

## Building on Your Property in the City of Burns

Can I build an addition to my home or business? Can I build a storage shed up to my property line? Do we need a building permit for a carport? Why do I have to have a property line survey? These are many of the questions asked by people that would like to make improvements to their property but don't know where to start.

It is more than likely that a building permit will be required and in most cases, it's a very simple procedure to obtain an "Approval to Obtain Building Permit" sign off from the City of Burns. If you're building a structure over 200 square feet or an addition which could be an extra room or a carport, you must meet the setbacks, which is the distance from the foundation of the structure to the property lines, or you will have to apply for a variance. Structures less than 200 square feet such as portable storage sheds may not require a building permit. Please be wise and call and find out before you build.

Once you've determined that the setbacks will be met, you will need to have a survey/site plan drawn up. The survey must be prepared by a registered surveyor and you can either have him/her draw the site plan onto the survey or you can draw it yourself. This will show us exactly what and where you are building. The survey is a requirement of the Burns Zoning Ordinance and the city will not sign off for building permits without it. Also, if you are building a home or addition to your home and it is located in the flood plain, you will need to have the surveyor prepare a "Flood Elevation Certificate" as well. Also, if your property is in the flood plain, you may be required to flood proof or elevate the structure which is a requirement of FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency).

After you have obtained the survey/site plan, bring it to Burns City Hall and we can review it together. If all the requirements (zoning, setbacks, flood plain, \$55 filing fee, etc.) are met, then we will give you an "Approval To Obtain Building Permit" sign off which you will take to the Harney County Planning Department to get your building permits. Howard Palmer is the building inspector for this area and works out of the County Planning Department. You can always contact them ahead of time to get an estimate of the cost for the building permits or to determine if you need a building permit. They can be reached at (541)573-8174. Again, better to find out if you need a permit BEFORE you build.

In many cases, the setbacks can't be met which means that you must apply for a variance. This is a fairly simple process. You will still need to provide a survey/site plan along with a completed variance application and a filing fee. The city will then notify the Burns Times Herald and every property owner within 200 feet of your property that a public hearing will be held with the Burns Planning Commission to approve or deny your variance application. If the commission approves the application, and after the 10 day appeal period has passed, then you can come in for an "Approval to Obtain Building Permit" sign off.

We understand that every situation is different and encourage you to come in to Burns City Hall and visit with us if you have questions or need additional information about our zoning and land use regulations.