



PLANNING AND ZONING DEPARTMENT

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Media Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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New Zoning Permit Application Process for Portage County Planning and Zoning Department

Stevens Point, WI (**May 17, 2016**) – The Portage County Planning and Zoning Department is introducing a new way of applying for Zoning Permits.

The Planning and Zoning Department will no longer require an in-person appointment in order to issue a Zoning Permit. Starting June 1, 2016, residents will be able to submit a completed Zoning Permit application and fee by mail, or by dropping it off at the Planning and Zoning office in the County Annex Building (Third Floor), 1462 Strong's Avenue in Stevens Point. Applications may also be submitted via email; however, the appropriate fee must be mailed or paid in person at the Planning and Zoning office.

It is important to note that, with this new process, Zoning Permits will no longer be issued the same day an application is received. According to Jeff Schuler, Portage County Planning and Zoning Director, "Due to a staff reduction, we are reworking our permit review process to best accomplish our various administrative duties. The Department has undergone a major reorganization of how we do our business internally." This change in procedures will also bring Zoning Permit review in line with other practices. Schuler continued, "Our Sanitary Permit review process has been successfully conducted this way for many years, and we felt this model would be best to follow for Zoning Permits, as well."

The Zoning Permit requirements haven't changed, just the application process. The Portage County Zoning Ordinance has always required a Zoning Permit for constructing or enlarging any building, sign, or other structure, changing use of land (as defined by the Ordinance), or certain alterations of the landscape (ponds, excavations, extractions, etc.). Planning and Zoning staff, including Assistant Zoning Administrators, will still be available to answer resident's questions, but permits will not be issued on a walk-in basis.

Staff recommends that for timely service, the public is strongly encouraged to plan ahead by **submitting your completed application at least 10 working days prior to the start of construction**. Applications will be processed in the order they are received, within that 10-day time period.

Additional information is available through the Portage County website, www.co.portage.wi.us. Please contact the Portage County Planning and Zoning Department, 715-346-1334, with any questions.

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