



MEDIA RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
May 7, 2010

May is International Building Safety Month

CALEDON'S BUILDING DEPARTMENT PLAYS KEY ROLE IN ENSURING SAFE BUILDINGS

Very few Ontarians give a second thought to personal safety while in the buildings where we shop, work, live or play. Much of the credit for that peace of mind goes to municipal building departments across the province.

The Ontario Building Officials Association explains that the high level of safety of buildings in Ontario is primarily a result of the development of the building code, construction of buildings to conform to that code and the enforcement of the code by the building officials of the local municipality.

The Ontario Building Code sets the minimum standard for new construction, additions and alterations to existing buildings. Caledon's building department, like building departments in municipalities across the province, enforces the Ontario Building Code by examining plans and specifications of buildings, issuing permits and performing inspections at various stages during the course of construction.

During International Building Safety Month, the Ontario Building Officials Association promotes public awareness of the Ontario Building Code, the reasons for obtaining building permits and the efforts of municipal building officials. According to the Association, promoting safe building practices, minimizing risk, educating residents and ensuring consistent construction standards all contribute to the well-being of a community.

Caledon's building department offers the following quick facts. Residents are encouraged to learn more by visiting the Town's website at www.caledon.ca or by contacting staff at 905.584.2272 x.2233.

WHAT IS A BUILDING PERMIT?

A Building Permit is a document granting legal permission from the Town to begin construction of a building project. A permit also includes a set of approved plans which have been reviewed by the building department for compliance with both the Ontario Building Code and the zoning bylaw.

WHY IS A BUILDING PERMIT REQUIRED?

Obtaining a building permit helps ensure the work is being completed in accordance with both the Ontario Building Code and the Town's Zoning Bylaw. The Ontario Building Code contains the minimum construction standards to protect the health, safety and welfare of both inhabitants and users of buildings.

WHAT TYPES OF PROJECTS REQUIRE A PERMIT?

Under the Building Code Act, a permit is required for the construction, alteration or renovation of any structure over 108 sq. ft (10 sq. metres). Typical projects include:

- new houses
- additions to houses
- garages – either detached or attached
- carports
- decks (note: a deck less than 24 inches (60 cm) above grade does not require a permit, regardless of deck size. However, any pertinent zoning bylaws are still applicable)
- plumbing, heating, air conditioning work
- sheds or other types of accessory structures greater than 108 sq. ft.
- new, or repairs or alterations, to septic systems.

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MEDIA RELEASE

-2-

WHAT TYPES OF PROJECTS DO NOT REQUIRE A PERMIT?

Not all new construction, alterations or renovations require a Building Permit. Some typical projects may include:

- air conditioning units
- pool heaters
- painting
- landscaping
- re-shingling roofs
- eaves troughs
- new windows and doors

WHAT IS NEEDED TO GET A PERMIT?

A Building Permit application form and two sets of the following drawings need to be submitted to the building department at Town Hall, along with the necessary Building Permit Fees:

- site plan
- floor plans
- elevation drawings of each side of the proposed construction (this does not apply if the proposed work is only to the interior of the building)
- a roof framing plan or truss layout, including truss drawings
- mechanical drawings including heat loss/ heat gain calculations if a HVAC system is being installed or altered
- number and type of plumbing fixtures being installed
- if the property is under the jurisdiction of a Conservation Authority or the Niagara Escarpment Commission, then proof of approval from these authorities is required.

WHAT IF I DO THE WORK WITHOUT A PERMIT?

If the work does not comply with the Ontario Building Code, or the Town's Zoning Bylaw, costly work may be needed to correct any infractions or the removal of the work may be required. Future legal transaction of the property (such as mortgage renewals, selling, etc.) may be impacted by the "illegal" construction work. It is a violation of the Building Code Act to carry out work without an applicable permit.

For more information visit: <http://www.caledon.ca/townhall/departments/buildings/>

For more information about the Ontario Building Official Association, visit: <http://www.oboa.on.ca/>

- 30 -

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