



Land Development Services

Technical Bulletin

**Subject: Building Trade Permit Fees and Review Process
Changing October 31, 2022**

Date: 9/22/22

No.: 22-07

Summary: Building trade permit fees and the associated review process will be amended concurrently with the launch of the Planning and Land Use System (PLUS) Release 4 on October 31, 2022.

Effective Date: October 31, 2022

Background: Commercial and residential building trade permits (plumbing, electrical, and HVAC/mechanical) are currently issued automatically at the time of application through Land Development Service's (LDS) online building permit system, Fairfax Inspections Database Online (FIDO). Staff does not currently review trade permit applications. While this process creates immediate permit approval, it has generated countless permit amendments resulting in a high number of mis-applied-for trades permits.

Consequently, with the fourth release of PLUS, this process will be amended on October 31 to ensure trade permit applications meet the requirements of the Virginia Construction Code. The new process will include a cursory staff review of the permit application prior to permit issuance. This will help minimize the number of refund requests necessary due to duplicate requests, incorrect equipment identified and incorrect permit types. This new review will check for the following items:

- Consistency of the permit application with any associated building plans, as applicable.
- Accuracy of work description and listed equipment to ensure accurate fees.

If discrepancies or errors in the permit application are discovered during review, the application will be returned to the applicant for correction prior to issuance of the trade permit. The goal remains to approve trade permit applications within two business days, though review times may vary based on the volume of permits received and available staff resources.

The Board of Supervisors approved an amendment to the Land Development Services Fee Schedule ([Appendix Q](#)) on December 7, 2021, including amended trade permit fees to be effective with PLUS Implementation. The current fee structure for building trade permits (plumbing, electrical and HVAC/mechanical) bases fees on the capacity of the system being permitted (e.g., kilowatt output of electrical installations). This structure will be amended to make those fees commensurate with the level of effort to review and inspect the project. The amended fees are calculated based on the quantity of materials and equipment individually, for all three trades: mechanical, electrical and plumbing. The amended fees equalize costs between the three trades as detailed in Appendix Q, which will go into effect on October 31, 2022.

If you have any questions, please contact Steve Kendrick in the Permitting and Code Administration Division at **703-324-1869, TTY 711**

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