

City of Virginia Beach
Development Services Center
DSC INFORMATION NOTICE #49
April 9, 1996

TOPIC: *Civil Inspection and Public Utilities Inspection Fees and Erosion and Sediment Control Permit and Inspection Fees*

BACKGROUND:

Prior to April 15, 1996, the City of Virginia Beach billed individuals or companies for Public Utility and Civil Inspection related inspections, including erosion and sediment control. These bills were based on an hourly rate for services performed for commercial site plans, right-of-way permits and other similar projects requiring inspections. The bill was sent to the customer after the services were provided. This practice often delayed the release of sureties (bonds) while the bill was being prepared and the payment was being made. In addition, several bills were being sent for each job which resulted in added administrative expense for both the customer and the City staff.

In response to customer and staff suggestions for process improvement by reducing administrative costs to the customer and City, the system for collecting Public Utility and Civil Inspection related inspection fees has been changed. The new fees and method of collection were designed to be revenue neutral, i.e., on average, the fees will not be increased due to the new fee structure. In addition, the new systems will eliminate the old hourly billing system for new projects.

ITEM #1: *When will the fees be paid?*

The previous hourly rate based, multiple billing system by Public Utilities and Civil Inspections has been replaced by a single point of collection. These inspection fees will be collected when the right-of-way and erosion and sediment control permits are issued.

ITEM #2: *Who collects the fees?*

The DSC will collect both the permit fees and the inspection fees at the time of permit issuance.

ITEM #3: *How much are the new fees?*

The hourly rate has been replaced by a percentage method similar to that used for subdivision inspection fees. The Civil Inspection fees are calculated by taking 1.5% of the engineer's cost estimate for the items inspected (see section A of attached Fee

Worksheet). The Public Utility inspection fees are based on 10% of the first \$7,500 of utility related estimated costs plus 1.5% of the estimated costs exceeding \$7,500 (See Section B of the attached Fee Worksheet). In each case, there is a \$50 minimum if the improvement costs are below that needed to achieve the \$50 minimum. The minimum fee will cover the minimum cost necessary to make the basic inspections.

ITEM #4: What permit fees are required and how are the fees collected?

The permit fees are much simpler than in the past. A right-of-way permit is a flat fee of \$25.00. The erosion and sediment control permit is also a flat fee of \$25.00. The permit and inspection fees will be collected while the permit is being issued.

ITEM #5: Who needs to obtain a permit?

Anyone needing to perform work within the public right-of-way or easement must obtain a right-of-way permit.

Anyone wishing to conduct land-disturbing activity by changing the land in a way that may result in soil erosion from water or wind and the movement of sediment into state waters or onto lands in the City, including but not limited to, clearing, grading, excavating, transporting and filling of land. (Exceptions are found in Chapter 30, Section 30-57 of Code of Virginia Beach.)

ITEM #6: What is needed to obtain a permit?

The following are basic requirements for:

Right-of-way permit (reference Section 33-53 of the Code of Virginia Beach):

1. Approved plan
 - a) showing nature of work to be done
 - b) property lines, right-of-way line and location of work to be done with reference to a fixed point on the street
 - c) underground work - cross section indicating conditions and proposed changes
 - d) grading operations - show pavement, shoulder, ditch and slope
 - e) trees to be removed
2. Approved engineer's cost estimate for the total construction cost of any improvements within the public rights-of-way and easements
3. Approved site plan for underground installations:
 - a) exact locations and dimensions of conduits, pipes, vaults, manholes, crossings and other installations
 - b) type (concrete, iron, etc.)
 - c) dept of covering material

- d) *size and type of outlets*
- e) *design and location of identification indicators*
- 4. *An acceptable surety sufficient to cover the estimated cost of completing the work and/or restoring the street to satisfactory condition should the permittee fail to do so*
- 5. *Proof of general liability insurance or a bond in the amount of \$500,000*

Erosion and Sediment Control Permit:

- 1. *Approved erosion and sediment control plan*
- 2. *Acceptable performance surety (\$500 per acre)*

ITEM #7: *Fire hydrant fee*

The first year's operation fee (\$310) for each new fire hydrant was previously billed with the Public Utilities inspection fees. This fee will also be collected by the DSC with the inspection fees. If the fire hydrants are associated with a subdivision, the fee will be collected at the time of the subdivision fee billing. If the fire hydrants are associated with a site plan or separate right-of-way improvements, the fee will be collected at the time of the right-of-way permit issuance.

ITEM #8: *Subdivision vs. site plan improvements*

There will be times when the consultant or developer will submit separate site plans or construction plans for work in the right-of-way. These improvements may be required with either a subdivision or site plan. Unless otherwise noted and included in a subdivision engineer's cost estimate, the inspection fees for these plans will be charged at the new fee rates shown on the attached fee worksheets and collected at the time of the right-of-way permit issuance.

ITEM #9: *Will the new fee structure and collection system affect subdivisions?*

No, subdivision inspection fees will continue to be billed under the existing system.

ITEM #10: *Transition*

There will be no fixed transition period. The approved plans with permits issued prior to April 15, 1996, will continue to be billed on the hourly rate until they receive their final inspection and the surety is released. Plans with permits issued on or after April 15, 1996, will pay inspection and permit fees at the time of the issuance of the permit and will be governed under the new system.

ITEM #11: *What are the advantages to the new process?*

- 1. *No billing for a final inspection and no waiting for the release of the surety -*

the surety will be released by the DSC once notice of the final approval has been received

2. *All permit fees and inspection fees will be known and collected at the time of permit issuance*
3. *One payment instead of multiple billings*
4. *Lower administrative cost and less confusion*

5. *Permit fees are simpler and the fee worksheet will show the customer how the fees were calculated.*

ITEM #12: *Effective Date*

ALL PERMITS ISSUED ON OR AFTER APRIL 15, 1996, WILL USE THE NEW INSPECTION FEE STRUCTURE AND PERMIT FEES

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ATTACHMENTS:

- *Right-of-Way Permit and Inspection Fee Worksheet*
- *Erosion & Sedimentation Control (Stormwater Management) Permit and Inspection Fee Worksheet*
- *Erosion & Sedimentation Control ONLY Permit and Inspection Fee Worksheet*