

March 30, 2020

TO: Building Permit Customers

FROM: Trenton L. Funkhouser, Assistant Director of Code Review & Inspection

SUBJECT: Remote Inspections Due to COVID-19 (Coronavirus)
Specified Residential and Non-Residential Permits

This memorandum is to advise current and prospective permit holders of updates and changes to current building inspection processes due to the COVID-19 (Coronavirus) situation. To follow CDC guidelines and other best practices, Stafford County is suspending in-person interior inspections for existing occupied residential dwellings and certain non-residential structures until further notice.

Stafford County Building Inspectors will continue to perform in-person inspections for all exterior inspections and for any new construction. Remote Inspections options will be offered for certain suspended inspections. Any other suspended inspections can be discussed on a case-by-case basis. All emergency inspections will be handled consistent with past practices and will be assigned priorities based on a given situation.

Permit Request Procedures

- To request a remote inspection, please contact the inspection office the day prior to the scheduled inspections to coordinate the remote inspection.
- Staff will perform remote inspections for all properties where staff must enter and pass through occupied space to perform their inspections.
- At the request of any permit holder, residential or commercial, remote inspections will be performed for the following inspection types:
 - Appliances - gas ranges, dryers, water heaters, furnaces and air conditioners
 - Electrical services
 - Additions, alterations, multi-work, finished basements concealments and finals
 - Kitchen concealments and finals
 - Other Inspections agreed to on a case-by-case basis

RE: Remote Inspections Due to COVID-19 (Coronavirus)

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Remote Inspection Procedures

- To enable remote inspections, the inspection requestor must have an electronic device that can connect with County inspectors (using Android). Contact the inspection office the day before the scheduled inspections to coordinate the remote inspection and provide the contact phone numbers for the inspector to communicate with the requestor and the requestor's connection method for the inspection. County inspectors can arrange your remote inspection and available App during their morning calls.

While other methods can be considered on a case-by case basis, the following methods are available, at this time, to connect with a county inspector (Microsoft Teams is not available):

- FaceTime: When it is time for your inspection, the county inspector will FaceTime the telephone number in the inspection request (ensure this number belongs to the person in the field accommodating the remote inspection).
- Skype for Business: County inspectors will connect to you through a meeting request at the telephone number in the inspection request (ensure this number belongs to the person in the field accommodating the remote inspection).

The inspection requestor must be prepared to use their mobile device's camera to show the inspector the areas of construction ready for inspection. Be prepared to verify the address of the property using your device. Please also have ladders, flashlights or other tools available for the inspections to be completed. County-approved plans must still be available onsite. Video inspections are at the discretion of the inspector and may not be possible in all cases.

Inspection and Pre-Construction Meeting Requests

You are encouraged to re-schedule, modify or cancel your inspections or pre-construction meetings due to the serious nature of the current COVID-19 (Coronavirus) situation and especially if you do not wish to have an inspector at your site or in your structure.

If you wish to suspend your construction project for the duration of the COVID-19 pandemic, Stafford County will extend your permits past the expiration threshold of six-months of inactivity. Of course, you cannot continue construction without the mandatory inspections performed.

For the safety of inspectors and the community, inspection staff will practice social distancing and minimize face-to-face interactions with customers. Electronic communication should be the primary means of interaction.

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