

Permits and Inspections in the Time of Pandemic

Updated March 25, 2020 at 11:00am

St. Louis County

Call with Dan Driesewerd on March 17. All St. Louis County offices will be closed to the public with the exception of the lobby in the 41 South Central building in Clayton. In the lobby, there will be a place for drop-off and pick-up specifically for plans and permits. At this time, the entire St. Louis County Plan Review and Code Enforcement staff is expected to continue working but some will work from home, so delays should be expected. Inspections will continue in both occupied and vacant structures, but delays may occur. Expedited plan review and permitting will be halted for the foreseeable future. Discussion is fluid and this plan could change at any time.

Call with Dan Driesewerd on March 20. Requests for inspections will be evaluated and given an order of priority. First priority will be given to anything considered an emergency, especially anything related to COVID-19. Second priority will be given to anything considered a life safety issue. Third priority will be given to anything that is considered an accessibility issue. Fourth priority will be given to replacement issues. And, everything else will be considered lowest priority, and this includes new home construction. Further, St. Louis County Executive Sam Page has given permission for any employee who meets certain criteria to stay home. This includes employees in certain age groups, employees with existing health conditions, employees who serve as caregivers for other family members (especially if those family members are considered to be part of a compromised population), etc. Nearly half of the county's employees who work in code enforcement fall into these categories. This is another reason why delays may occur.

City of St. Louis

Call with Frank Oswald on March 17. Lyda Krewson stated publicly on March 16 that City Hall will remain open for the time being. However, the City has no electronic capabilities, so plan review and permit issuance will be affected if City Hall closes. City of St. Louis will continue full occupancy inspections for vacant homes/units. For occupied homes/units, occupancy inspections will be completed with an inspection of the exterior only. Occupancy inspections of the interior of a home/unit will be halted and may not be completed until those inspections resume in 60-90 days. Occupancy permits will still be issued with exterior violations listed, and closings may continue to occur at the discretion/risk of the parties involved. Funds may be escrowed to cover any interior deficiencies noted once full inspections resume.

St. Charles County

Call with Jared Agee on March 19. Currently, St. Charles County offices are closed to the public with the exception of the atrium in the Administration Building. Code enforcement staff are willing to come to the lobby to speak with any visitors but contact via phone or email is preferred. For the time being, St. Charles County will no longer complete inspections in occupied structures, but inspections in unoccupied/vacant structures and new homes will be completed per usual. Fortunately, St. Charles County is completely paperless and staff can telecommute, so there should be no delays on plan review and permit issuance. St. Charles County does not complete occupancy inspections for residential. Jared Agee is willing to consider alternative means of inspection if necessary, including completing inspections by video chat. However, Jared Agee noted a video inspection is feasible for reinspections when only a few items are being looked at, but not necessarily feasible for all inspections.

Jefferson County

Call with Eric Larson on March 16. County will operate with limited staff/skeleton crew beginning March 17 or March 18. Staff will have no interaction with general public. All submittals must be made electronically. Plan review will occur and then electronic permits will be issued. Any paper coming into the county must be sealed in an envelope and will be treated before touched. Inspections should continue but delays may occur. Unsure how public meetings will continue, if they continue.

City of St. Charles

Call with Greg Tate on March 16. City Hall to stay open for now. Business will continue as usual. Inspectors will work primarily from the field. There will be limited access to city staff.

O'Fallon

Call with Chris Gaw on March 16. City Hall will close on March 17 but management staff will continue to work. No inspections in occupied structures will occur until at least April 6. Business should continue as usual for homebuilders – plan review, permit issuance, inspections. City will follow guidance from federal government, CDC, state government, local government, etc.

Wentzville

Call with Doug Forbeck on March 16. City Hall will remain open for now, but the city would like to limit the number of essential personnel in the office during working hours. No interruptions in service expected as personnel who handle plan review, permit issuance, scheduling, and inspections will continue to work (but likely on staggered schedules). Visits to City Hall by the public should be limited to picking up and dropping off permits. Electronic interaction should become more commonplace. The scheduling of inspections and submission of permit applications can be handled online or by phone. Inspectors will primarily work from the field.

Correspondence from Jessica Isaak on March 23. Wentzville City Hall is now closed to the public until further notice. Field inspections will be conducted as normal. Inspections can be scheduled [here](#). To submit for a new home permit, click [here](#). If you have any issues with these links, please call (636) 327-5101.

Lake Saint Louis

Call with Mike Pavlakes on March 16. City Hall will close on March 17 and all staff will work from home. All business will be handled electronically – plan review, permit issuance, etc., and new home inspections will continue. It was announced on March 17 that the Lake Saint Louis Fire Protection District will not conduct any home occupancy inspections through April 6, but this should have little effect on single-family residential. Applications will be accepted in the interim and will be added to the queue for completion once inspections resume.

Dardenne Prairie

Left message for Jeff Amelong.

Cottleville

Call with Rich Francis on March 16. City Hall will remain open and business will continue as usual.

St. Peters

Call with Burt Benesek on March 17. Although things are changing daily, at this time it is business as usual at the city. Plan review, permitting, and inspections will continue, and the city would like to continue keeping their field staffers working especially given the low risk of exposure in outdoor, small-group environments. The city may eventually do what O'Fallon is doing related to limiting/halting inspections in occupied structures but that decision has not been made at this time. The city will continue to look to the St. Charles County Health Department for guidance.

Kirkwood

The HBA has learned Kirkwood has halted the Architectural Review Board process meaning no permits will be issued until ARB resumes. Further, Kirkwood Electric will only complete emergency calls until March 30 (at least). This means they will not remove electric from a home that is scheduled for demolition.

Frontenac

Call with John Morgan on March 17. City Hall will remain open for now but anyone dropping off or picking up may only do so in the lobby and will not be able to interact in person with city staff. Plan review, permit issuance, and inspections will continue, but inspections in occupied structures will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis (so there's no moratorium at this time on those type of inspections). He used the example of a master bath – he said he doesn't want the city's inspectors putting themselves at risk by accessing such personal areas of a potentially sick person's home. But, in cases like that, they may consider accepting photos of work completed in the interim. But, for new construction, there should not be much of a change from current status quo.

Ladue

The HBA has learned Ladue has halted the Architectural Review Board process meaning no permits will be issued until ARB resumes.

Town & Country

At this time, Town & Country will continue with Architectural Review Board meetings, but meetings may not be attended by the public (including applicants).