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State expands "Quick Permits" to Eastern Oregon

Online building permit program now includes 20 cities and counties

(Salem) —Buying building permits from Jefferson County and the City of Hermiston just got a lot easier.

The county and city recently joined Quick Permits, the state's online building permit program — becoming the first two building departments east of the Cascades to offer the Quick Permits service to their customers. The service allows contractors to buy simple permits from building departments throughout the state any time of the day or night, seven days a week at www.BuildingPermits.Oregon.gov.

"We are always looking at ways to make the process of obtaining permits the easiest it can be for our customers," said Mike Roberts, Jefferson County building official. "Normally customers have to drive a minimum of 40 miles round trip to come to Madras and get a permit, then drive to Camp Sherman to do the job. Now, it is as easy as going online and punching some buttons."

With the addition of Hermiston and Jefferson County, 20 building departments in the state are now offering electrical, plumbing, and mechanical permits through www.BuildingPermits.Oregon.gov. Other cities and counties that offer the e-permitting service include Marion County, Salem, Medford, Cannon Beach, Corvallis, Eugene, Lane County, and several in the Portland metro area. The site, hosted by the Oregon Department of Consumer and Business Services' Building Codes Division, receives high praise from contractors.

"Hermiston's new online permitting system is fast, efficient, and very user friendly," said Jennifer McDonough of Bruce Heating and Air Conditioning in Hermiston. "I was able to pay for and receive my permit in a matter of minutes instead of having to drive down to the building department to pay for it and pick it up."

"It's very handy, and you do not have all the extra paperwork hanging around," said Katie Raffety, of Chet's Electric Inc. in Redmond. "All you do is follow a couple of easy steps, purchase, and then receive a fax within 24 hours with your permit number."

The e-permitting program is part of Gov. Kulongoski's regulatory streamlining initiative. During the 2007 Legislative session, the Governor signed into law House Bill 2405, which will expand the existing program to create the nation's first comprehensive statewide e-building program. This system will allow contractors to conduct more building department activities, such as receiving plan approval and scheduling inspections online, morning, noon, and night, with any city or county in the state.

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The Building Codes Division, part of the Department of Consumer and Business Services (DCBS), provides building code development, administration, inspection, plan review, licensing, and permit services to the construction industry to help ensure the safe and effective construction of structures in Oregon.

DCBS, Oregon's largest regulatory agency, administers state laws and rules, and protects consumers and workers in the areas of workers' compensation, occupational safety and health, financial services, insurance, building codes, and targeted contracting opportunities for small business. For more information, visit www.dcbs.oregon.gov.