



# The Plans Examiner

## Subcontractor Permit Information Process

This is to follow up on the article in the July/August edition on the Discontinuation of Fax Back Simple Trade Permits. To clarify subcontractors can continue to add themselves as a “subcontractor of record” on Residential (One and Two Dwelling) Combination Permits via fax. **The new fax number is (503) 823-7693.** The Electrical, Mechanical and Plumbing Applications forms, as well as the Subcontractor Permit Information Process Brochure, has been updated to reflect this change and can be accessed online at [www.portlandonline.com/bds/app/trades](http://www.portlandonline.com/bds/app/trades).

The July 22, 2010 Discontinuation of Fax Back Simple Trade Permit Service Level Update document has also been updated to include this information. You can view the document online at [www.portlandoregon.gov/bds](http://www.portlandoregon.gov/bds) by clicking on the Service Level Updates button.

**Inability to add or Modify Trade Permits using the Online Permitting System.** Currently, the City of Portland’s Online Permitting System does not allow modifications to an existing permit, for example, adding additional fixtures to an electrical or plumbing trade permit. Addressing this deficiency is a top priority for BDS and we apologize for any inconvenience this may be causing. In the meantime, Trade Permit customers are strongly encouraged to thoroughly evaluate the number of fixtures necessary to complete a project before the permit is purchased.

We appreciate the understanding and patience of our customers as we streamline the changes to maximize our limited resources. All of the Bureau changes may be viewed online at [www.portlandoregon.gov/bds](http://www.portlandoregon.gov/bds) by clicking on Service Level Updates button. If you have any questions please contact Ross Caron, Public Information Officer at (503) 823-4268.

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## Public Works Permitting Process Improvements

Portland has a new process for permitting public works improvements that are required by private development projects. Beginning at the earliest stages of project planning, Portland’s public works permitting bureaus will work with you and your project team to efficiently plan, design, permit, inspect and accept public works improvements.

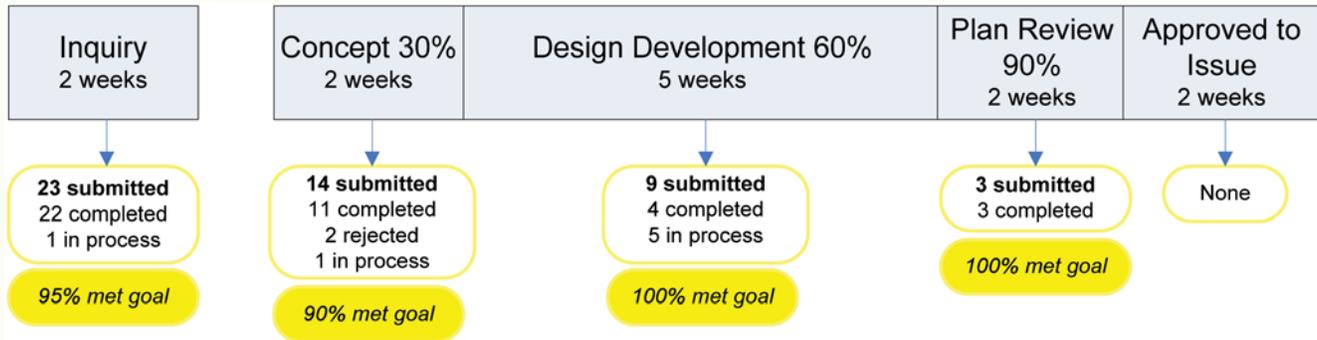
Following are updates on some of the public works permitting bureaus accomplishments to date and a few new resources for the public.

On July 28, 2010, the Public Works bureaus reported to City Council on the progress of the permit process improvements. The presentation included an update on the status of process improvements made to date and a review and report on the status of the original April 16, 2009 Council directives. It was noted that the new public works permitting process and appeals process have been initiated. Of the permits submitted under the new process, turnaround time goals were met 95% of the time, and 100% within 1 day of timeline goals.

Over the next year, the bureaus will continue to monitor the new programs and work with the public and customers to improve and refine the process for effectiveness and efficiencies. The next report to City Council will be in July of 2011.

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# Public Works Permitting Process Improvements Continued from page 1



## New Public Works Website

As part of the Public Works Permitting process improvements, the Public Works Permit Process website has been updated. The updated website went “live” July 28, 2010. You can view the website directly at <http://www.portlandonline.com/publicworks>.

The Public Works Process website now includes information on the new permit procedures and process, flowcharts, fees and charges, application forms, design checklists, and design requirements. Links are also included to technical requirements and the public works bureaus websites.

## Appeals Process

The new Public Works Permitting Appeals process went into effect June 1, 2010 and the procedure is intended to encourage the identification and resolution of issues as early as possible prior to the granting of a public works permit. Several goals are incorporated into the new appeals process. They include ensuring that development applicants are fully informed of their appeals rights and the appeals process, that appeals are fully documented, that reviews are conducted within strict turn around times, and that policy issues are flagged for further consideration.

Further information about appeal submittal timelines, application form, and how to submit an appeal is available at <http://www.portlandonline.com/publicworks> by clicking on Appeals Process on the left side of the screen. The fee to file an appeal application is \$200.

## Public Works Inquiry Meetings

Public Works now offers early assistance meetings for potential applicants. These meetings are intended to provide information to applicants on the public works and infrastructure requirements for proposed projects.

Two types of meetings are offered: a Basic Inquiry Meeting and a Detailed Consultation Meeting.

- A Basic Inquiry Meeting is a meeting with a public works permit manager to review a standardized summary report of the public works improvements that will be required to serve your property. You will also receive information about the permitting process and a summary of site-specific issues for you to consider. The fee for this meeting is \$150.
- A Detailed Consultation Meeting is a meeting with a public works permit manager and representatives from each of the public works bureaus. The meeting focuses on the public works improvements that will be required to serve your property. At the meeting, you will receive comprehensive information about your project and the permitting process. The fee for this meeting is \$3,000.

The Public Works Inquiry Request Form is available at <http://www.portlandonline.com/publicworks> by clicking on Step 1 – Inquiry/Scoping on the left side of the screen.

For additional information or questions, please contact Public Works Permitting Staff at 503-823-1987 or at [PublicWorksPermits@portlandoregon.gov](mailto:PublicWorksPermits@portlandoregon.gov).

## More to Come...

The public works permitting bureaus will continue to implement and refine the new public works permitting process. Keep an eye out for new information and updates posted on the public works website. Future information to be posted to the website includes examples of Public Works Inquiry applications, Public Works Appeal decisions, administrative rules, updated application forms, and new brochures for the public works process and appeal process.

## Tall Grass & Weed Complaint Pilot Project

In an effort to provide the highest level of service, while maximizing limited resources, the Bureau of Development Services implemented a pilot project on July 19, 2010 that allows citizens to submit online complaints accompanied with a digital photograph of tall grass and weed violations at properties within the City of Portland.



Title 29 of Portland City Code requires the owner of any property to cut and remove and keep cut and removed all weeds and grass that are located in lawn areas and have a prevailing height of more than 10 inches. In October 2009, BDS was forced to prioritize various enforcement/complaint types in order to effectively process the most critical cases with reduced resources. Unfortunately, limited resources have not allowed BDS to respond to tall grass and weed complaints. The pilot project is another opportunity that allows citizens to partner with BDS to address code violations to improve the livability and safety of our community. Complainant logs and photographs have long been utilized to assist with Zoning and Noise cases.

As of August 27, 2010, 150 online complaints have been submitted to BDS as part of the pilot project and 88 notices have been mailed to properties to notify them on how to correct their tall grass and weed violation.

To participate in the pilot project and report a property with grass and weeds in excess of 10 inches high, citizens are encouraged to submit a complaint accompanied by a digital photograph online at <http://www.portlandoregon.gov/bds/index.cfm?c=53082>. Due to limited resources, complaints may only be submitted online and must be accompanied by a digital photograph of the reported violation.

## Financial & Workload Update

The bureau's cost recovery rate has improved since the last staff reductions in May 2010, and its cumulative cost recovery for fiscal year (FY) 2009-10 was 92% up from 74% in FY 2008-09. The reserve balance at the end of June was just over \$500,000 – still quite low, but slightly better than projected. The bureau is expected to achieve cost recovery for FY 2010-11.

Average monthly expenditures in FY 2009-10 amounted to approximately \$2.4 million, or 31% less than in FY 2008-09 (\$3.5 million).

Average monthly revenues in FY 2009-10 amounted to approximately \$2.2 million, or 15% less than in FY 2008-09 (\$2.6 million). Revenues are expected to stabilize and in FY 2010-11 and stay at the level achieved in FY 2009-10.

For most of the bureau's programs, workloads decreased in FY 2009-10, though not as much as they dropped in FY 2008-09.

## BDS Service Level

The bureau is constantly reviewing and assessing its level of service to all customers. Currently, the bureau's service level is less than adequate in a number of program areas.

The continued decline in revenues, along with the major reduction in staffing level from a year ago, makes this challenge even more difficult to overcome. However, we are exploring creative solutions such as recalling laid off staff for temporary assignments and encouraging our customers to access more information on line, where possible, to elevate some of the operational and financial challenges.

Service level improvements and changes are posted regularly on the bureau's webpage and/or sent out through press releases. Please visit the bureau's website at [www.portlandoregon.gov/bds](http://www.portlandoregon.gov/bds) for more information.



City of Portland, Oregon  
 Bureau of Development Services

# School Tax Increase Effective October 1<sup>st</sup>

## BACKGROUND

Passed in 2007, SB 1036 allowed school district to impose tax on new construction measured by the square footage of improvements (affordable housing, public buildings, agricultural buildings, hospitals, private schools, and religious facilities are exempt). SB 1036 defined and required revenues to be used for capital improvements and must be collected by a local government, local service district, special government body, state agency or state official that issues a permit for structural improvements regulated by the state building code. An inter-governmental agreement with local governments collecting the tax is required and collection expenses are limited to 4% of tax revenue.

## TAX LIMIT CALCULATIONS

SB 1036 set tax rate limits of \$1 per square foot for residential use and \$0.50 for nonresidential use, along with a \$25,000 tax limit on nonresidential properties. Beginning in 2009, tax rates were indexed to inflation using the Engineering News-Record Construction Cost index. As prescribed in statute, the Oregon Department of Revenue (DOR) is responsible for updating tax rate limits to reflect the inflation and notifying affected districts.

## TAX RATE LIMITS BY FISCAL YEAR

	Current	Effective October 1 <sup>st</sup>
Residential	\$1.00	\$1.05
Non-Residential	\$0.5	\$0.53
Non-Residential	\$25,000	\$26,400

\*Dollars per square foot

# Build It Green!

**Saturday, September 25th, 2010**  
**Tour 11:00 am to 5:00 pm**  
**FREE Info Fair 3:00 pm to 7:00 pm**



## Home Tour and Info Fair

The market is flooded these days with eco-certifications and claims of being green everywhere you turn. Green

home certifications are no exception. With so many to choose from, today we are describing the certifications and what they cover. All home certifications have fees (usually registration and certification), testing and a lot of documentation associated with them. Often, in the process of qualifying for one home certification program you will receive another one as well.

The City of Portland Bureau of Planning and Sustainability invites you to join us on the ninth annual **Build It Green! (BIG!) Home Tour**. The Tour features twenty-one green remodels and new homes around the Portland Metro Area. This year's themes are affordable housing, the Passive House Standard and small home footprints.

These innovative and inspiring projects showcase a variety of ways homeowners are:

- generating energy,
- meeting and exceeding green home certification standards,
- managing stormwater on site,
- reducing their carbon footprints, and
- recycling water and minimizing construction waste.



- **\$15** general admission
- **\$10** car-free/student/honored citizen
- **Free** for children 14 and under

Online (credit card):  
[www.portlandonline.com/bps/builditgreen](http://www.portlandonline.com/bps/builditgreen)

In-person (cash/check only)  
 Ecohaus | 819 SE Taylor St |  
 Portland | 97214 | 503-222-3881

Tickets are full-color booklets with home highlights, photos, map and project resources.

**BIG!** is presented by the City of Portland Bureau of Planning and Sustainability (BPS).

Thank you to our sponsors! Metro, Energy Trust of Oregon, Oregon Home magazine, Solar Oregon, City of Portland Bureaus of Development Services (BDS), Environmental Services (BES) and Water.

For more info and to preview homes: [www.portlandonline.com/bps/builditgreen](http://www.portlandonline.com/bps/builditgreen)

Regional Green Building Hotline | 503-823-5431 | [green-hotline@portlandoregon.gov](mailto:green-hotline@portlandoregon.gov)

We hope to see you on the Tour and at the Info Fair on Saturday, September 25th!

### Get the latest:

 Build It Green! Tour and Fair

 BIGtour

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# Home Tour and Info Fair

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Following the tour on Saturday is a fun, family-friendly FREE Information Fair hosted by Ecohaus, 819 SE Taylor St, Portland, OR 97214 from 3 p.m. to 7 p.m. There will be over fifty vendors of green products and services, hands-on activities, music and raffle prizes! Food and drinks will also be available. The Info Fair is open to all (it is not required to have a tour ticket to attend).

## Tour highlights include:

- Three affordable housing projects for home buyers at or below 80 percent of area median income (AMI). These sites provide 19 new affordable green housing units from community development partners Habitat for Humanity Portland Metro/East, Portland Community Reinvestment Initiatives, Inc. (PCRI) and Proud Ground. The PCRI duplex features energy upgrades 15 percent above Oregon Residential Energy Code made possible by a competitive grant from the BDS Portland Energy Efficient Home Pilot (PEEHP).
- A new, tiny 200 square foot mother-in-law cottage in the midst of a family food garden.
- Portland's first permitted, new strawbale dwelling (it's bright orange with 20" thick walls).
- A colorfully renovated 1884 national historic landmark home with energy improvements financed by Clean Energy Works Portland [www.cleanenergyworksportland.org](http://www.cleanenergyworksportland.org)



- One home renovation and two new homes that follow the stringent Passive House Standard ensuring a "very well-insulated, virtually air-tight building that is primarily heated by passive solar gain and by internal gains from people, electrical equipment, etc."
- A wheelchair-accessible, new timberframe home featuring six species of Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) -certified and salvaged wood.
- An owner-designed, -built and -financed duplex meeting the Living Building Challenge. The Living Building Challenge requires all water to be harvested and disposed of on-site, the generation of all energy and the processing of all waste built from materials sourced no more than 500 miles from the site.

Volunteers wanted! Sign up to volunteer for a shift and receive a FREE Tour ticket. E-mail [polly.birge@portland-oregon.gov](mailto:polly.birge@portland-oregon.gov) with: your name, phone, e-mail, morning or afternoon shift preference, area of town preference (N, NE, SE, SW or Milwaukie) and whether you'd like to be at a home or at the Info Fair.

# Online in 2010

To receive the Paperless Plans Examiner:

1. Go online to [www.portlandoregon.gov/bds](http://www.portlandoregon.gov/bds)
2. On the left side of the BDS Home Page, under Quick Links, click on Join Our Mailing Lists

## PLANS EXAMINER, JULY / AUGUST 2010

The Plans Examiner is a bi-monthly online publication of the City of Portland - Bureau of Development Services

### How to Reach Us

Visit us in person at  
1900 SW 4th Avenue  
Portland, OR 97201

### BDS Main Office

Monday - Friday  
8:00 am to 5:00 pm  
(503) 823-7300  
(503) 823-6868 TTY

### Development Services Center

Tuesday - Friday  
8:00 am to 3:00 pm  
Closed Mondays

### On the Internet visit:

[www.portlandoregon.gov/bds](http://www.portlandoregon.gov/bds)

Building Code Information ..... 503-823-1456 (e)	BUREAU OF PLANNING AND SUSTAINABILITY
Fire Code Information ..... 503-823-7300	Regional Green Building Hotline..... 503-823-5431
Planning & Zoning Information..... 503-823-7526	TRANSPORTATION
24-hour Inspection Request Recording ..... 503-823-7000 (e)	Development Requirements, Right-of-Way Policy,
Inspection Section, 1 & 2 Family Dwellings ..... 503-823-7388	Land Divisions and Transportation Plan Review
Commercial, Plumbing ..... 503-823-7302	Kurt Krueger ..... 503-823-6964
Building & Mechanical..... 503-823-7303	Local Improvement Districts, Andrew Aebi ..... 503-823-5648
Electrical ..... 503-823-7304	Street Permit Engineering, Chon Wong..... 503-823-7050
Development Services Center ..... 503-823-7310 (e)	Systems Development Charge
Development Services Center FAX..... 503-823-3018	Richard Eisenhauer ..... 503-823-6108
Information, electrical, mechanical, plumbing,	TREES - Urban Forestry (7:00 am - 3:30 pm)..... 503-823-4489
sewer, and sign permits..... 503-823-7363	Pruning/Planning/Removal Permits
Newsletter Contact, Colleen Poole..... 503-823-7889	N, Luke Miller ..... 503-823-4511
Permitting Services, Fee estimate and	N, Jim Field ..... 503-823-4011
Permit status via voice mail..... 503-823-7357 (e)	S, Ned Sodja..... 503-823-4440
Permitting resource and records..... 503-823-7660	S, Dave Kahler..... 503-823-1691
FAX requests for records ..... 503-823-7765	Tree Cutting Ordinance and Commercial Planning
Septic Tanks / Cesspools ..... 503-823-6892	and Development, Charley Davis ..... 503-823-4523
ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES	Transportation Improvements, Joe Hintz ..... 503-823-4025
Development Assistance ..... 503-823-7761	Residential Development & Improvement
Industrial Source Control..... 503-823-7585	Myles Black..... 503-823-4018
FIRE BUREAU	WATER
Development Standards, Sprinklers, Alarms	Water Service Information..... 503-823-7368
Nate Takara ..... 503-823-3810	Hydrant Permits..... 503-823-7368
Flammable Liquids, Tanks, Hazardous Processes	Plan Review, Mari Moore..... 503-823-7368
Bob Happel ..... 503-823-3934	Subdivision Planning, Rick Nelson ..... 503-823-7475
	Backflow Valve Installation Requirements,
	Dave Barrigan..... 503-823-7479