

## NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **Zoning Fees will Change, Inspections Start July 1, 2011**

Yes you need a permit for that! Actually any structure over 100 square feet needs a zoning permit issued by the Pierce County Planning Department. Beginning July 1, all zoning permits issued will carry a minimum fee of \$50 for inspections, including all agricultural zoning permits.

Permits issued after July 1, and some issued prior to July 1 will be inspected by the Pierce County Planning Department. Some inspections will be done at the footing stage and others will be done close to completion of construction. "There are basically two reasons for the inspections," said Planning Director, John Johnson. "With the Federal tax credits out there we are getting requests from accountants and banks to do final inspections for many buildings.

The other reason is people are taking advantage of the system. They are applying for agricultural permits, but are really building everything from residences to businesses in these so-called agricultural buildings," Johnson concluded.

Permit fees for residential, commercial and industrial buildings and additions over 650 Square feet will remain at \$.20 a square foot, but be assessed the \$50 inspection fee. All agricultural structures, including grain bins, livestock buildings and sheds, and additions and building less than 650 square feet will be charged only the inspection fee of \$50. Other fees including re-zonings, conditional use permits, variances, etc., will go to \$130 from \$100.

All structures built without a permit, will be charged a \$500 late fee plus any permit fees if construction is finished when caught, and they will be caught. Conditional uses started without a permit will be charged the \$130 application fee and a late fee of \$1,000. Any structures built or conditional uses started without a permit will not only be charged a late fee in addition to any application fees, but could be denied and ordered removed or stopped. Any violation of the county's zoning regulations is a Class III Misdemeanor. Each day of the violations constitutes a new and separate violation once the property owner is notified by the Zoning Administrator of the violation.

This is the first zoning fee hike since 2003.

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