Pickens County
Building Code
Guidelines for
Commercial 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](http://www.dca.ga.gov) for the state minimum standard codes.

You may access the County Ordinances on the Pickens County website [www.pickenscountyga.gov](http://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, 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 Commercial Building Permit in Pickens County

1. **Apply for a Land Disturbing Permit (Soil & Erosion)**
   - Submit three (3) sets of plans for review to Planning and Development. One (1) set will be returned upon approval.

2. **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.

3. **Complete a building plan submittal form & submit three (3) complete sets of building plans**
   - See commercial plan requirements and the Fire Marshal’s requirements list for plan requirements.
   - Plan reviews take one (1) to three (3) weeks to complete. Planning and Development will contact you when the plans are approved and ready for pick-up.
   - Denied plans will need to be revised and three (3) revised sets of plans are required for re-submittal.
   - Plan review fees are as follows:
     - Buildings less than 5,000 sq.ft. $100.00 per each review
     - Buildings over 5,000 sq.ft. $200.00 per each review

4. **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.

5. **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 plan review application (attached to this guidelines packet)
     - 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. Violations of this policy will result in double permit fees and/or stop work orders placed on the 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.**
Commercial Plan Requirements

Sec. 38-854. - Information in commercial site plan.

- The drawing shall contain a graphic scale, north arrow, date, acreage, and owner/developers name, address, and telephone number.
- The names of adjoining property owners shall be shown in relation to the proposed development.
- The names of all streets or roadway abutting or crossing the property with width of all rights-of-way shown.
- The boundary of any flood hazard areas.
- A detailed access plan to enter county or state right-of-way.
- A location sketch map shall be provided which shows the location of the site in relation to existing public roads, streams, power transmission lines, etc.
- A detailed and scaled drawing of the location of the commercial building on the property, together with all other improvements which will not be attached to the main structure.
- A detailed and scaled drawing of all public parking spaces provided as well as access lanes for emergency vehicles.
- A detailed and scaled drawing of buffers if buffers are required.
- Approval of the county sanitation office showing site meets requirements for sewage treatment.
- Utility and drainage plans shall be provided which shall include all information necessary for the appropriate county official to determine that the water, sewer, sanitary disposal and storm drainage improvements will be made and located in accordance with county requirements, and, where applicable shall also contain soil erosion and sedimentation control measures.

Plans not containing any of the above items will be rejected.

Submit three (3) copies of the building plans for review along with the completed plan review application to the Planning and Development office.

Fire Marshal Plan Requirements

The Pickens County Fire Marshal’s office performs “Building Plans Reviews” on all new commercial projects within Pickens County. Site inspections will be conducted on all buildings during the construction phase and upon completion to ensure compliances to all required building and fire safety codes.

The following is required on all plans:

- International Fire Code 2018
- Life Safety Code 2018
Commercial Setbacks and Buffer Requirements

Sec. 38-855.- Building lines
Commercial building setback lines shall be at least 40 feet from the front property line. A corner lot shall be at least 40 feet from each property line. The building shall otherwise be at least 15 feet from the side and rear property lines.

Sec. 38-856.- Buffer requirements.

1. If the proposed commercial development adjoins residential property, appropriate buffers shall be erected to protect the enjoyment of the residential property.

2. Buffers shall be located within and along the outer perimeter of the parcel which abuts the residential property. Buffers shall not be located on any portion of existing, dedicated, or reserved public or private street right-of-way.

3. No building permit shall be issued for any development requiring a buffer until such time as that buffer, as specified herein, shall be substantially in place.

4. All buffers required by this section shall conform to the following specifications:
   a. Prior to development, a buffer plan shall be required to show the types and location of all screening devices within a required buffer.
   b. Screening is a method of visually shielding or obscuring one use from another by fence, walls, berms or densely planted vegetation. Screening shall provide a year round visual screen from the ground to a minimum of six feet in height. The fence or wall shall be placed on the other edge of the buffer.
   c. Landscaping within buffer areas shall be used to screen objectionable views or nuisances, such as parking and service areas, refuse containers, air conditioning units and transformers.
   d. A buffer shall have not less than a 12-foot base width and shall consist of plantings having a year round foliage, or a fence, or a wall, or a berm, or any combination thereof, with a total minimum height of six feet. The required buffer shall provide not less than 90 percent visual blockage. If a buffer consists of plantings only, then said planting shall be an evergreen species which under normal growing conditions will attain a minimum height of six feet.

5. Responsibility for maintenance of a required buffer shall remain with the owner of the commercial property. Maintenance is required to ensure the proper functioning of a buffer as a landscaped area which reduces or eliminates nuisances and/or conflict.
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.

(l) “Erosion, Sedimentation and Pollution Control Plan” or “Plan” means a plan for the control of soil erosion and sediment resulting from a land disturbing activity.

(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

For more information regarding land disturbances, please visit Georgia Water and Soil Conservation Commission at https://gaswcc.georgia.gov/

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

CALL BEFORE YOU DIG 1-800-282-7411

Revised 09/01/20
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.

***Inspections required may vary depending on the type of commercial structure being built.***

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.

   - 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 – 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. This inspection will be done in conjunction with the Fire Marshal.
   - A Certificate of Occupancy (C.O.) will not be issued until all required documents are on file and the inspector and Fire Marshal have passed the final inspection. C.O.’s will only be released to the business owner or the contractor listed on the building permit.
The Pickens County Fire Marshal’s Office conducts construction inspections to ensure compliance with fire and life safety requirements.

The following types of inspections are performed by fire inspectors.

**New Construction Inspections:**
- Preconstruction Meeting
- Underground Inspections
- 50% Construction Inspections
- 80% Construction Inspections (required by Georgia State Fire Marshal)
- 100% Construction Inspection

**Fire Protection System Inspections:**
- Sprinkler System Inspections
- Fire Alarm System Inspections
- Hood and Suppression System Inspections
- Spray Booth Inspections
- **Plan review and approval are required on all fire protection systems before construction begins**
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 and re-submit)

- Electrical affidavits need to be turned in along with the electrician’s state and business licenses **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 licenses **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.

- If you fail to schedule a required inspection, a $50 fee will apply.
Commercial Building Plan Review Application

Submittal Date: __________________________

Project Name: __________________________________________________________________________________

Project Address: __________________________________________________________________________________

City  State  Zip

Contact Person: ________________________________________________________________________________  Phone: __________________________

Owner: ________________________________________________________________________________________  Phone: __________________________

Mailing Address: ________________________________________________________________________________

City  State  Zip

Contractor: ____________________________________________________________________________________  Phone: __________________________

Mailing Address: ________________________________________________________________________________

City  State  Zip

Architect: ____________________________________________________________________________________  Phone: __________________________

Mailing Address: ________________________________________________________________________________

City  State  Zip

Structural Engineer: _____________________________________________________________________________  Phone: __________________________

Mailing Address: ________________________________________________________________________________

City  State  Zip

Proposed Use/Business Type: ______________________________________________________________________

Building Sq.Ft.: __________________________  Suite Sq.Ft.: __________________________

Permit Type:  

_____ New Structure  _____ Speculative Space  _____ Tenant Finish  _____ Renovation  

_____ Addition  _____ White Box  _____ Foundation Only  _____ Shell Only  

Sprinkler System: Yes  No  Standpipe: Yes  No  Fire Alarm: Yes  No

NOTE: If project is a restaurant or food service facility, or commercial pool facility, approval from Environmental Health is required as part of the plan review process. Please call 706-253-0900 for more information.
Is this a home occupation? Yes  No  Any Special Equipment? __________________________
If yes, please explain: ________________________________________________________

Are there any zoning conditions that effect the property? Yes  No
If yes, please explain: ________________________________________________________

Were any variances or conditional use permits applied for or granted? Yes  No
If yes, indicate type and date of application submittal or approval: ______________________

Façade: __________  Site Plan Approval: __________  Current Zoning: __________

Required Setbacks: ____________________________________________________________

Number of Stories: ______  Number of Suites: ________  Building Height: ________

Sq.Ft Heated: _________  Unheated: ________________  Mezzanine Sq.Ft. __________

Elevator(s): Yes  No  If Yes, how many? __________

Occupancy Type: _____________________________  Occupant Load: _______

Construction Type: __________________________________________________________________

Special Conditions: __________________________________________________________________

Fire Barriers: 1 HR  2 HR  3 HR  4 HR  UL#: _________  Demising: __________

Special Inspection Report Received: Yes  No

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

Planning & Development Approval: ___________________________  Date: ___________

Comments: ___________________________________________________________________

Commercial Inspector Approval: _____________________________  Date: ___________

Comments: ___________________________________________________________________

Fire Marshal Approval: ________________________________  Date: ___________

Comments: ___________________________________________________________________

Environmental Health Approval: ___________________________  Date: ___________

Comments: ___________________________________________________________________