

Efiles Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

What has changed with the Efiles update?

The way Efiles looks is new; the interface has been simplified and streamlined. The icons for the different types of records have a new look, too.

The layout is now more mobile friendly, so when searching Efiles on a mobile device the layout will reformat to the smaller screen size.

On the search results page, you can now jump between multiple pages of results by clicking the page number at the bottom of the results screen.

You can now search for Record Date by using the following formats: **4/2/1962**, or **4/1960**, or **1962**, or **1960 to 1965**

You can use the AND OR buttons to do more advanced searches. For example to search for records about the building now called Keller Auditorium:

- Search Term: *Auditorium* AND
- Search Term: *Civic* OR
- Search Term: *Keller*

You can search for electronic record types or extensions by typing in the file extension (the three letters that appear after the period such as .pdf or .jpg). For example to see PDF files, select Electric File Extension from the Search Type drop down menu and then enter *PDF* in the Search Term box.

What is the same about Efiles?

Efiles is still pulling information from the same database. You can continue to view/download electronic records including pictures, documents and audio files.

You can search the database by:

- Any Word (searches the title and notes field)
- Document Content (for electronic documents that are full text searchable)
- Electronic Document Extension (Ex: JPG)
- Record Date (Ex: *4/2/1952* for a specific date or *1931 to 1931* for a specific year)
- Record Number (Ex: *AF/11111*)
- PARC Accession (Ex: *A2009-009*)
- PARC Confirmation Number (For City employees who have sent in record to the Records Center)

I am not getting any results, what's going on?

1. Double check your spelling. Efiles searches for exact matches and does not correct spelling, near misses, or extra letters.
2. Broaden your search. For example, if you aren't finding anything for an exact address, try searching for streets and cross-streets.
3. Most of the records in Efiles were created by City employees on behalf of the City. Some things to keep in mind when looking for records in Efiles:
 - Is there a reason why the City of Portland would have created or managed the records you are seeking? If not, you may want to contact us for referrals.

- If you are looking for a person, did that person work for the City or routinely work with the City? If not, it is likely we do not have any records about them.
 - Is the building owned by the city? The City does not maintain much information about residential or non-City owned buildings.
4. If you are still not finding what you are looking for, feel free to email PARC@portlandoregon.gov or drop in during [open research hours](#).

How can I search for multiple spellings of the same word like sewer, sewers, and sewerage?

Efiles searches for exact matches. For words that have are plural, like sewer versus sewers, or have similar spellings like sewer and sewerage, Efiles will only produce results for one or the other. A search for *sewers* will yield different results than a search for *sewer*.

You can use an asterisk (*) at the end of your search term as a “wild card” to get results for both *sewer* and *sewers* by searching for *sewer**

How can I search for specific dates?

To search for specific dates, select the Record Date field from the drop down menu under Search Type and then type in the date or date range.

- To find records on a specific date, type M/D/YYYY in the Search Term box.
For example for records dated April 2, 1962, type 4/2/1962
- To find records in a specific month and year, type M/YYYY in the Search Term box.
For example for records in April of 1962, type 4/1962
- To find records with a date range, type YYYY to YYYY in the Search Term box.
For example for records in the 1950s, type 1950 to 1959

How can I search just for pictures?

Select “Record Number” from the drop down menu under Search Type; then enter **p** under Search Term. On the next line you can enter the subject of the photo such as *Burnside Bridge, City Hall, or NE Killingsworth*.

To see photos with digital files available online, click the “Show Result with Electronic Records Only” box.

What is the best way to search for pictures of my neighborhood?

Many of photos in the collection were taken in relation to a public works project like a new sewer line, repairing a street, or considering a land use request. To look for photos of your neighborhood, search for major streets in your neighborhood or city landmarks like parks.

How can I see the picture, document or audio file online?

If an electronic record is available online you will see either [PDF](#), [JPG](#), [TIF](#), or [MP3](#) under the record type on the left hand side of the page. The majority of historical records listed in Efiles are simply catalog records and do not have digital version available online. These records can be accessed at the City of Portland Archives & Records Center [during the hours when the Research Room is open](#).

I have suggestions about how Efiles can work better.

Send your suggestions, questions or comments to PARC@portlandoregon.gov.