



01-01-09
NEWS FROM THE PLUMBING INSPECTORS
City of Winston-Salem

The following information is provided from the Plumbing Inspections Department of the City of Winston-Salem. All news letters that have been sent out can be accessed online @ www.cityofws.org/Home/Departments/Inspections Look for Newsletters, Plumbing Monthly.

Looking for Inspector Territory Maps? Go to www.cityofws.org/Home/Departments/Inspections/Articles/FormsAndFees .

The New Year is here and along with it the 2009 NC Plumbing Code. There will be a transition period to use either the 2006 NC Plumbing Code or the 2009 NC Plumbing Code between January 1st. and July 1st. All building permits bought on and after July 1st. will be using the 2009 NC Plumbing Code.

Questions from contractors: ADDENDUM -See Attachment below

Items you wish to discuss please e-mail me and we will respond to your questions and also we will include what we can in our monthly letter. Thank you for all your comments and concerns.

Please send any comments to Jamesr@cityofws.org we would like to hear from you.

Thank you

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Solar Energy Systems

The information below is for the installation of Solar Energy Systems only.

With the Nation, States and Counties bringing more awareness about the benefits and advancements in “GREEN BUILDING” technologies it’s no wonder that the installation and use of Solar Energy Systems is one of the fastest growing areas of the Winston-Salem/Forsyth County region. Many questions have been submitted on what parts of a Solar Energy System would need to be permitted and what license(s) are needed to install these systems.

The following paragraphs are put forth by the Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Inspections Department to answer the most common recurring questions on the permitting and installation of Solar Energy Systems in our area.

Any installation of a Solar Energy System in the Winston-Salem/Forsyth County area must be permitted. The Solar Energy System must be installed in strict accordance with Manufacturers Installation Instructions, all current NC Building Codes, and any City/County Ordinances or Regulations that the Solar Energy System affects.

Permits

1. What kind of permit(s) need to be bought for these Solar Energy Systems?

Answer:

- A. **Building Permit** – A Building Permit will not be needed. However the Building Inspector will be needed to look at and confirm the information that is needed from a Structural Engineer for the installation of solar collector panels on roofs.
- B. **Electrical Permit** – An Electrical Permit must be bought for the installation of Solar Energy Systems used for supplemental or alternative electrical power.
- C. **Mechanical Permit** – A Mechanical Permit must be bought for the installation of a Solar Energy System used for the heating or conditioning of the living space either heating or cooling within a dwelling.
- D. **Plumbing Permit** – A Plumbing Permit must be bought for the installation of a Solar Energy System used for the

domestic hot water heating of potable water system for sanitary or consumption purposes.

2. What if a Solar Energy System is to be installed as a combination system of either Plumbing or Mechanical or Electrical or all three?

Answer:

If a combination Solar Energy System is to be installed then each part of this system which would serve a specific trade as defined by the most current NC Building Codes would have to be permitted according to each trade that that part of the system served.

Example:

A Solar Energy System is to be installed in a single-family residential dwelling. The Solar System will produce energy for both the heating of the living spaces within the dwelling and the domestic water heating of the potable water system for sanitary and consumption purposes.

This kind of Solar Energy System would require the following permits and inspections.

1. The Building Inspector will need to review information from A Structural Engineer showing that the roof system can handle the extra load for the mounting of the solar collector panels on the roof.
2. Mechanical Permit for that part of the Solar System for the heating of the living spaces within the dwelling.
3. Plumbing Permit for that part of the Solar System for the domestic water heating of the potable water system for sanitary and consumption purposes.

License

1. What kind of license (if any) is needed to install a Solar Energy System?

Answer:

For the installation of Solar Energy Systems in the Winston-Salem/Forsyth County area by contracting work in the field of.

1. **Plumbing** – You must have a current and active NC Plumbing Contractor License to contract work on any Plumbing System as described in the most current “LAWS & RULES” book put out by the State Board of Examiners of Plumbing, Heating, and Fire Sprinkler Contractors.
2. **Mechanical** - You must have a current and active NC Mechanical Contractor License to contract work on any Mechanical System as described in the most current “LAWS & RULES” book put out by the State Board of Examiners of Plumbing, Heating, and Fire Sprinkler Contractors.
3. **Electrical** - You must have a current and active NC Electrical Contractor License to contract work for any Electrical System as defined by General Statute 87-43.

Note: “A home owner can install his/her own Solar Energy System in his/her house that he/she is living in without any NC Contractor License. However if the home owner is not living within the dwelling where the Solar Energy System is to be installed and the property or some parts of that same property would be construed as rental property then the installer of the Solar Energy System must be a current NC licensed contractor.”

Each permit that is bought in the Winston-Salem/Forsyth County area will have a specific Inspector linked to that permit depending on the geographical location of each job site. Contact numbers for these Inspectors can be obtained through the Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Inspection Division office. Territory maps for our Inspectors can be found by going to www.cityofws.org. Click on Departments, then Inspections, look for Inspectors territory maps. If there are any questions concerning the NC Building Codes for the installation of these Solar Energy Systems, please contact the Inspector assigned to the specific permit you have purchased.

We at the Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Inspection Division want to thank each and every one of you for submitting these questions on these Solar Energy Systems.

Any future questions or comments please address to:

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