



MARIN COUNTY
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AGENCY

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Frequently Asked Questions

About our Jan 1, 2010 Building Permit Fee Adjustments

On October 27, 2009 Marin County Board of Supervisors unanimously passed and adopted Ordinance No. 3528, amending Section 19.04.032 of Marin County Code adjusting building permit fees for the purpose of establishing 100% recovery of the costs to provide building permit, plan review, inspection and code enforcement services resulting from building violations. The adjusted building permit and service fees went into effect on January 1, 2010.

Q: Why did building permit fees change?

A: In 2007 the Community Development Agency followed a best management practice and engaged a professional consulting firm to analyze the fee structures CDA charged for many of our services. The result of this 20 month effort was recommended adjustments to fees charged for services provided by the Planning and Building Divisions of CDA.

Fee adjustments for building permits were carefully considered in order to establish an equitable and sustainable balance between service levels and priorities, with a reasonable corresponding charge for each type of service provided.

Q: How will this affect my overall permit expense?

A: "Building permit" fees are the portion of your total CDA *construction permit* fees charged by the CDA Building and Safety Division to recover costs of providing processing, review and inspection of your proposed construction, alteration or repair. This fee may appear on your application or receipt as the sum, or any combination, of *application* or *plan review* fee, plus *permit issuance* or *inspection* fee.

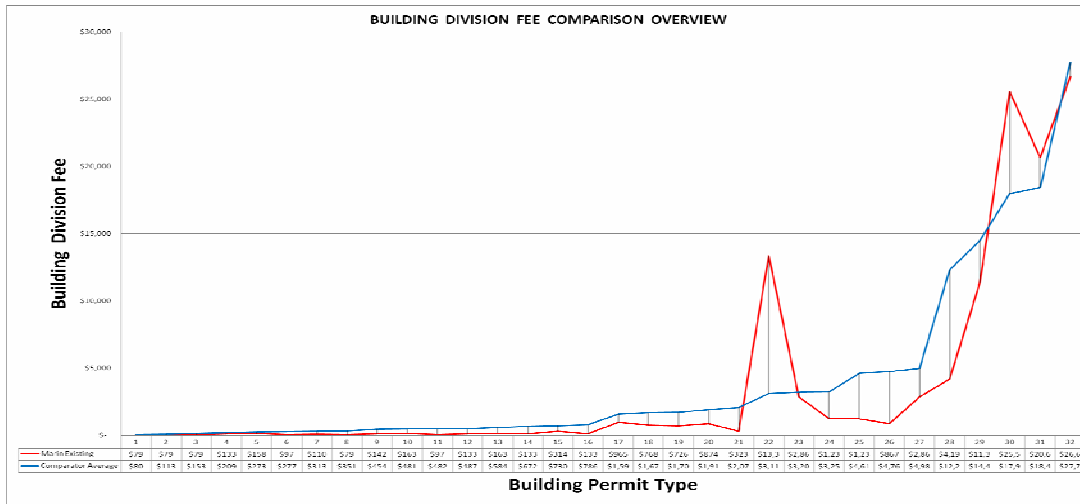
Your total out-the-door cost for a CDA construction permit issued at the Building Permit Counter is the sum of *all* applicable charges, taxes, surcharges and impact fees administered by the County for each type of construction activity.

Our Jan 1, 2010 building permit fee adjustments generally have little impact (if any) on other fees or charges assigned to your construction permit from these other sources.

Please see [UNDERSTANDING YOUR CONSTRUCTION PERMIT FEES & CHARGES](#) for a more detailed explanation of fees, charges from other programs or agencies, taxes and surcharges and the purpose of each.

Q: Did building permit fees increase?

A: Many building permit fees increased, some stayed the same, and some decreased. The relative level of each fee adjustment is visually shown in the following graph:



In this graph, a comparison of our fee structure shows all of our permit fees from low (a simple plumbing permit), to high (a new office building), depending on the type of building permit. The blue line illustrates the average fee level for each type of permit, charged by 3 comparative counties, as well as 3 local cities. The red line reveals the corresponding level of our legacy fees for each type of permit; and the vertical lines indicate the magnitude of adjustment we needed to make to each of our legacy fees in order to establish parity for our customers with the average of our six comparator building jurisdictions.

As of January 1, 2010 our new building permit fee structure matches the blue line –the average of what customers pay in these other jurisdictions.

Q: Will I be affected by the new building permit fees?

A: Our new building permit fee structure will only apply to building permit applications submitted after January 1, 2010, and to *new activity* charged to building permits applied for before January 1, 2010. New activity includes any *additional* service requested of the CDA Building and Safety Division, other than services previously paid for under our earlier fee structure.

Q: Did code enforcement violation fees change?

A: Yes, fees charged by CDA Code Enforcement Division for resolving building related violations will now be charged to recover 100% of the cost associated with investigating and managing verified violations. The actual amount of the code enforcement fee charged to a building permit could be less or more than what would have been charged under our previous fee structure, depending on the nature of the violation and the effort we expend to reconcile.

Q: How can I learn more about these new building permit fees?

A: Several documents are available on our Community Development Agency public web site located at <http://www.co.marin.ca.us/building> including our Fee Ordinance No. 3528 and current Master Fee and Service Schedule.