Pickens County
Building Code
Guidelines for
Residential Structures
NOTICE:

These guidelines are intended to provide general guidance to installers and permit holders. It is not a substitute for the State of Georgia building codes and Pickens County ordinances. In the event of a conflict, the State codes and County ordinances will supersede the enclosed information.

Please refer to the Georgia Department of Community Affairs website www.dca.ga.gov for the state minimum standard codes.

You may access the County Ordinances on the Pickens County website www.pickenscountyga.gov

All Construction job sites that are involved with “land disturbing activity” must have a Georgia State certified personnel in NPDES effective 12/31/2006

Anyone applying for a building permit in a subdivision that is approved after January 1, 2007, you will need to provide Planning and Development with a copy of NPDES Notice of Intent Secondary Permitee permit from the developer of the subdivision PRIOR to applying for your building permit.

Georgia State Law requires that the permit “on-site” card must always be clearly visible on the job site during construction. If there is no site card on the jobsite, the inspector will not perform your scheduled inspection. This card should be kept in good condition and protected from the elements. If the on-site card becomes lost or damaged, it is the permit holder or contractor’s responsibility to contact our office immediately for a replacement card.

You can purchase an inspection box at your local hardware/home improvement stores. Please do not place your inspection box higher than 6’ off the ground. The inspector will leave his inspection cards in this box (pass or fail).
Steps to obtain a building permit in Pickens County

1. Visit the Environmental Health Department (Hall D)
   - Level III soil evaluation must be performed before obtaining a septic permit application. You can contact Environmental Health at 706-253-0900 for a list of soil classifiers.
   - Septic tank permit/authorization form. A copy of this form is required before a building permit will be issued.

2. Access Encroachment (Hall D)
   - If your driveway will be accessing a county road, an access encroachment permit must be obtained to connect the driveway to the county road and must be approved by Planning and Development. Failure to obtain the permit prior to obtaining a building permit will result in double permit fees and no inspections will take place until the access encroachment is approved.
   - If your driveway will be accessing a State Highway, you will need to contact the Georgia Department of Transportation (404) 631-1990 to obtain an access encroachment permit from them.

3. Planning and Development (Hall C)
   - Building permit applications will not be accepted without the following:
     - A copy of your approved septic permit
     - Access encroachment approval
     - Completed building permit application and all applicable licensing information
     - If you have recently purchased the property a copy of the warranty deed will be required
     - If you rent the property a letter from the property owner giving the applicant permission to obtain a building permit is required
     - Payment (permits will not be processed after 4:30pm.)
   - Permits must be obtained PRIOR to any phase of construction begins. Violations of this policy will result in double permit fees and/or stop work orders placed on jobsite.
   - Permits may not be available same day. All permits are processed in the order in which they are received. Please make sure you have filled out the permit application in its entirety and have submitted all required documentation. Incomplete applications will not be accepted.
**Land Disturbing Activity**

The Erosion and Sedimentation Act of 1975 requires that, as a minimum, protections at least as stringent as the state general permit; and best management practices, including sound conservation and engineering practices to prevent and minimize erosion and resultant sedimentation, must be consistent with, and no less stringent than, those practices contained in the Manual for Erosion and Sediment Control in Georgia published by the State Soil and Water Conservation Commission as of January 1, of the year in which the land-disturbing activity was permitted.

According to Rule 391-3-7-.01 Definitions, the following definitions shall apply in the interpretation and enforcement of these rules and regulations unless otherwise specifically stated.

(a) “Best Management Practices” – commonly referred to as BMPs, means a collection of structural measures and vegetative practices which, when properly designed, installed and maintained, will provide effective erosion and sedimentation control and are designed in accordance with the design specifications contained in the “Manual for Erosion and Sediment Control in Georgia.” Best Management Practices also include, but are not limited to, design specifications from the most recent publications of the Georgia Stormwater Management Manual and Coastal Stormwater Supplement in the Georgia Stormwater Management Manual.

(n) “Land Disturbing Activity” means any activity which may result in soil erosion and the movement of sediments into State waters or onto lands with the State, including but not limited to clearing, dredging, grading, excavating, transporting, and filling of land, but not including those practices to the extend described in O.C.G.A. 12-7-17.

Pickens County Ordinance Article X ; Soil Erosion, Sedimentation and Pollution Control; Section 38-686-696 describes local county ordinances relating to land disturbing activity including definitions, exemptions, minimum requirements, permitting, inspections, penalties, education, and administrative and judicial review.

https://library.municode.com/ga/pickens_county/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=PTIICOOR_CH38LADEST_ARTXSOERSEPOCO

If your building plans consist of disturbing more than 1 acre of land you must file for a land disturbance permit **PRIOR** to any work taking place. Failure to do so may result in “revocation of business license, work permit or other authorization for the conduct of a business and associated work activities within the jurisdictional boundaries of the local issuing authority.” (Sec. 38-692a)

For more information regarding land disturbances, please visit Georgia Water and Soil Conservation Commission at https://gaswcc.georgia.gov/
The construction of single-family residences, when such construction disturbs less than one (1) acre and is not a part of a larger common plan of development or sale with a planned disturbance of equal to or greater than one (1) acre and not otherwise exempted under this paragraph; provided, however, that construction of any such residence shall conform to the minimum requirements as set forth in O.C.G.A. 12-7-6 and this paragraph. For single-family residence construction covered by the provisions of this paragraph, there shall be a buffer zone between the residence and any state waters classified as trout streams pursuant to Article 2 of Chapter 5 of the Georgia Water Quality Control Act. In any such buffer zone, no land-disturbing activity shall be constructed between the residence and the point where vegetation has been wrested by normal stream flow or wave action from the banks of the trout waters. For primary trout waters, the buffer zone shall be at least 50 horizontal feet, and no variance to a smaller buffer shall be granted. For secondary trout waters, the buffer zone shall be at least 50 horizontal feet, but the Director may grant variances to no less than 25 feet. Regardless of whether a trout stream is primary or secondary, for first order trout waters, which are streams into which no other streams flow except for springs, the buffer shall be at least 25 horizontal feet, and no variance to a smaller buffer shall be granted. The minimum requirements of subsection (b) of O.C.G.A. 12-7-6 and the buffer zones provided by this paragraph shall be enforced by the Local Issuing Authority.

The Definition of State Waters as Defined by the Environmental Protection Division:

Any and all rivers, streams, creeks, branches, lakes, reservoirs, ponds, drainage systems, springs, wells, and other bodies of surface or subsurface water, natural or artificial, lying within or forming a part of the boundaries of Georgia which are not entirely confined and retained completely upon the property of a single individual, partnership, or corporation.

Flood Control

All applicants must follow Federal, State, and local guidelines when building in a known flood plain. Please refer to Pickens County Code Section 38 – Article 5

Access Control on County Maintained Roads

Driveways, roads, entrances, or other access points made onto a County and/or Public road MUST first obtain an Access / Encroachment Permit prior to any construction of said access point. All access points shall have a proper drainage structure which must be approved by Pickens County. This structure shall be made of a material that has been approved by Pickens County and installed according to GDOT and/or industry standards. Pipe dimensions are a minimum of 15” in diameter and 20 ft. in length. The pipe must be of a size suitable for expected runoff and be covered with sufficient fill to support expected loads. Pickens County reserves the right to determine if a structure is necessary and/or if a larger structure will be required to adequately facilitate expected runoff amounts.

CALL BEFORE YOU DIG 1-800-282-7411

Revised 08/06/20
Building Inspection Line Up

To schedule inspections, please call our office at 706-253-8850 to schedule inspections. Please do not contact the inspector to schedule an inspection. Your onsite card must be posted and visible from the street.

List of Inspections:

1. **Temporary Power Pole** - Performed before the power company will install service.
   - Electrical affidavit & all applicable documentation must be on file with our office before the power company will release temporary power.

2. **Footing Inspection** – Performed before concrete is poured.

3. **Masonry & Poured Wall Inspection** – Any wall higher than 4’ from bottom of footing to top of wall.

4. **Foundation Water Proofing & Drainage** – Performed before backfill.
   - Any wall, including walls less than 5’ high, must have a waterproof inspection before any backfill is placed against wall.

5. **Plumbing In-Slab** – 4” pipe must exit slab.
   - Plumbing must have water test or air test. Can seal pipe for test at cleanout between house & septic tank after test is approved. Connection from cleanout to tank can be done. Can check this on slab inspections.

6. **Slab** – Basement and carports. Performed before concrete is poured.

7. **Sheathing** – Inspect nail pattern and apply air barrier to attic side of kneewalls.

8. **Housewrap** – Tape all laps, turn into openings.

9. **Rough** – Done after roofing, framing, windows, and doors installed, fire blocking, bracing in place, and all rough-in electrical, mechanical, and plumbing are complete.
   - All electrical, mechanical, and plumbing affidavits (and all applicable documentation) BEFORE the rough inspection can be called in.

10. **Insulation/Energy Code** – Do NOT insulate prior to the rough inspection. This inspection (insulation) is performed after all insulation is in place and prior to wall cover and ceiling cover.

11. **Temp to Perm power** – Once power is installed on permanent structure (meterbase).
   - Final approval from Environmental Health must be on file in our office before the power company will turn on permanent power.

12. **Final** – This inspection is performed only after the structure is complete and ready for occupancy.
   - A Certificate of Occupancy (C.O.) will not be issued until all required documents are on file and the inspector has passed the final inspection. C.O.’s will only be released to the homeowner or the contractor listed on the building permit.

**Please secure all animals at the inspection site. An adult **MUST** be present when it is necessary for the inspector to gain access to occupied properties.**

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Important Information Regarding Inspections

- All engineering letters submitted are subject to the inspector’s approval.
  - *(If your letter is denied, you will be asked to revise the letter and re-submit)*

- Electrical affidavits need to be turned in along with the electrician’s state and business license *BEFORE* temporary power will be released to the power company.

- Plumbing and mechanical affidavits need to be turned in along with the plumber and mechanical’s state and business license *PRIOR* to requesting a rough inspection.

- Final approval from Environmental Health needs to be submitted to Planning and Development *BEFORE* permanent power will be released to the power company.

- Certificate of Occupancy will not be issued until all affidavits (Electrical, Mechanical, Plumbing, Insulation, Blower Door) and fees are paid.

- No inspections will be allowed until re-inspection fees are paid.

- Subcontractor affidavits will not be accepted without a copy of the subcontractor’s state and business licenses.