

The Minnesota State Building Code, Building Permits, and Building Inspections in Goodhue County

Minnesota State Building Code

The State Building Code governs the construction, reconstruction, alteration, repair, and use of buildings and other structures and provides uniform performance standards, establishes reasonable safeguards for health, safety, welfare, comfort, and security of the residents of the state. (Excerpt from MNSS 326B.101) The State Code supersedes the building code of any municipality.

Purpose of the Code

The purpose of the Code is to provide minimum standards to safeguard the public health, safety, and general welfare through structural strength, means of egress facilities, stability, sanitation, adequate light and ventilation, energy conservation, and safety to life and property from fire and other hazards attributed to the built environment and to provide safety to firefighters and emergency responders during emergency operations.

Scope of the Code

With a few exceptions, the Minnesota State Building Code applies to the design, construction, addition, alteration, moving, replacement, demolition, repair, equipment, installation, use and occupancy, location, maintenance, and inspection of any building, structure, or building service equipment in a municipality. (From Minnesota Rules 1300.0040)

Administration of the Code

Minnesota State Statutes require that a **Certified Building Official** administer the Building Code. The County Building Official administers the State Code in the 21 unincorporated townships of Goodhue County. By contractual agreement, the County Building Official also administers the State Building Code for some of the cities in the County. The Building Official is solely and ultimately responsible for all aspects of Code administration. The County Building Official is part of the County Land Use Management Department which is located in the Goodhue County Government Center in Red Wing.

Building Permits are Required

Except as specified in Minnesota Rules 1300.0120, projects covered by the Building Code require a building permit. Permits are required to construct, enlarge, alter, repair, move, demolish, or change the occupancy of a building or structure, or to erect, install, enlarge, alter, repair, remove, convert, or replace any gas, mechanical, electrical, plumbing system, or other equipment. Carpeting, wallpapering, and painting typically do not require building permits. For specific projects and circumstances, the County Building staff can answer questions about requirements for a permit.

Other Regulations

Other regulations that are not a part of the Minnesota State Building Code may affect building construction. Among these regulations are zoning regulations and restrictive covenants. Zoning regulations are local rules that regulate the type of use allowed in various zoning districts, the size and height of buildings, the location of structures on property, parking requirements, fences, lot sizes, and so forth. Restrictive covenants are private agreements between property owners. County or City Zoning approval is submitted to the Building Official with the application for a Building Permit.

Building Permit Applications

Goodhue County Building Permit Applications are available at the County Land Use Management Department, City Halls, from Township Clerks, and on line at www.co.goodhue.mn.us. Applications for permits are reviewed by County Zoning staff, by County Environmental Health staff, by County Soil and Water Conservation District staff, and by County Building staff as relevant to the proposed project.

Building Permit Submittals

Typical submittals for residential building permits include the Township or City Zoning Approval, a site plan or plot plan, two complete sets of detailed, dimensioned, final construction drawings, and the completed Building Permit Application. Additional submittals may include a contractor waiver form, manufacturer specifications, engineering calculations, soils reports, and other data as may be requested.

Building Permit Fees

Permit fees defray the direct and the indirect costs of administering the State Building Code. To be commensurate with the service, permit fees are based on the scope of the work. The Building Official determines the permit valuation from the project size, the construction type, and the use or occupancy of the proposed work. A project valuation reflects the total value of all construction work including materials and labor for work covered by the permit such as electrical, gas, mechanical, plumbing equipment, and permanent systems. Fees are in accordance with the fee schedule adopted by Goodhue County.

Permit Issuance

Only the Building Official may issue a Building Permit. Making application for a permit does not mean that construction may begin. Obtaining zoning approval does not mean that construction may begin. Prior to beginning construction, a permit must be issued. When the Building Official finds that the project described in a permit application, the plans, specifications, and other data submitted, all conform to the requirements of the Minnesota State Building Code and to other pertinent laws and ordinances, and that all required fees have been paid, the Building Official will issue a permit to the applicant. Depending on the scope of the project, allow at least fifteen days for the reviews and permit processing. After a permit is issued, it will be mailed to you or it will be available for pick up. You will receive a copy of the permit application with the Building Official's signature of approval, a Permit Card/Inspection Record, a description of required inspections, and the "Field Copy" of the approved construction plans. The approved field copy of the plans and the Permit Card/Inspection Record must be onsite and available for all inspections.

Project Inspections

All construction or work for which a permit is required is subject to inspection by the Building Official and all such construction or work shall remain accessible and exposed for inspection purposes until approved by the Building Official. It is the duty of the permit applicant to cause the work to remain accessible and exposed for inspection purposes. The person doing the work authorized by a permit is required to notify the Building Official that work is ready for inspection. (Minnesota Rules 1300.0210) When the work is ready for inspection, call the Land Use Management Department to schedule the inspection. Please allow at least one working day for completion of the inspection.

Certificate of Occupancy

After the project passes a final inspection, use and/or occupancy are allowed. For some projects, the Building Official may issue a Certificate of Occupancy. Successful completion of the final inspection and/or a Certification of Occupancy is required prior to use or occupancy of a project or structure.