

TOWN OF SOUTHBOROUGH



BUILDING DEPARTMENT

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To: Select Board
From: Casey Burlingame, Building Commissioner
Date: December 12, 2023
Subject: Building Department schedule of fees

To ensure that Southborough is in alignment with fees being charged in its surrounding communities, the Building Department undertook a review of its current fee schedule for building, electrical, plumbing and gas permits. The current fees for the Building Department were compared to other Massachusetts towns with similar Population, Per Capita Income, Median Household Income, and Residential Taxes:

	Leicester	Maynard	Medfield	Mills	Norfolk	Sutton	Southborough	Weston
Population	11,077	10,702	12,775	8,481	11,531	9,334	10,380	11,808
Per Capita Income	\$37,853	\$55,372	\$88,348	\$55,889	\$52,240	\$56,895	\$82,164	\$107,793
Median Household Income	\$83,016	\$112,432	\$196,820	\$131,138	\$168,281	\$124,364	\$170,223	\$220,815
Residential Taxes	12.88%	18.97%	15.43%	17.49%	16.41%	13.85%	14.78%	11.84%
Building Inspectional Fees (base)	\$289.00 + \$0.15	\$80.00	\$75.00 + \$15.00	\$90.00	\$100.00	\$100.00	\$70.00 + 4%	\$50.00
Gas Inspectional Fees	\$53.00	\$75.00	\$80.00 + \$10.00	\$100 + 10 per fixture	\$100.00 + \$10.00	\$75.00 + \$10.00	\$60.00 + 4%	\$50.00 + \$10.00
Plumbing Inspectional Fees	\$53.00	\$75.00	\$80.00 + \$10.00	\$100 + 10 per fixture	\$100.00 + \$10.00	\$75.00 + \$10.00	\$60.00 + 4%	\$50.00 + \$10.00
Wiring Inspectional Fees	\$53.00	\$50.00	\$100.00		\$50.00	\$75.00	\$60.00 + 4%	
Doing work without a permit	\$250.00	x2	x3	x2	x3	x2		x2
Emergency Calls				\$50.00		\$200.00		\$150.00
Reinspection Fee	(B)\$50.00	(B)\$35.00 (G)\$50.00 (P)\$60.00 (W)\$50.00	(ALL)\$75.00	(ALL)\$50.00	(W) \$75.00	(ALL)\$60.00		(B)\$50.00 (W)\$50.00

The comparison posed questions on where fees should be decreased, increased, or added; also adding notations on the fee schedule so there is no confusion with permit holders.

On the attached draft schedule of fees, please note the following:

1. The base fee for Building Inspections (both residential and commercial), was decreased from \$70.00 to \$60.00 to align with all the minimum fees throughout the fee schedule.
2. Notification of "Doing work without a permit is subject to a x3 permit fee plus license complaint filed with the State Licensure Board." This fee is common practice in municipalities. It also deters contractors from doing work without the proper permits.
3. Notification of "No fee will fall below the minimum" as outlined in each permit-type.
4. Notification of "Expired permits will be subject to a reopening fee of \$50.00."

Reopening fees are a way for projects with lapsed permits to be restarted and completed. It is also more cost-efficient for the permit holder, rather than having to apply and pay for a new permit.

Permit terms

Plumbing, Gas, and electrical permits are valid for one year, and Building permits are valid for six months; unless an extension is requested and granted by the Building Department. Since January 1, 2022, there are a total of 595 permits that remain open. Building staff will immediately commence reaching out to each individual permit holder to determine the status of the permit and whether a reopening fee is applicable. Most permit holders are contractors and not individual homeowners.

Attached is the current fee schedule for the Department, as well as the newly proposed fee schedule. I am recommending the Select Board approve the revised fee schedule, effective January 1, 2024.

I remain available to answer any questions from the Select Board.

Proposed Permit Fees – Building Department

Proposed Permit Fees – Building Department

- *Doing work without a permit is subject to a x3 permit fee plus a license complaint filed with the State Licensure Board*
- *All rates listed below are subject to a 4% technology fee*
- *No fee will fall below the minimum*
- *No credits or refunds*
- *Expired permits will be subject to a reopening fee of \$50.00*

Building Permits

PROPERTY TYPE	TYPE OF WORK	RATE
Residential	New construction, additions, alterations	\$12/\$1000 total cost of construction
Residential	Minimum Fee	\$60.00
Commercial	New construction, additions, alterations	\$12/\$1000 total cost of construction
Commercial	Minimum fee	\$100.00
Commercial	Annual Certificates of Inspection	\$60.00
Commercial/Residential	Reinspection fee	\$60.00 per inspection
Commercial/Residential	Emergency Inspection	\$150.00

Plumbing and Gas

PROPERTY TYPE	TYPE OF WORK	RATE
Residential	New construction, additions, alterations	\$80.00 plus \$15.00 per fixture
Residential	Single fixture	\$60.00
Residential	Minimum Fee	\$60.00
Commercial	New construction, additions, alterations	\$150.00 plus \$10.00 per fixture
Commercial	Single fixture	\$150.00
Commercial	Minimum Fee	\$150.00
Commercial/Residential	Reinspection fee	\$60.00 per inspection
Commercial/Residential	Emergency Inspection	\$150.00

Electrical

PROPERTY TYPE	TYPE OF WORK	RATE
Residential	New construction, additions, alterations	\$20.00 per \$1000.00 of total cost of electrical construction
Residential	Minimum Fee	\$60.00
Residential	Each additional inspection	\$60.00
Residential	Solar	\$150.00
Commercial	New construction, additions, alterations	\$20.00 per \$1000 of total cost of electrical construction
Commercial	Inspections (3 minimum)	\$150.00
Commercial	Each additional Inspection	\$60.00
Commercial	Minimum Fee	\$150.00
Commercial	Solar	\$20.00 per \$1000 of total cost of electrical construction
Commercial/Residential	Reinspection fee	\$60.00 per inspection
Commercial/Residential	Emergency Inspection	\$150.00

▼ BUILDING PERMIT FEES

These fees include all Building permits, Swimming Pool permits, Shed permits, Sheet Metal permits, Mechanical permits, Demolition permits, Mass Save Insulation permits, Roofing, Windows, Siding, and Door permits:

PROPERTY TYPE	TYPE OF WORK	RATE
Residential	New construction, additions, alterations	\$12/\$1,000 total cost of construction plus 4% technology fee
Residential	Minimum Fee	\$70 plus 4% technology fee
Commercial	New construction, additions, alterations	\$12/\$1,000 total cost of construction plus 4% technology fee
Commercial	Minimum	\$100 plus 4% technology fee

▼ PLUMBING AND GAS PERMIT FEES

Please note that separate gas and plumbing permits are required for gas fueled fixtures like water heaters, boilers, etc. If only one permit application is submitted without the other, the permit submitted will not be approved until its' accompanying permit is pulled.

PROPERTY TYPE	TYPE OF WORK	RATE
Residential	New construction, additions, alterations	\$80 plus \$15 per fixture plus 4% technology fee
Residential	Single Fixture	\$60 plus 4% technology fee
Commercial	New construction, additions, alterations	\$150 plus \$10 per fixture plus 4% technology fee
Commercial	Single Fixture	\$150 plus 4% technology fee

▼ **ELECTRICAL PERMIT FEES**

PROPERTY TYPE	TYPE OF WORK	RATE
Residential	New construction, additions, alterations	\$20/\$1,000 of total cost of electrical labor and materials plus 4% technology fee
Residential	Single Fixture	\$60 plus 4% technology fee
Residential	Solar	\$150 plus 4% technology fee
Commercial	New construction, additions, alterations	\$20/\$1,000 of total cost of electrical labor and materials plus 4% technology fee
Commercial	Single Fixture	\$150 plus 4% technology fee
Commercial	Solar	\$20/\$1,000 of total cost of electrical labor and materials plus 4% technology fee