

# CITY OF EFFINGHAM INFORMATION



INFO

## Answers to Frequently Asked Questions

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# Building Permit Requirements

At one point or another, most residents will have questions about making improvements or changes to their residential or commercial property. The following is a simple outline to be used to answer basic questions about obtaining building permits for these projects. More specific questions may be directed to the Building Official's Office which is located on the second floor of City Hall, or may be reached at (217)342-5300



- You may not be sure if you need a building permit or not.  
**Before you start any project, please call the Building Official's Office to determine whether or not you need a permit.**

- In general, a permit is required if the work involves the erection, installation, alteration, conversion, structural repair, or demolition of any building or structure. A permit is not required for most remodeling projects.
  - Pools—Yes, a permit is required to put in a swimming pool.
- Fences—No, a permit is not required for the erection of a fence.
- If a building permit is required, an application must be signed by the owner or the owner's authorized agent. These forms are available in the Building Official's Office.

# Building Permit Requirements Continued

- Along with an application, the applicant needs to submit plans signed by an architect or engineer and a copy of the plat of survey for the building site. If the project is minor, this requirement may be waived by the Building Official.

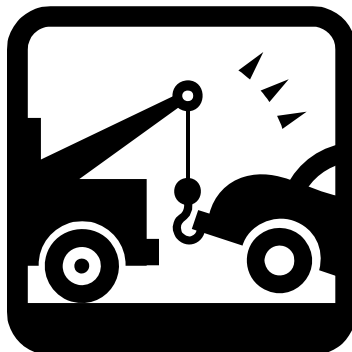


- After work has begun, any changes must be submitted to the Building Official before the changes are made.
- In addition to the normal fees to be paid in connection with the issuance of a building permit, if the City needs to use outside professional and technical consulting services during its review and processing of an application to assure ordinance requirements are met, the applicant is responsible for reimbursing the City for these costs as well.
- No refunds will be issued by the City of Effingham for permits obtained in error. These include, but are not limited to Building Permits, Electric Permits, Plumbing Permits and Sewer Taps.

# Traffic and Parking Regulations

**O**bservance of these regulations will make living and traveling through Effingham more pleasant and safe for everyone.

- Speed limits are clearly posted throughout the City to reflect school zones, residential areas and the business district.
- Trucks and commercial vehicles weighing over 20,000 pounds are prohibited from traveling on weight restricted streets. Exceptions to this rule include vehicles picking up or delivering persons or packages, emergency vehicles, maintenance vehicles, garbage trucks and school busses.
- It is illegal to park a vehicle on a municipal lot for the purpose of displaying the vehicle for sale or to peddle merchandise from the vehicle.
- Inoperable and/or unlicensed vehicles may not be parked on a driveway in a residential area. They must be parked in an enclosed structure.
- No more than five (5) vehicles may be permanently parked on any parcel of property.
- As a courtesy, please do not park in front of your own, or a neighbor's mailbox. This will avoid interfering with mail delivery.



# Freedom of Information Act

**I**f you need records from the City of Effingham, you must first obtain and complete a “Freedom of Information Request Form” from the City Clerk’s Office located on the first floor of City Hall. You may then proceed to the department where the record you are seeking is housed.

The requestor shall provide the following information in a request for public records:

- Full name, address, and phone number
- Description of public records sought
- Whether it is a request for inspection, copies or both.
- The City shall respond to a written request within seven working days of the receipt of the request.

The City shall respond to the request in one of three ways:

- Approve the request
- Approve in part and deny in part
- Deny the request
- A list of records and information that are exempt under the Freedom of Information Act is available upon request in the City Clerk’s Office.
- Some documents, such as Ordinances, Resolutions, City Council Minutes and the Municipal Code are available online at <http://www.effinghamil.com>



# Animal Regulation

**W**hile pets are fun and exciting as part of a family and our community, there are guidelines that must be followed to ensure that our animals do not become a nuisance to the community.

- Any animal running in public places without a leash shall be impounded by the City or other appropriate public agency.



- It is illegal to keep, maintain or harbor more than 4 cats and 4 dogs of 4 months of age or older in any residential building within the City.

- It is illegal to cruelly treat any animal by way of overworking, cruelly beating, torturing, cruelly killing, working any lame or sick animal, failing to provide proper nourishment and shelter, or abandoning an old or sick animal.



- It is illegal to keep any animal which disturbs the peace by loud noises at any time of the day or night.
- It is illegal to let any animal under your control go upon City cemetery ground.
- If you have any further questions about animal control, please call the Animal Control office at (217) 347-5695

# Landscape and Burning Regulations

**O**bserving these regulations will prevent fires as well as keep our community looking beautiful.

- It is illegal to burn garbage of any kind at any time in the City.
- On site burning of landscape waste is permitted between the hours of 8:00 am and 6:00 pm if it is properly piled and away from any structure.
- Burning is not permitted on days determined unfit by the Commissioner of Health and Safety.
- It is illegal to allow landscape waste to smolder at anytime anywhere in the City.



- You may not burn off (burning **without** collecting and piling) landscape waste without a permit obtained from the Fire Department at least 5 days before burning activity.
- Grass is not included by definition and therefore is not allowed to be open burned.
- As a courtesy to your neighbors, please keep your lawn neatly mowed.
- If you should have a concern about a neglected lawn, please call the Effingham County Health Department at (217) 342-9237

# Fire Department Inspections and Public Education

**E**very business within the City limits is required to have a fire inspection conducted annually under the Life Safety Code. The following is an example of issues involved in a fire inspection.



- Exit Access, obstructed access, signage, and emergency lighting
- Fire Extinguishers and related annual inspections
- Fire Alarm and Sprinkler systems annually tested
- Electrical System, properly marked electrical panels, and use of extension cords (prohibited)
- General Housekeeping to include storage of flammable liquids, storage in furnace/utility rooms (prohibited)
- Structural condition to include roof or building leaks, missing ceiling panels

- More specific questions may be directed to the Fire Prevention Bureau at Fire Station #1 (Central Fire Station) on Fayette Avenue or by calling (217) 342-2555 Ext 50.
- Any existing building being renovated may be required to bring the entire building up to the current Fire Code. Please contact the Fire Prevention Office for clarification. All new construction is reviewed by the Fire Prevention Bureau along with the Building Official's Office.
- Fire Safety House and Public Education tours, appearances, and programs to include Fire Extinguisher training, can be arranged by calling the Public Education Division at (217) 342-2555 Ext. 56



# Peddling and Soliciting in Effingham

**P**eddlers and Solicitors have a right to conduct their business in the City of Effingham provided they follow the City's regulations. Citizens also have certain rights concerning this issue. The following should be used as an outline to follow when questions arise.

- Anyone who desires to engage in peddling or soliciting must apply for a certificate of registration which is available at the Police Department located at 206 E. Section.
- No certificate of registration will be issued to any person who has been convicted of a felony within 5 years of the date of application, nor to anyone who has been convicted of a violation dealing with peddling or soliciting.
- Citizens may place signs refusing peddlers and/or solicitors near the main entrance to the residence. These cards may be purchased at the Police Department. Peddlers and Solicitors must immediately and peacefully depart from the premises upon seeing these cards, or upon the request of the resident.
- Peddling and soliciting are only allowed between the hours of 9:00 a.m.—9:00 p.m. There shall be no peddling or soliciting on Sundays, or on any holiday.



**NO SOLICITING**

# Connecting to the Water System

**W**hether you are preparing to move to Effingham, or are currently a resident, the following guidelines can be used to ensure that the process of connection to the water system is done as smoothly as possible.

The Water Department Offices are located on the first floor of City Hall and may be reached by telephone at (217)342-2366

- No connections with a water main shall be made without a permit being issued and 24 hour notice having been given to the water department. Applications for these permits may be obtained at the Water Department located in City Hall.
- All customers are required to install shut-off valves on their main service line where it enters the building.
- Water bills shall be due and payable no later than the twenty-fifth day after the billing date. If any such bill is not paid within said twenty-five-day period, a ten percent service charge for late payment will be added to the amount due.
- There will be a \$25.00 charge to disconnect the water except when such disconnect is needed because of underground leaks, or final disconnection.



# Helen Matthes Library

**H**elen Matthes Library is the public library in Effingham. With over 65,000 books, magazines, and audio-visual materials, you are sure to find something to interest you.

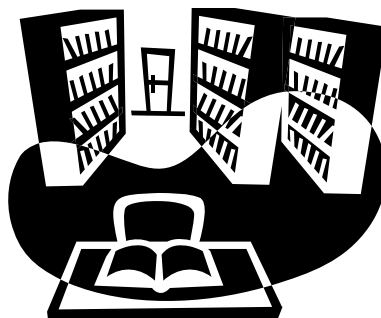
- Those who live within the jurisdictional boundaries of the City pay for library services through their property taxes and can receive a library card at no charge with proof of residency. The fee to replace a lost card, however, is \$3.00.
- Those living outside the jurisdictional boundaries of the library may purchase a non-resident family card for \$58.00 a year.

- The library is located at:  
100 E. Market Ave.  
Effingham, IL 62401

Phone: (217)342-2464

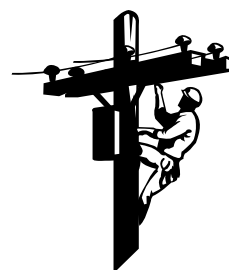


- The library's operating hours are:  
Mon-Thurs 10:00am-8:00pm  
Friday 10:00am-1:00pm  
Saturday 10:00am-4:00pm  
Sunday Closed
- You may also see the latest happenings, use the online card catalog, and collect other information from the library's website:  
<http://www.effinghamlibrary.org>



# Miscellaneous Information

- Ameren CIPS (1-888-789-2477) and Norris Electric (1-877-783-8765) supply electric and gas to residents of Effingham. Please contact these companies to determine which supplies to your area.



- Illinois Consolidated (1-800-553-9981) is the phone company serving Effingham.

- Cable Television Service in Effingham is provided by Mediacom (217-342-6656) and Illinois Consolidated at (1-800-553-9981).



- All garbage pickup in Effingham is done by private businesses. The City does not supply a garbage pick up service.

# Where Should You Call?

Please use the following guide to determine what office to contact with specific questions.

## **City Hall—201 E. Jefferson**

City Clerk's Office.....	(217) 342-5301	Freedom of Information Requests Comprehensive Plans Audit Reports
Mayor's Office.....	(217) 342-5304	Liquor Licenses Cable TV Franchise Street Department Messages City Council Agenda Economic Development Tourism City Attorney Citizen Complaints/Concerns
Engineering Dept.....	(217) 342-5303	Maps
Building Official.....	(217) 342-5300	Zoning Building Permits Electric Permits Plumbing Permits Sewer Permits Contractor License Street Addresses City Limits Boundaries
Police Department.....	(217) 347-0774	Peddling/Soliciting/Carnival Permits Accident Reports Report Accidents/Incidents
Fire Department.....	(217) 342-2555	Burn Permits/Fireworks Permits Fire Inspections Fire Reports/Investigations KNOX Boxes

## **Court House—100 E. Jefferson**

Circuit Clerk.....	(217) 342-4065	Court Cases Traffic Tickets Collection of Fines Passports Orders of Protection Divorce Papers Justice of Peace
Public Defender's Office	(217) 342-9612	

## **County Building—101 N. Fourth St.**

County Clerk.....	(217) 342-6535	Recording of Documents Birth & Death Certificates Marriage Licenses Property/Real Estate Records Voting Permits for Raffles
Probation Office.....	(217) 347-7931	
Sheriff/County Jail.....	(217) 342-2102	
State's Attorney.....	(217) 347-7741	
Superintendent of Schools.....	(217) 342-4363	Work Permits
Supervisor of Assessments.....	(217) 342-6711	
Treasurer's Office.....	(217) 342-6844	Real Estate Taxes

# Directory



Building Official .....	217-342-5300
Plumbing/Electrical Inspector.....	217-342-5300
Cemetery .....	217-342-4696
City Clerk.....	217-342-5301
Insurance/Safety Coordinator .....	217-342-5301
Personnel.....	217-342-5301
TDD (For Hearing & Speech Impaired) .....	217-347-5557
Engineering Department .....	217-342-5303
Fire Department .....	217-342-2555
To Report a Fire .....	911
Station #1 Non-Emergency.....	217-342-5384
Station #3 Non-Emergency.....	217-342-3831
Administration .....	217-342-5346
Helen Matthes Library .....	217-342-2464
Mayor's Office .....	217-342-5304
Economic Development Department.....	217-342-5304
Tourism Department .....	217-342-5310
Street Department .....	217-342-5306
Mechanic Garage .....	217-347-7421
Police Department .....	217-347-0771
To Report an Emergency .....	911
TTD (Hearing & Speech Impaired).....	217-342-5501
Records.....	217-342-5326
Investigations .....	217-342-5321
Administration .....	217-342-5331
Public Property .....	217-342-4696
Sewage Treatment Plant .....	217-342-6494
Sewer/Water Dept., Office.....	217-342-2366
To report a Sewer Emergency after hours .....	217-342-6494
To report a Water Emergency after hours.....	217-347-5056
Street Dept. Maintenance Garage .....	217-342-4470
Street Dept. Office .....	217-342-5306
Treasurer .....	217-342-5302
Water Dept. Maintenance Garage.....	217-342-2011
Water Treatment Plant .....	217-347-5056