

Building Blocks

JANUARY 2017

LUCAS COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT
BUILDING REGULATIONS DIVISION

New Home Starts	
through	
Dec-16	314
Nov-16	292
Oct-16	267
Dec-15	292
Dec-14	252
Dec-13	261
Dec-12	169
Dec-11	128
Dec-10	119
Dec-09	111

2016 was the best year since 2006 regarding the number of new home starts. In addition, we had 49 two-family dwellings in 2016.

Reaching out to everyone

As we begin the new year, Lucas County Building Regulations looks forward to improving customer service and bettering communication between designers, contractors, and our division. We hope this new quarterly newsletter will provide useful information about our services. We will provide ongoing statistics about the number of new homes, the number of inspections, and the number of plan reviews that we see. We will pass on information regarding code changes and common issues. Lucas County Building Regulations also looks forward to hearing from you—our customers—regarding your questions or concerns.

Our goal is to provide excellent customer service and to ensure that your project complies with the State of Ohio Laws and Codes. To aid in that endeavor, we have developed new checklists for both commercial and residential projects. In addition, we have created a listing of common issues for both commercial and residential projects. Finally, Lucas County Building Regulations has created a summary of the processes necessary to obtain plan approval, get a permit, schedule inspections, and ultimately receive a certificate of occupancy. You may find all of these documents on our website (<http://co.lucas.oh.us/index.aspx?NID=325>) or in our McCord Road office.

Understanding the plan review process

One of the common issues that we often hear about is that the plan review process takes too long. In 2016, Lucas County Building Regulations staff conducted over 2,000 plan reviews. Plan review is a time consuming process that requires detailed knowledge and documentation.

Our goal is to issue a "Certificate of Plan Approval" for your project as quickly as possible. However, over 40% of submittals are issued an "Items of Non-compliance Report" due to either a lack of information or that the plans conflict with the adopted codes. A project may experience a delay of one to three weeks if there are compliance issues. These delays may be avoided by ensuring that your submitted plans contain all of the required information in a clear, concise, and detailed manner.

If you receive an "Items of Non-compliance Report," please review the code requirement associated with each comment for a better understanding as to why the plans examiner is not approving this item. Before you return the plans to our office, please document how you addressed each comment to assist the plans examiner in the subsequent review. For example, if the plans examiner comment is "revise the ceiling joists over the master bedroom to comply with RCO Section 802.4," your response could be "revised the ceiling joists over the master bedroom to 2x8 SPF #2, 16"o.c. per table 802.4(1)."

Free online copies of the codes and the Ohio amendments can be found at <http://www.com.ohio.gov/dico/bbs/>.

Effective January 1, 2017, the Ohio Board of Building Standards has adopted the 2012 International Energy Conservation Code (IECC) and the ASHRAE 90.1-2010. All new projects submitted after January 1, 2017 will be reviewed to this new standard. If you are using REScheck or COMcheck, please ensure that you specify the newly adopted IECC.

Do you have a code question that you would like to have answered in the next newsletter? If so, email it to me at ckiel@co.lucas.oh.us

Upcoming code changes

The Ohio Board of Building Standards (OBBS) is currently working on adopting new codes in 2017 for all non-residential buildings. The new codes are to be based on the 2015 International Building, Plumbing, and Mechanical Codes as well as the 2017 National Electrical Code. They anticipate an adoption date in the latter half of 2017. We will pass along information as it becomes available to us. As always, you can find the latest adopted codes at <http://www.com.ohio.gov/dico/bbs/>.

Applications

Lucas County Building Regulations has recently updated all of our applications. You may download them at <http://co.lucas.oh.us/index.aspx?NID=327>. Please use only the new forms and fill out all of the sections on the application. Your assistance in this matter will be greatly appreciated and assist our staff in providing you the best service.

What else do I need?

You often need to obtain permits from other departments and agencies before Lucas County Building Regulations can issue a building permit. A good example of this situation is the need to get zoning approval from the local city, village, or township agency. Commercial projects also need a review completed by the local fire department. You may also need a water/sewer or well/septic receipt, health department approval and flood plain approval. Please refer to these agencies for additional information. Contact information for local zoning and fire departments may be found on the back of our checklists.

What to look for in the future

Improving customer service and updating inspection technology are top goals for 2017. In addition, we plan to offer code update workshops throughout the year to make sure that you have the latest information on what is required by the State of Ohio.

We appreciate your commitment to building in Lucas County. We will continue to strive to eliminate any barriers to your project's successful completion. We welcome your comments, questions, and suggestions. And, as always, thank you for partnership.

Sincerely,

Chris Kiel, PE, MCP, CBO
Chief Building Official

Building Regulations offices will be closed on January 16th for the Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday and on February 20th for President's Day.

Our offices are located at:
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