

**DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENT SUPPORT AND ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT**



**435 NORTH MACOMB STREET, 2<sup>ND</sup> FLOOR  
TALLAHASSEE, FLORIDA 32301  
[www.leonpermits.org](http://www.leonpermits.org)**

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**Development Services, Septic System, Environmental Management,  
Driveway and Street Connection, and Building  
Permit Application Requirements**

## **RESIDENTIAL DESIGN MANUFACTURED HOMES**

Leon County staff is committed to processing permit applications in the shortest time possible. In order to prevent delays in processing, applicants must furnish *all* of the required documents before processing of the permit application can begin. Staff is available to answer any questions regarding application requirements.

This handout provides a detailed explanation of permit application requirements for Septic System, Environmental Management, Driveway and Street Connection, and Building Permits. For your convenience, all permit applications, fees, and inspections required for your home, with the exception of water and/or sewer system charges, are administered at 435 N. Macomb St., Tallahassee, Florida, 32301.

### **TELEPHONE NUMBERS**

BUILDING PLANS REVIEW & INSPECTION	606-1300
TO SCHEDULE BUILDING AND DRIVEWAY INSPECTIONS	891-1800
DEVELOPMENT SERVICES	606-1300
ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES	606-1300
LEON COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT	606-8350
PROPERTY APPRAISER	488-6102
PUBLIC WORKS	606-1500

## **RESIDENTIAL DESIGN MANUFACTURED HOMES**

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The following pages contain valuable information on permitting a Residential Design Manufactured Home (RDMH). Becoming familiar with this material will save you time and money.

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### APPLICATION PACKAGE CHECKLIST

A COMPLETE APPLICATION PACKAGE MUST INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING DOCUMENTATION AND INFORMATION:

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Parcel Identification (Tax ID) Number
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Current, scaled site plan
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Legal access to the property
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Flood letter signed, dated and sealed by a Florida Registered Professional Engineer
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Septic System Permit Application or Waiver Letter from Leon County Health Department
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. Building/Environmental Permit Application
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. Driveway and Street Connection Permit Application
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. Application fees
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. Foundation plans (pier spacing details)
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. Electrical contractor license number
- \_\_\_\_\_ 11. Set-up contractor's license number
- \_\_\_\_\_ 12. Recorded copy of Floodplain Declaration of Covenants, Conditions, and Restrictions if the property is flood prone
- \_\_\_\_\_ 13. Notice of Commencement form
- \_\_\_\_\_ 14. Engineer designed drawings/details for skirting (120 mph wind load)

#### FEES\*

Addressing Fee (new address only)	\$156
Development Services**	\$120
Septic System Permit	\$400
Driveway and Street Connection	\$82.24
Environmental Permit Fee	\$372
Building Permit Fee	\$385

**\* As of December 1, 2003, the Development Support and Environmental Management Department requires all fees associated with applications for manufactured homes to be paid at the time applications are submitted.**

\*\* Property must comply with Zoning and Subdivision/Site Plan Regulations. If not, additional application reviews and fees may be necessary. Also, certain fees will sometimes vary according to the location and characteristics of your site and will have to be calculated when specific information is provided.

**NOTE: If you will be applying for a permit in a recorded or unrecorded subdivision, please check for additional regulations contained within your deed restrictions. These regulations are a private matter between subdivision property owners and are legally binding. As such, they are a private civil matter and Leon County has no legal standing to enforce them. It is possible to obtain a permit that complies with Leon County Land Development Regulations which may be in conflict with private deed restrictions.**

## RESIDENTIAL DESIGN MANUFACTURED HOMES

### ZONING

- A. A residential design manufactured home (RDMH) can be permitted in any zoning district which allows a single family detached unit.
- B. Buildings must be set back from each property line a specific minimum distance. Listed below are the building setbacks for each zoning district.
- C. **BUFFERS:** Under certain conditions, such as building next to a different type of land use, buffers such as shrubs, trees or fences are required. If you are required to install or preserve a buffer, staff will notify you prior to issuing a permit.

#### ZONING SETBACKS MEASURED IN FEET

DISTRICT	FRONT	REAR	SIDE INTERIOR	SIDE CORNER
R-1	25	25	7.5*	15
R-2	25	25	7.5*	15
R-3	20	25	7.5*	15
R-4	20	25	7.5*	15
R-5	15	25	7.5	15
Residential Acre	35	25	15**	25
Rural Community	25	50	10	20
Rural	30	50	20	30
Urban Fringe	30	50	20	30
Lake Protection	25	25	15	25
Residential Preservation	†	†	†	†
Lake Talquin/Urban Fringe	30	50	20	30
MH	††	††	††	††
MR-1	15	25	7.5*	15
OR-1	15	25	7.5*	15
OR-2	15	25	7.5*	15
OR-3	15	25	7.5*	15

† Standards must be consistent with existing requirements within developed areas.

†† Setbacks differ according to access – contact Development Services

\* Any combination of 15 ft., as long as either side is no less than 5 ft.

\*\* Any combination of 30 ft., as long as either side is no less than 10 ft.

**NOTE: The table above is for low density residential, non-cluster standards. Standards for cluster options are different in most districts. Check with Development Services for details.**

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### SIX STEPS TO OBTAINING PERMITS AND COMPLETING CONSTRUCTION OF A RESIDENTIAL DESIGN MANUFACTURED HOME

#### STEP 1: COLLECT AND PREPARE REQUIRED INFORMATION AND DOCUMENTS

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. **Parcel Identification Number.** Must be the current tax ID number for your parcel of land and can be obtained from the Property Appraiser's Office (488-6102) or from your most recent ad valorem (property) tax notice.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. **Flood Letter.** Signed, dated and sealed by a Florida Registered Professional Engineer.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. **Site Plan.** A site plan is a scaled drawing of your property. The site plan must include the following information (see page 16 for an example of a site plan):
  - \_\_\_\_\_ A. North directional arrow.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ B. Indicate whether property is a corner or interior lot.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ C. Property boundary lines.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ D. Location of *all* existing and proposed structures and their distances from all property lines and each other (see Zoning Table, page 4).
  - \_\_\_\_\_ E. Location of driveways, streets and utility easements.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ F. Location of septic system.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ G. Type and location of water system: well or public system.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ H. Location of any wells within 75 feet of the septic system, even if wells are located on adjacent property.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ I. Location of any proposed fill material.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ J. Limits of clearing activity.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ K. Location of grading activity.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ L. If the Flood Letter indicates any portion of the property is in a flood zone, show location of flood boundary line, the established benchmark and the required height of the finished floor of all structures.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ M. Location of any Dogwood tree having a diameter at breast height (DBH) of 4 inches or greater, Longleaf Pine or Live Oak tree DBH of 12 inches or greater, or any other tree having a DBH of 18 inches or greater.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ N. Location of any on-site or nearby wetlands such as lakes, ponds, swamps, marshes, sinkholes, or shallow depressions.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ O. An arrow indicating the direction of any slopes.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ P. Location of all natural or constructed water conveyance features such as ravine, ditch, swale, culvert, canal, stream, or springs/seeps.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Q. Location of special development restrictions such as easements, natural areas required undisturbed, or land use buffers.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. **Required Plans:**
  - \_\_\_\_\_ A. **Elevations.** Elevations are drawings showing what the outside walls of your house will look like when finished. Show exterior wall finish (wood siding, stucco, etc.), window and door locations, porches, decks, stairs, guardrails, handrails, roof slope and composition, etc., drawn to scale.

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- \_\_\_\_\_ B.     **Foundation Plan.** This is a scaled drawing of exactly how the foundation of your home will be constructed. It must show the type of foundation complete with details on how you propose to construct the perimeter skirting. It must show details of all footers, slabs, piers, and reinforcing steel.
- \_\_\_\_\_ C.     **Exterior Stair Detail.** This is a detailed drawing of how the exterior stairs in the home are to be constructed. It must show the height and width of the steps, landings and the location and height of the handrails.
- \_\_\_\_\_ D.     **Engineer Designed Drawings/Details for Skirting (120MPH Wind Load).**

\_\_\_\_\_ 5.     **Legal Access.** This is your right to enter and exit your property to a public or private street. These rights are confirmed by deed or easements recorded in the public records. If you cannot prove this right, you must obtain and record the proper documents *before* your permit can be approved.

\_\_\_\_\_ 6     **Name and phone number of contact person to call for additional information if necessary.**

\_\_\_\_\_ 7     **Floodplain Declaration of Covenants, Conditions, and Restrictions (Flood Indemnification).** All applicants for development orders pertaining to any parcel on which a structure is currently located partially or wholly within the 100-year floodplain, or on which a structure will be constructed, erected, installed or placed partially or wholly within a 100-year floodplain, or on which any part of a vehicular use is partially or wholly within the 100-year floodplain, as determined by a flood certificate.

\_\_\_\_\_ 8.     **Completed applications and payment of fees:**

- \_\_\_\_\_ A.     On-Site Sewage Disposal System Construction Permit Application Form
- \_\_\_\_\_ B.     Driveway and Street Connection Permit Application Form
- \_\_\_\_\_ C.     Building Permit/Environmental Management Permit Application Form

### **STEP 2: MANUFACTURED HOME AND ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT PERMIT APPLICATION**

#### **PERMIT TECHNICIAN**

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1.     Take all information, documents, affidavits, and completed application forms with appropriate fees to the receptionist for assignment to a Permit Technician.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ A.     The Permit Technician will review your applications for completeness and will advise you if any additional materials are required.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ B.     If your applications are complete, you will be notified when your permits are ready.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2.     The Permit Technician will answer any questions on permit application requirements. The Permit Technician will need your Parcel Identification Number in order to forward your application for review.

### **STEP 3: DEVELOPMENT SERVICES**

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1.     During the routing of your permit, Development Services staff will review your application for the placement of a home on your property consistent with the Leon County Land Development Regulations (LDRs).
  - \_\_\_\_\_ A.     You will need to provide staff with sufficient information to make a

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determination of whether the proposed home complies with the Residential Design Manufactured Home (RMDH) architectural development standards for roof slope, roof pitch, roof finish material, width of home and composition of the exterior finish. **An affidavit must be completed and signed stating these criteria have been met.**

- \_\_\_\_\_B. If property is zoned for a RDMH home, staff will determine if your development is compatible with the local Comprehensive Plan and the LDRs. This is called a Land Use Determination. *If not compatible*, staff will advise and assist you in bringing your property into compliance with all County regulations.
- \_\_\_\_\_C. If your development requires a concurrency determination, Development Services staff will notify you before issuing a Land Use Determination.

**NOTE:** Florida law requires that each county and municipality have a local Comprehensive Plan. These plans must describe how communities will grow over the next twenty years. All development must either be exempt from the plan, or consistent with the plan's allowable land uses, and within a community's ability to provide infrastructure and services. Leon County and the City of Tallahassee jointly adopted the Tallahassee-Leon County Comprehensive Plan on July 16, 1990. Development Services staff or the Tallahassee-Leon County Planning Department staff will answer questions regarding how your property is affected by our local Comprehensive Plan.

### STEP 4: SEPTIC SYSTEM PERMIT REQUIREMENTS

- \_\_\_\_\_1. If you need to install a septic system *and* if your property is either exempt from the requirements of the local Comprehensive Plan or both consistent and concurrent with Plan requirements, take all information and documents to the Leon County Health Department.
  - \_\_\_\_\_A. Leon County Health Department staff will visit your site and conduct a soil test to ensure the proper septic system is installed.
    - (1) If septic system permit *is* issued, GO TO STEP 5.
    - (2) If septic system permit *is not* issued, consult with staff for alternatives.
    - (3) If a mounded septic system is required, additional review will be required by both the Leon County Health Department and Development Services.
  - \_\_\_\_\_B. If a new septic system is not required, obtain a Waiver Letter from the Leon County Health Department and GO TO STEP 5.

### STEP 5: DRIVEWAY AND STREET CONNECTION PERMIT REQUIREMENTS

- \_\_\_\_\_1. A driveway and street connection permit shall be required for the following:
  - \_\_\_\_\_A. All *new or existing* driveways connecting to the *public* street system (even if a development currently exists on the site).
  - \_\_\_\_\_B. All modifications to existing driveways by the property owner resulting in a change to the driveway dimensions, location, profile, movement of vehicular or pedestrian traffic, or stormwater.
  - \_\_\_\_\_C. All modifications that affect the safe and efficient operation of the driveway(s)
  - \_\_\_\_\_D. All new *public or private* roads that intersect with a public road.\*

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- \_\_\_\_\_ E. All modifications to private roads desired by the property owner.\*
- \_\_\_\_\_ F. All sidewalk or bikeway connections to the public street system crossing a drainage ditch will require installation of a pipe.
- \_\_\_\_\_ G. A temporary driveway accessing either vacant parcels of land or building construction sites not served by a permanent driveway.

\* Approval of final construction plans by Public Works *will* serve as driveway approval and no separate permit is required.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Design and application requirements are attached to the permit application form.

### STEP 6: INSPECTIONS

#### SEPTIC SYSTEM INSPECTIONS

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. In most cases, the company that installs your system will arrange all inspections by contacting the Leon County Health Department.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. If you are installing your own system, call for an inspection *before* covering the system.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. To schedule an inspection, please call 606-8350.

#### ENVIRONMENTAL INSPECTIONS

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Environmental Inspectors will inspect your home site during construction at regular intervals. ***Unless your permit was conditioned, you do not need to request an environmental inspection.***
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. If your permit approval was conditioned to require a pre-construction conference with an Environmental Inspector on the site, you must call 606-1300 and ask for "Environmental Inspection" to schedule this important on-site conference. Staff will discuss additional inspection requirements with you at that time.

#### DRIVEWAY AND STREET CONNECTION INSPECTIONS

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Two (2) inspections are required for driveway and street connection permits.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ A. The first inspection is the rough inspection (inspection code 801). It is scheduled after the asphalt and/or concrete forms, reinforcement bar, etc. are in place, but *before* pouring concrete or spreading asphalt.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ B. The final inspection is scheduled after pouring concrete or spreading asphalt (inspection code 909).
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. To schedule a driveway and any other required inspection, please call 891-1800. *Please have the permit number and inspection code ready when you call.* You will need to follow the Interactive Voice Response System information as listed on the last page of this booklet.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ A. A driveway final inspection must be approved prior to the approval of the electrical inspection.

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### BUILDING INSPECTIONS

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Inspections are required to ensure that your home complies with the Florida Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles Set Up Standards, and applicable environmental and health codes. All inspections must pass, and all fees must be paid before permanent electrical service and a Certificate of Occupancy are approved. If onsite construction activity exceeds \$2,500.00, no inspections can be approved until a copy of the Notice of Commencement that has been filed with the Clerk of the Court (located in the Bank of America building, 313 South Calhoun Street) is posted at the job-site. Before scheduling an inspection, verify that:
- \_\_\_\_\_ A. Home is properly constructed in accordance with manufacturers or engineers specifications and that the specifications are available to the inspector for the inspection.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ B. Electrical wiring is complete.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ C. Potable water lines are installed and left uncovered.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ D. Septic system is installed and plumbing from home to tank is left uncovered.
- NOTE: Septic system inspections are scheduled by the septic system contractor.**
- \_\_\_\_\_ D. Site plan and permits are on site and available to the inspector.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ E. If the home is located in a flood zone, a FEMA elevation certificate must be completed by a registered land surveyor, engineer or architect and available to the inspector to verify that the floor of the home is at the minimum elevation required in the flood letter.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. You are required to post your address numbers on your building before your final inspection. Your address can be found on your permit. For questions about your address, please call the Addressing Unit at 606-1300.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. To schedule a final inspection, please call 891-1800. Please have the permit number and inspection code (900) ready when you call.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. If the building inspection passes, your home will be approved for permanent electrical services and the permitting office will contact the proper utility provider.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. If the building inspection fails, the inspector will advise you of the deficiencies. Fix the problems and reschedule the inspection.

***Note: Certificates of Occupancy cannot be issued nor the electrical service released until all final inspections are completed and approved.***

If you need assistance from our Building Inspectors, they may be reached by telephone throughout the business day at the following numbers:

Fred Varn	933-8279
Claude Bruce	933-8280
Andy Weaver	933-8281
Emil Brady	933-8283
Park Walker	933-8285
Jerry Estes	933-8289
Doug Perdue	879-3798

If you need assistance for driveway connections, please call Andrew Riley of Public Works at 556-1764.

**PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT**  
**Flood Letter/Elevation Certifications for Manufactured Homes**

October 25, 1999

To All Interested Individuals:

It has come to our attention that some people are unclear about the difference between a “flood letter” and an “elevation certification.” Basically, a flood letter is a pre-permit document prepared by a civil engineer specifying whether the property on which the home is going to be installed is located within the 100-year flood zone. If the property on which the home is to be located is determined to be in a flood zone, the engineer will specify both the base flood elevation and the elevation of the finished floor. This information is then incorporated into the building permit file. The building permit card will have the word “YES” in the flood zone field and the required floor elevation (from the engineer’s letter) will be entered in the minimum finished floor elevation field.

The manufactured home installer should be informed of these requirements in order to ensure the home is installed at the appropriate elevation. Typically, a benchmark must be established on or near the subject property. A benchmark (generally established by a land surveyor) is a point of known elevation, relative to sea level. It is used to determine the elevation of the home’s finished floor, and when required, the elevation of the septic tank. After the home is installed, and prior to requesting a final inspection, you must have an engineer or registered land surveyor verify on a FEMA Elevation Certification Form that the “actual” elevation (height) of the finished floor is at or above the design elevation required by your pre-permit flood letter. Leon County Building Inspectors are required to have this sealed elevation certification form prior to approving the manufactured home installation.

If the flood letter indicates that the home is **not** located in a flood zone, both the flood zone and minimum finish floor fields will indicate “NO” and a zero noted in them respectively. In this case, the elevation of the finished floor may be set as it normally would, based on the topography of the property.

In summary, the flood letter is a design document required to obtain a permit while an elevation certification is an “as built” document submitted to ensure that the actual finished floor elevation complies with the design criteria of the flood letter.

Please do not hesitate to contact the Building Plans Review and Inspection Division at 606-1300 if you have any questions regarding a particular manufactured home installation or this Public Service Announcement.

Ed Jarriel  
Director of Building Plans Review and Inspection Division

### Florida's Construction Lien Law Protect Yourself and Your Investment

According to Florida law, those who work on your property or provide materials, and are not paid-in-full, have a right to enforce their claim for payment against your property. This claim is known as a construction lien.

If your contractor fails to pay subcontractors or material suppliers or neglects to make other legally required payments, the people who are owed money may look to your property for payment, even if you have paid your contractor in full.

This means if a lien is filed against your property, it could be sold against your will to pay for labor, materials or other services which your contractor may have failed to pay.

This document explains Florida Statute 713, Part 1, as it pertains to home construction and remodeling, and provides tips on how you can avoid construction liens on your property.

#### Protecting Yourself

If you hire a contractor, you should know the following:

- You may be liable if you pay your contractor and he then fails to pay his suppliers or subcontractors. **There is a way to protect yourself:** a Release of Lien is a written statement that removes your property from the threat of a lien. Before you make any payment, be sure you receive this waiver from suppliers and subcontractors covering the materials used and work performed.
- Request from the contractor, via certified or registered mail, a list of all subcontractors and suppliers who have a contract with the contractor to provide services or materials to your property.
- If your contract calls for partial payments before the work is completed, get a Partial Release of Lien covering all workers and materials used to that point.
- Before you make the last payment to your contractor, obtain an affidavit that specifies all unpaid parties who performed labor, services, or provided materials to your property. Make sure that your contractor obtains releases from these parties before you make the final payment.
- Always file a Notice of Commencement before beginning a home construction or remodeling project that has a direct contract price greater than \$2,500. The local authority that issues building permits is required to provide this form. You must record the form with the Clerk of the Circuit Court in the county where the property being improved is located. Also, post a certified copy at the job site. In lieu of a certified copy, you may post an affidavit stating that a Notice of Commencement has been recorded. Attach a copy of the Notice of Commencement to the affidavit.
- In addition, the building department is prohibited from performing the first inspection if the Notice of Commencement is not also filed with the building department. You can also supply a notarized statement that the Notice has been filed, with a copy attached.

The Notice of Commencement notes the intent to begin improvements, the location of the property, description of the work, and the amount of bond (if any). It also identifies the property owner, contractor, surety, lender and other pertinent information. Failure to record a Notice of Commencement or incorrect information on the Notice could contribute to your having to pay twice for the same work or materials.

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### **Notice to Owner**

Prior to filing a lien, a lienor (except those contractors or suppliers in direct privy) must serve the owner a document titled "Notice to Owner." The Notice to Owner must state the lienor's name and address, a description of the real property, and the nature of the services or materials being furnished. The Notice to Owner must be served before commencing, or within 45 days of commencing, to furnish the services or materials. A lien cannot be enforced unless the lienor has served the Notice to Owner as described above.

### **Whose responsibility is it to get these releases?**

You can stipulate in the agreement with your contractor that he must provide all releases of lien. If it is not a part of the contract, however, or you act as your own contractor, YOU must get the releases.

If you borrow money to pay for the improvements and the lender pays the contractor(s) directly, instruct the lender to get releases before making any payments. If your lender then fails to follow the legal requirements, the lending institution may be responsible to you for any loss.

### **What can happen if I don't get releases of lien?**

You will not be able to sell your property unless all outstanding liens are paid. Sometimes a landowner can even be forced to sell his property to satisfy a lien.

### **Who can claim a lien on my property?**

Contractors, laborers, materials suppliers, subcontractors and professionals such as architects, landscape architects, interior designers, engineers, or land surveyors all have the right to file a claim of lien for work or materials. Always get a release of lien from anyone who does work on your home.

### **Contesting a lien**

A lien is valid for one year, unless a lienor files a lawsuit to enforce the lien prior to the expiration of the year. An owner has the right to file a Contest of Lien during the one year period. Upon the filing of a Contest of Lien, a lienor must file a lawsuit to enforce the lien within 60 days. Failure of the lienor to file the lawsuit renders the lien invalid.

### **Additional tips on home construction**

- Verify that your contractor is properly licensed, is insured, and carries worker's compensation insurance for his employees. Information regarding licensing can be found below.
- If you intend to get financing, consult with your lender or an attorney before recording your Notice of Commencement.
- Insist that the contractor/remodeler secures a building permit and adheres to all building codes and ordinances.

### **Information all construction contracts should contain**

- The contractor's name, address, telephone number, and contractor's license number.
- A precise description of the work and materials to be supplied. The contract should specify the grade of construction, flooring and trim materials to be used. Don't accept the phrase "or equivalent"; the contract should specify appliance models and alternates for models not available.
- A beginning date and completion date.
- A complete list of companies or individuals supplying the contractor with labor or materials. Be sure they are insured so you are protected against theft or damage to their supplies or work.
- Financing information and the payment schedule.
- All necessary building permits or licenses.
- Agreement regarding site clean up and debris disposal.
- All warranty agreements.

Ask for explanations and clarifications of legal terms or confusing language. Be sure you understand completely what you are signing: **Remember**, promises are difficult to enforce unless they are in writing. Even for small jobs, have a written contract spelling out the details. Be wary of anyone who says, "We don't need to bother putting it in writing," or "You pull the permit; it will save you money."

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Some contractors require a down payment of 10-30 percent of the total and an additional payment at the halfway point. Pay only when the work is done to your satisfaction and you have releases of lien as described above. If the completion date is critical, like a swimming pool planned for summertime use, link payment to on-time performance. Changes to a contract after the construction has begun can cost you. Specify in the contract how changes are to be handled and insist that all change orders be in writing and signed by both you and the contractor.

### **Cancellation of contracts**

Some home repair/improvement contracts can be canceled in writing (preferably by certified mail) without penalty or obligation by midnight of the third business day after signing. They include:

- Those signed anywhere other than the seller's normal place of business.
- Those signed as a result of door-to-door solicitation, except emergency home repairs.
- Those paid on an installment basis.

Other contracts are binding as soon as they are signed, so be sure before you sign.

### **Things you should know before starting**

The most frequently cited complaints concerning home remodeling, home improvements, and home repair are cost overruns, missed deadlines, and inferior workmanship. Another persistent problem is "fly-by-night" contractors who take deposits or payments before finishing or starting work.

When you need something done to your home, choose a contractor carefully. Be wary of door-to-door salespeople and telephone solicitors promising "this-month-only" bargains. Make sure your contractor is properly licensed, insured and that a Notice of Commencement has been filed with the Leon County Clerk of the Court.

**THE CONSTRUCTION LIEN LAW IS COMPLEX AND CANNOT BE COVERED COMPLETELY IN THIS DOCUMENT. WE RECOMMEND THAT WHENEVER A SPECIFIC PROBLEM ARISES, YOU CONSULT AN ATTORNEY.**

**To register a complaint (or learn if complaints have been filed against a prospective contractor), contact the Florida Department of Business and Professional Regulation's Customer Contact Center at: (850) 487-1395, or [CallCenter@dbpr.state.fl.us](mailto:CallCenter@dbpr.state.fl.us).**

**Or write to: Florida Department of Business and Professional Regulation  
1940 North Monroe Street  
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-1027**

**Or visit online at: [www.MyFloridaLicense.com](http://www.MyFloridaLicense.com)**

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You may also contact your local building department or the Better Business Bureau.

## RESIDENTIAL DESIGN MANUFACTURED HOMES

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### FOUR STEPS TO DRAWING A SITE PLAN

An accurate site plan gives staff the critical information needed to process your permit application rapidly. While some applicants use professionals (contractors, engineers, architects, etc.) to help with the permit application and site plan, others don't. The following are four steps to prepare a site plan with a drawing of what the plan might look like at the end all four steps.

In order to draw your site plan you need to be familiar with your site including lot and house dimensions, size and location of driveway and sidewalk, location of well and septic tank (including distance between), size and location of protected trees, slope of site, limits of clearing, sediment controls, and environmentally sensitive features.

**STEP 1.** Using graph paper, choose a scale of measurement for the plan drawing. To ensure all information will fit on the page and be easy to read, a good example would be to have each block of the graph paper equal five (5) feet (or 1 inch = 25 feet). After choosing your scale of measurement, draw lot lines then place the house, driveway and any sidewalks on the plan. Write in the closest distances in feet of the lot lines to the house (i.e. building setbacks), and draw an arrow pointing north.

**STEP 2.** Locate the well and septic tank (with drainfield) on the site plan. Show the distance in feet between them (minimum distance is 75 feet) and the distance from any wells or septic tanks located on adjacent properties as required by the Environmental Health Department.

**STEP 3.** Identify any environmentally sensitive features (i.e. wetlands, sinkholes, 100-year floodplain, etc.) that may be located on your property. These features are listed at the top of page 2 of the permit application. Also, locate and identify the protected trees on site by drawing a small circle and writing the name and size of the tree by it. On the site plan, protected trees to be removed should be crossed out. Protected trees include any Dogwood tree having a diameter at breast height (DBH) of 4 inches or greater, Loblolly Pine or Live Oak tree DBH of 12 inches or greater, and any other tree having a DBH of 18 inches or greater. Also included are trees within the preservation features, such as a Canopy Road Protection Zone (CRPZ), Bradfordville rural road, wetland, floodplain, and within the restrictions associated with the Special Development Zone (SDZ).

- \* To measure the diameter of a tree at breast height (DBH), measure inches around the tree at the height of 54 inches above the ground, then divide the number of inches by 3.14. The resulting number equals the diameter of the tree (DBH).

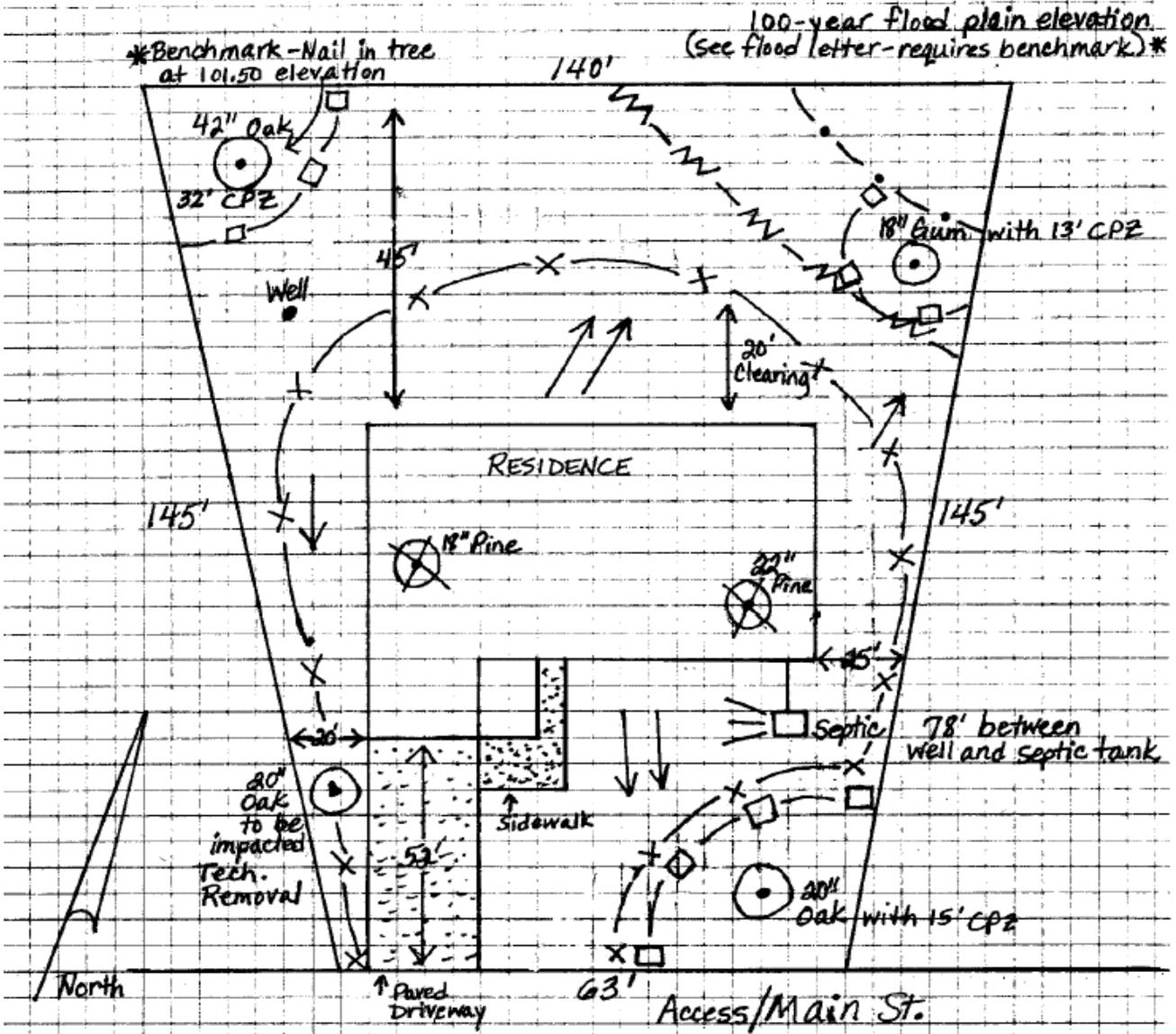
During construction, all areas surrounding the tree trunk of a protected tree within a minimum of 75% of the radius of the critical protection zone (CPZ) must be protected from all development activity, including material stockpiling, parking, and other related construction activity. How do you measure the CPZ? The CPZ is the area surrounding a tree within a circle described by a radius of one foot for each one inch of the tree's diameter at 54 inches above the ground (DBH). Seventy-five percent of the CPZ is protected against encroachment by development or related activity.

**STEP 4.** Identify and draw the area of the site that will contain the proposed construction activity (defined as the limits of clearing). Then show the slope of pattern of stormwater runoff of the site with arrows pointing downhill in the direction of the stormwater runoff. Then, locate and draw the sediment controls (hay bales or silt fences) and tree barricades needed for protecting your trees, your neighbors, and environmental features.

Please feel free to contact Development Services of Environmental Compliance staff with any questions you may have regarding drawing your site plan.

RESIDENTIAL DESIGN MANUFACTURED HOMES

SAMPLE SITE PLAN



Scale 1" = 25 Ft.

Legend

- ⊙ Tree to remain
- ⊗ Tree to be removed
- Tree Protection Barricade
- — Sediment Controls/Silt Fence
- • - Easement or Code Protected Area (Ex: Floodplain)
- X - X - X Limits of Clearing

## RESIDENTIAL DESIGN MANUFACTURED HOMES

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Leon County Interactive Voice Response System  
(IVRS) CALL PLAN  
891-1800

**HOW TO:** The telephone number to call the interactive voice response system is **891-1800**. At the opening menu, press the keys listed below. **NOTE:** Experienced users don't have to wait for each menu prompt to key in the request. Inspections can be requested 7 days a week from 5:00 am to 12:00 midnight. Inspection requests called in by 12:00 midnight will be made the following workday.

1. **To schedule an inspection:** Press 2, 1, 2, permit number and # key, inspection code, 1 (1 to leave a message for an inspector or 2 if no message for an inspector), and 1.
2. **To cancel an inspection:** Press 2, 2, 2, permit number and # key, inspection code, 1, 1, and 1.
3. **To hear inspection results:** Press 2, 3, 2, permit number and # key, inspection code, 1, and 1.
4. **To hear plan review status:** Press 2, 4, 2, permit number and # key, and 1.

<u>BUILDING INSPECTIONS</u>	
<u>CODE</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>
900	Final Building

<u>ELECTRICAL INSPECTIONS</u>	
<u>CODE</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>
904	Mobile Home