

Director's Office, 350 Winter St. NE, Room 200, Salem, Oregon 97301-3878

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For more information:
Lisa Morawski, 503-947-7897

Lincoln City joins Oregon's e-permitting program

(Salem) – Lincoln City this month became the first coastal building department to join Oregon's full-service e-permitting program. The program, administered by the Department of Consumer and Business Services' Building Codes Division, allows contractors to submit plans, track projects, and buy various permits online.

Springfield, Lebanon, Cottage Grove, West Linn, and Jefferson County are also using the full-service program, and the division is working to bring a dozen other jurisdictions on board, including Lane County and Lake Oswego. The program has the capacity to serve all 134 local building departments in Oregon.

"Making building department services available online saves time for contractors, speeds the construction process, and makes it easier to do business in Oregon," said Patrick Allen, acting administrator of the Building Codes Division. "Expanding the program will make things easier for contractors around the state."

Full-service e-permitting builds on the "basic services" e-permitting program, which allows contractors to buy simple, non-plan review permits online from 34 jurisdictions. To date, more than 90,000 permit applications have been processed online through e-permitting, at BuildingPermits.Oregon.gov.

With full-service e-permitting, licensed contractors can access many more services, including:

- Purchasing a full range of permits including permits for the construction of new buildings
- Submitting electronic plans for review
- Receiving correction notices
- Printing their permit
- Tracking the permit progress
- Receiving their Certificate of Occupancy

In addition, licensed architects and engineers can submit applications, including documents for new buildings.

"The website is very user friendly. I have just cut four steps that I originally did to obtain a permit," said Kelly Johnson of Groth Gates Heating of Lincoln City. "I am very much looking forward to this new permit process and all the time it is going to save."

E-permitting not only saves time for contractors, it reduces the building department's workload because applications filled out online are immediately deposited into the department's system.

"The state's system will help us get information out to contractors and citizens much more readily and will streamline the process and reduce the paperwork burden for everyone," said Richard Townsend, planning and community development director for Lincoln City.

The e-permitting system was developed using software from Accela, Inc., which facilitates shared services approaches for state and local governments.

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The Department of Consumer and Business Services is Oregon's largest business regulatory and consumer protection agency. For more information, visit www.dcbs.oregon.gov.