested.



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### Construction Documents

The role of construction documents in commercial construction is very important. These plans are in most cases required to be designed and sealed by a State of Tennessee licensed Architect or Engineer. It is understood that the plans may not contain all necessary details, account for all field conditions, or 'reprint the code book' but the contractor should strive to follow the plans and to seek revisions from the designer when a change is made. The goal of the City of Franklin inspector is primarily to obtain code compliance, not to generate a perfect set of as-builts. The contractor and designer will have to determine to what extent their professions legally require revised construction documents. There will be occasions when the inspectors must require the plans to be updated, but the inspectors do have discretion to determine field compliance by inspection as long as the project owner is notified.

The most current set of approved plans must be kept onsite in order to obtain inspections. A pdf copy of the plans can be downloaded from the Electronic Plan Review website once they are approved.

### General Notes

- Larger projects will have an 'Inspection Log Book' where inspectors will record inspections and leave stickers and correction notices.
- All inspections in a sequence are to be approved before covering or concealing any work.
- Do not remove all copies of the correction notice. Two copies will be provided. Take one for your use and leave the other as a reference for the next inspector. Removal of the correction notice may result in a reinspection fee and delay until it is returned. The correction notice is the basis for the reinspection, and if it is not there, the inspector will have to move to the next inspection site on the list.
- Call your inspector to discuss stocking drywall on the project before stocking the drywall.
- Ensure you coordinate Fire Sprinkler and Life Safety inspections through the Fire Dept. The Fire Inspectors will have to conduct a Final Inspection before the Certificate of Occupancy is signed.
- Inspections for electrical temporary poles will be made after pole is set and ready for service.
- Inadequate or improper information will delay or void your inspection request. It is imperative that you supply correct information to obtain a timely inspection. Use the Online system for best results.
- Due to the volume of work, we cannot give priority or schedule appointments for inspections. We attempt to place Footing and Slab inspections at the beginning of our inspection routes to facilitate concrete pours. If you called the inspection in anticipation of completing your work and you do not finish, call and cancel your inspection and reschedule for the next day.
- There is always a possibility your inspection will be the first stop for the inspector. If the work is not ready, you may be charged a re-inspection fee.
- If a residential dwelling is occupied, City inspectors will not be able to enter the inside areas unescorted. Arrange to have someone available onsite on the day the inspection is requested.
- **ZONING REQUIREMENTS:** There will be items from the site plan approval that will apply to free-standing buildings and additions. There will be an inspection to verify these items have been



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completed as required. This will include site work, screening of mechanical equipment and other stipulations set forth in conditions required by the City of Franklin. Contractors should plan on calling this request in early to avoid delay in receiving a Certificate of Occupancy. For this inspection, call Molly Pike, Zoning Administrator, at 794-7012. This will include conditions and requirements of the Planning Department, Engineering Department, Street Department, Water and Sewer Departments that were approved as pending during site plan approval.

- **DO NOT** call your inspector and leave a voice mail on his cell phone or business extension for your inspection request. If that inspector is not at work for any reason or does not check his voice mail more than once or twice a day, you will not get your inspection. He will instruct you to use the Inspection Request Line. However, feel free to contact your inspector if you do have questions or concerns involving work or inspections.

### Inspection Results

- A 'green' sticker will be left on the jobsite if your inspection passes.
- If corrections are needed, a 'red' sticker will be left with a list of corrections.
- The inspection stickers will be left on the posted permit or in the Inspection Log Book. If you cannot find your sticker you can double check the Inspection Results webpage which is updated daily.
- 'Adding On' to inspections is not allowed and our team strives to issue a complete correction list the first time an inspection is conducted. If you are issued a correction notice, then the follow up inspection will deal with only those items from the first list. If an Inspector finds that they did not address a major issue, they must go through the Building Official to add significant issues only to the list. The Building Official will notify the Dept. Director and Asst. City Administrator of the actions taken. If there are deviations to this procedure, notify the BNS Director.

### Reinspection Fee

A reinspection fee may be charged when:

- The work is not complete enough to inspect or is ongoing when the Inspector arrives
- Corrections have not been made or attempted after a failed inspection
- Use of a rigged gauge for gas or water line pressure tests

The reinspection fee must be paid before additional inspections are requested.

### Certificate of Occupancy

- It is the Contractor's responsibility not to allow occupancy until a Certificate of Occupancy (or Temporary CO) is issued. There is almost always a delay that occurs if either people or belongings are moved into a structure before final inspection and issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy.



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- Inspectors cannot enter an occupied space without a responsible adult present in the space.
- Occupancy of a building without a certificate of occupancy may result in a citation to court with a fine to be assessed “per day” and an order to vacate the space.
- Temporary CO’s may be issued if all major issues are resolved – contact your Inspector beforehand to ensure this goes smoothly. Last minute notice can result in delays to occupancy. The inspector will help you identify obstacles to a Temp. CO beforehand so you have time to work off the deficiencies.
- Certificates of Occupancy may be obtained at the Building and Neighborhood Services offices or by email after all Final inspections are completed. Allow time for the Building, Fire, and Zoning inspectors to complete and sign the COO form.
- We do NOT recommend ordering concrete prior to approval since there are limits on the time it can be on a truck and still be used. We do enforce this.

### Notes on Inspection Types

1. **FOOTINGS:** We will inspect the trenches and reinforcement of all footings before concrete is placed. We will conduct partial footing inspections on large commercial projects. In some instances, we may require additional engineering work where questionable soil exists. Contact your Building Inspector if you have a 3<sup>rd</sup> Party Engineering firm making documented in-progress inspections of the structural elements prior to concrete emplacement as an alternative to City inspection.
2. **RETAINING WALLS:** We will inspect retaining walls for conformance to engineered design. All forms and reinforcement are to be in place and inspected before concrete is placed.
3. **SLABS:** We will inspect all slabs within the building. We will look for proper grade level. A vapor barrier must be in place and not damaged by other work. Reinforcement is to be in place.
4. **HANDICAP RAMPS:** Great care should be taken to size, level and dimension of landings at exit doors where handicap accessible ramps are placed. The dimensions and rise of the handicap ramp are to be compliant with the Handicap Code or the work will have to be redone at final. If you have questions about this before you pour these areas, contact your inspector. Again, approved plans should have the necessary information and should be on site.
5. **POURED IN PLACE WALLS:** We will inspect poured in place walls when all forms and reinforcement are in place and before any concrete is poured.
6. **SLAB ROUGH IN ELECTRICAL:** Electrical rough-in under slab will be done when this work is completed and ready to be covered. It is not to be covered until inspected and approved.
7. **ELECTRICAL ROUGH-IN: (ABOVE SLAB)** Electrical work above the slab is to be inspected before anything is covered. Building is to be dried in before rough-in inspections.
8. **UNDER SLAB PLUMBING:** We will inspect all under-slab plumbing before the any of the plumbing work is covered. All plumbing pipes running through or under walls are to be sleeved as prescribed by the 2012 International Plumbing Code. Tests are to be on the system for inspection. This inspection request and work is the responsibility of the plumbing contractor who obtains the plumbing permit for that project. Partial inspections can be requested on commercial projects.
9. **PLUMBING ROUGH-IN: (ABOVE SLAB)** Plumbing system above the slab is to be inspected before anything is covered up. Building is to be dried in before rough-in inspections. Partial inspections can be requested on commercial projects.



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10. **MECHANICAL ROUGH-IN:** All mechanical equipment is to be inspected when it is roughed in and before anything is concealed. All piping, ducts and other components are to be in place. Building is to be dried in before rough-in inspections. Partial inspections can be requested on commercial projects.
11. **FRAME:** When all walls are in place and building is completely dried in. A building being dried in means that framing is complete with all windows and doors in place along with having the roofing in place. Partial inspections can be requested on commercial projects.
12. **WATER & SEWER:** Inspection will be made when trenches are excavated and lines installed, connected, bedded and clean-outs are in place. Site development plumbing between taps and the buildings are to be permitted and inspected by the City of Franklin Building & Neighborhood Services Department. **Fire Protection water service laterals** are inspected by Fire Inspectors – call the Fire Inspector directly for inspection scheduling.
13. **FINAL PLUMBING:** This inspection will be done after all plumbing work is done and ready for use. This includes all fixtures in place and operable handicap accessibility fixtures for restrooms will be checked at this inspection. Backflow preventers will be checked as well.
14. **GAS LINE TEST:** This inspection will be done when all mechanical work is completed and prior to final Mechanical Equipment inspection.
15. **MECHANICAL FINAL:** This inspection will be done after gas line has passed inspection. All mechanical equipment is to be in place, connected and ready for service when this inspection is done.
16. **ABOVE CEILING INSPECTION:** We will do an inspection above ceiling to determine that all penetrations have been properly sealed and that fire rated walls are properly stenciled as fire rated walls. This is to be done before ceiling tiles are put in place. This primarily deals with rated walls, tenant separations, etc., but can be required in other situations. The Fire Marshal shall have approved any above ceiling suppression systems prior to this inspection.
17. **FINAL ELECTRICAL:** An electrical final will be done after all electrical work is completed and ready for service. **Do not call for building finals until final electrical has passed inspection.**
18. **FINAL FIRE MARSHAL INSPECTION:** The City of Franklin Fire Marshal or his assistant will do a final inspection for Fire Code violations prior to issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy. **It is the responsibility of the contractor to get this scheduled with the Fire Marshal. This applies to all commercial projects.**
19. **BUILDING FINAL:** **This inspection should not be requested until the ELECTRICAL FINAL has passed.** This should be the last inspection necessary for the issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy. The building, including all site work and zoning issues, as mentioned above, must be completed and ready for occupancy before a Certificate of Occupancy is issued. A Temporary Certificate of Occupancy may be issued in some cases for setting up equipment and stocking. This would not include admission of the general public or opening for business. This is to be coordinated with the Fire Marshal and your Building Inspector.
20. **CERTIFICATE OF OCCUPANCY:** A Certificate of Occupancy can be issued when all requirements and conditions have been satisfied. The builder should be aware that a Certificate of Occupancy can only be issued when the permit work is completed. If a contractor obtains one (1) permit for more than one building or one tenant build-out, there can be no Certificate of Occupancy issued until all buildings or spaces indicated for that permit are completed and approved. We discourage





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this because it restricts occupancy of any one space or building until all the work under that permit is completed.

21. **CERTIFICATE OF COMPLETION:** When a permit is obtained to build a “shell building”, a Certificate of Completion for the shell will be issued at time of completion and approval of the shell building. Tenant build-outs require separate submittals of plans and separate permits. A Certificate of Occupancy cannot be issued for a tenant space until the shell has been completed and a Certificate of Completion has been issued.