

Building Department FAQs

Q. When do I need a permit?

A. A building permit is required to construct, enlarge, alter, repair, move or change the occupancy of a building or structure, or to erect, install, enlarge, alter, repair, convert, or replace any electrical, gas, mechanical, or plumbing system or to cause any such work to be done. Examples include: Add room; build stairway; move, remove, or add walls; put up a fence more than 6 feet high; finish an attic, garage or basement to make additional space; cut a new window or door opening, or widen existing opening; build, demolish, or move a carport, garage or shed that is more than 20 sq. ft. in area; apply roofing material when all of the old roofing material is removed and new sheathing is installed, except when the existing solid plywood is removed and new plywood is installed; build a retaining wall more than 4 feet high, measured from the bottom of the footing to the top of the wall, unless it has a surcharge; build a port or deck that is more than 30 inches above any portion of the surrounding finish grade; move more than 50 cu. yds. of earth or move any amount of cut/fill on sites affected by waterways or slope hazards. If you are not sure if you need a permit, please call the Building Department at (254) 542-3528.

Q. What codes does the City of Copperas Cove currently enforce?

A. The City of Copperas Cove has adopted and is currently enforcing the 2015 International Model Codes: IBC, IFC, IFGC, IMC, IPMC, IEBC, IPC, IPSD, IRC, IECC and ISPC and the National Electrical Code (NEC)—2017 Edition

Q. How much will my building permit cost?

A. Please see link below for current City Fee Schedule.

[Fee Schedule](#)

Q. How do I check the status of my permit?

A. Please use the online portal (www.MyGovernmentOnline.org) to learn the status of your permit. Watch for emails requesting additional documentation or clarification of submitted information or requesting payment once the permit request is ready to issue.

Q. What is required to place an accessory building on my property?

A. In addition to a building permit application, a site plan is required. The minor site plan needs to show where the proposed structure is going to be placed, the distance from all property lines, the distance from the main structure, the structure height and where the main electrical service come into the house. Please show all “existing” accessory structure locations and dimensions; and if there are no other

accessory structures on the property, please state “no other structures”. A site plan template is located at the beginning of the application process for your use.

[Sec. 20-29. - Accessory buildings](#)

Q. What is required to install a swimming pool, spa, or hot tub on my property?

A. In addition to a building permit application, a site plan is required. The site plan needs to show where the proposed pool, spa, hot tub is going to be placed, the distance from all property lines, the distance from the main structure and where the main electrical service comes into the house. You will need to show the location of the electrical outlet you plan on plugging the pool, spa, hot tub pump into. Extension cords are not allowed to operate the pump. Please also upload the specification document(s) for the pool, spa, hot tub. [Additional requirements for swimming pools, spas and hot tubs.](#)

[Sec. 20-26. – Swimming pools.](#)

Q. As the property owner, can I obtain the building permit to have a shed or pool placed on my property?

Per [Sec. 4-7](#) and [Sec. 4-8](#) of the City of Copperas Cove Code of Ordinances, it is the responsibility of the building contractor to register and to obtain a building permit to place an accessory structure or swimming pool on private property located within city limits. The property owner may not apply for the permit on the contractor’s behalf. For example: If a homeowner purchases a ready-built shed, the company who sets the shed will need to pull a permit to hold the permit holder responsible for placement according to the site plan.

Q. What is required to install a fence on my property?

A. In addition to a building permit application, a site plan is required. The site plan must show where the proposed fence is going to be placed, the fence height and the distance from all property lines. If the fence is going to be placed on the property line it must be shown as such on the site plan. The linear footage of the fence and all gates must be calculated when providing the total linear footage. Please review the property survey for property line locations and any drainage easements. Fencing is not allowed in drainage easements.

[Sec. 20-25. – Fences.](#)

Q. What is required to build a retaining wall on my property?

A. In addition to a building permit application, a site plan is required. Also, if the wall is proposed to be over 24 inches tall, then engineered drawings with an engineer stamp will be required for review.

Q. Is a Certificate of Occupancy required prior to opening my business?

A. Yes. It shall be unlawful to make a change in tenancy of any existing commercial building or lease space without first making application for and obtaining approval for a certificate of occupancy. Please complete the business contact form and upload with your building permit application. The form is also located on our city website at the link below in .pdf or .doc format.

https://www.copperascovetx.gov/files/forms/police/Business_Alarms.pdf

https://www.copperascovetx.gov/files/forms/police/Business_Alarms.doc

Q. Can I have an in-home business?

A. Yes. You are allowed to operate a business in your home provided that the activity is clearly incidental and secondary to the use of premises for dwelling purposes, is carried on within the dwelling, and is not detrimental or injurious to the economic or aesthetic value of adjoining property. Customary home occupations shall not include auto repair, barber shops, beauty shops, carpenters', electricians', or plumbers' shops, radio shops, tin-painting, furniture repairing, sign painting, or any form of retail sales. Please refer to Section 20-28 for the regulations concerning home occupations.

[Sec. 20-28. – Home Occupations.](#)

Q. Do I need a permit to have a garage sale?

A. Yes. You are allowed four 3-consecutive day garage sales per calendar year.

[Sec. 12-4. Garage sales.](#)

Q. Do I need a building permit to install a sign by for a business?

A. A building permit shall be required for signs greater than thirty-two (32) square feet in total sign area.

[Chapter 16.5 – Sign Basic Sign Regulations](#)

Q. Is a Pre-Pour Inspection required for flatwork?

A. Yes. Please ensure that you schedule the pre-pour inspection once the area is framed out. You can schedule the inspection online or call MyGovernmentOnline to schedule. If you call in before 9 am, the inspection may be scheduled for the same day.

Q. What is the cutoff time for making inspection requests?

A. You can schedule the inspection online or call MyGovernmentOnline (866) 957-3764 to schedule. If you call in before 9 am, the inspection may be scheduled for the same day. AM or PM inspections may

be requested. Inspectors leave the office at approximately 9 am. AM inspections may occur between 9:30-11:30; PM inspections may occur between 1:30-4:30.

Q. What is required to install an irrigation on private property?

A. In addition to a building permit application, a design plan is required. Upon a passing ditch inspection, you are required to upload the backflow report to the project in order to close the project and email the backflow report to backflow@copperascovetx.gov.

[Backflow Prevention Tester Registration \(Water Dept\)](#)

Q. Do I need to wait for an electrical inspection in order to have my power turned back on?

A. No. All occupied utility inspections are PRIORITY over any other inspection.

Q. What hours am I able to perform permitted construction work?

A. Anytime between 7 a.m. and 10 p.m.

[Sec. 8-7. – Noise.](#)

Q. Does the Plumbing Contractor need a Street Cut permit before commencing work in the street or right-of-way?

A. Yes. Here are the steps to request a Street Cut for sewer cleanouts and yard line sewer repair permits in the City of Copperas Cove:

1. Contractor shall contact Building Department for a permit. www.mygovernmentonline.org.
2. Contactor shall contact Water & Sewer Departments for line locates. Call 811 to conduct a DIG test to locate electrical lines (gas, electrical and cable).
3. After the above has been accomplished, contractor shall contact the Street Department to coordinate a time for the Street Crew to haul off spoils in the street and fill the street cut with base. The Street Department will need at least a 48-hour notice. Contractor shall email Street Department ccstreet@copperascovetx.gov with a point of contact including Name, Phone Number, Address, and Business Name.
4. Road/lane closures shall be approved by the Public Works Department and coordinated with the police department, fire department, and the emergency medical services for the safety of pedestrians and vehicular traffic.
5. Contractor shall schedule online the agreed-upon date between the street department and contractor for an inspection to be performed by a city inspector. www.mygovernmentonline.org

Q. How do I make an Open Records Request?

A. Public Information and Open Records are available by submitting a request in writing to the City of Copperas Cove, Texas. Please see link below.

[Open Records Request](#)

Q. Is a Building Contractor required to register with the city?

A. Yes. Please go to www.mygovernmentonline.org and register to use the website. Once you login to your account, you will go to Permits & Licensing, Apply Online, select Copperas Cove jurisdiction, project type registration, *next*, Get Started on a New Application, Contractor Registration and follow the application instructions. You will receive an application number once you submit the application successfully.

No City registration fees will be assessed to licensed Plumbing, Electrical, or Mechanical contractors per State Law; however, a copy of driver's license and trade license will be required with registration.

[Sec. 4-7. – Building contractor registration-Fee.](#)

Q. Who is required to register as a contractor with the City of Copperas Cove?

A. All contractors working in the City of Copperas Cove are required to register. If you have a Homestead exemption from the County, you may do work with your own hands on your own single-family home with a permit. It is recommended that electrical work be performed by a licensed Master electrician. If you do not have a Homestead exemption and want to do work on your own single-family home, you would need to register as a contractor.

Q. How long is a Contractor's registration valid for?

A. One calendar year which runs January 1 – December 31 during the year registration is accepted.

Q. What are the requirements for a residential solar installation?

A. In addition to an electrical permit application, solar plan drawings and wind load information is required. The 2015 IRC reference must be notated on the signed and stamped engineer wind and load documents for residential solar, and the 2015 IRC and 2017 NEC need to be referenced on the residential solar array documents.

The meter cannot be disconnected or reconnected in the meter box without prior authorization from ONCOR (Electric Service Provider). The meter cannot be reconnected in the meter box without a Building Department inspection. You will need to add the disconnect and reconnect information to your initial permit request document. The only authorized personnel that can reconnect the meter is an ONCOR representative.

All service upgrades, and residential add-on's require compliance with the 2015 IRC section R 314.2.2 as it refers to the interconnected smoke detectors installation requirements. Please read the city ordinances for additional electrical upgrade requirements.

Generator installation require a site plan that identifies the placement of the generator, the fuel supply tank, the distance from fuel supply tank to generator, and fuel tank supplier. Please provide the distance from where the supply stops and the plumber starts.

An engineer's letter for the wind load is also required for this permit request. This letter needs to be one document signed, dated, addressed for the application address, and stamped with the engineer's current stamp. This engineer's letter needs to reference compliance with the 2015 IRC.

Q. Do I need a Solicitors License to sell or solicit door to door?

A. Yes. It shall be unlawful for any person to engage in the business of itinerant vendor or peddler in the city without first obtaining a solicitor's license. See Sec. 12-53 for license requirements and City Fee Schedule for costs.

[Article III – Peddlers; Itinerant Vendors](#) (also known as solicitor)
[Fee Schedule \(Code & Health\)](#)

Q. What are the requirements for modification of an existing cell tower or base station?

A. Federal law requires local government approval of any eligible facilities request for modification of an existing wireless tower or base station. An eligible facilities request is any request for modification of an existing tower or base station that does not substantially change the physical dimensions of such tower or base station, involving:

1. Collocation of new transmission equipment;
2. Removal of transmission equipment; or
3. Replacement of transmission equipment.

In addition to completing the online building permit application, the following documents will be required for review:

1. Request for Minor Modification to Existing Wireless Facility – Section 6409,
2. Section 6409 Substantial Change Checklist,
3. Engineer-stamped construction drawings, and
4. Structural analysis report.

Q. How long will it take to get a permit?

A. Typically, starting from the date of your permit application is accepted, you will be notified within 10 business days by email. If there is any information missing, you will receive an email requesting

documentation. Once the requested documentation is received, the review period starts over at Day 1. Otherwise, you will receive an email requesting a payment.

Q. How long is my building permit good for?

A. The building permit becomes null and void if work or construction authorized is not commenced within 6 months or if construction or work is suspended or abandoned for a period of 6 months at any time after work is started.

Q. Do I need to be present for the building inspection?

A. No. If the inspection is to occur in a fenced yard or enclosed structure, permission may be given to the inspector. Please add a note with the inspection request that permission is granted for entry.

Q. How many chickens can I keep at my residence?

A. No person may keep more than 10 hens (female chickens) in residential zoning districts of the city.

[Sec. 3-66. – Hens.](#)