

Bureau Veritas Processes and Information

The City of West has received many questions in regards to its plan review and inspection company, Bureau Veritas. This document will explain the reasoning for using Bureau Veritas, as well as the process residents and contractors will go through when dealing with them.

Before Bureau Veritas, the plan review process was done by previous council member Al Vanek, who worked in and was very knowledgeable in building processes. Al did not charge the city or residents for his service; at that time the only fee incurred by the city was a \$25 permit fee. For inspections, it was the responsibility of the resident or contractor to find their own inspectors and submit their own inspection sheets to the city. Unfortunately, with this process the city had issues receiving inspection sheets and certificates of occupancy, and also had issues with homes being built to the new codes.

Because of these issues, the city contracted with Bureau Veritas to handle all new residential and commercial construction projects, as they have the expertise to ensure that all construction is performed as required by the current codes. This is also the most cost-effective way for the city to provide construction code enforcement, and also to ensure that residents are receiving the quality of work they are paying for.

As in the past, all construction plans will be submitted at West City Hall. For major building projects, the city has packets which list out the processes and also what is required by Bureau Veritas in order for them to do plan review and/or inspections. Packets also include contact information for Bureau Veritas, and contractors and residents are welcome to call Bureau Veritas with any questions. If the building project is smaller there may not be a packet available, but city employees will let you know what is needed. When the information needed is brought to city hall, the resident or contractor will then pay the permit fees to the city.

Above all, building fees are something the city receives the most questions and comments about. Fees for each project are calculated using the construction valuation for the project. When the resident or contractor brings in the paperwork needed for the build, city staff will enter the valuation of the project into an Excel calculator supplied by Bureau Veritas. This calculator lists the fees which will be incurred by the project.

The building permit fees are all-inclusive, which means that the fee you pay includes all plan reviews, permits and inspections. Bureau Veritas does not charge for re-inspections, and the cost of the fee paid will never change, even if an issue is found later which increases the valuation of the project.

The fees charged for building projects vary, depending on a few factors, including whether or not plan review or inspections are required, and what the valuation of the project is.

To give you a few examples on fees, a new home build with a valuation of \$150,000 will have fees totaling \$914.25, and a new home build with a valuation of \$225,000 will have fees totaling \$1,166.25. For other building projects which require plan review and inspections, a project with a valuation of \$25,000 will have fees totaling \$284.74 and a project with a valuation of \$40,000 will have fees totaling \$390.77. If your project is smaller and does not require plan review or inspections, the fees would be less. For example, if you are building a fence or putting a new roof on your home that doesn't require any structural or electrical work, the fee would be \$50 if the valuation is under \$10,000. Again, it all depends on what kind of project you are doing, what the valuation is and what services will be needed.

Once the paperwork has been submitted to the city and the fees have been paid, the city will then send everything to Bureau Veritas. If your project does not require plan review then your permit is usually issued within one business day, but if your project does require plan review, there will be a short wait while Bureau Veritas performs this process. For new home builds this typically takes no more than seven business days, and for smaller projects it usually takes between two and four business days. If Bureau Veritas finds any issues with the plans or has any questions, they will either contact the city or the contractor listed on the paperwork.

For projects with plan review, when the plans or paperwork are approved by Bureau Veritas, they will overnight the papers back to the city. This will include a copy for the city to keep and a copy for the contractor to keep. The city will then call the contractor to pick up their copy, and the city will then issue the permit for work to begin. After this, the only steps left are the inspection requests.

For inspections, the contractor and homeowner no longer need to find their own inspectors and file their own reports as they did before Bureau Veritas. Now they only need to call Bureau Veritas' toll-free inspection request number and schedule their inspection when they are ready for it. Inspections requested by 5 p.m. Monday – Friday will be performed the next business day. On new home projects, before any inspections can be requested from Bureau Veritas, the contractor must first have a form survey done. This survey is done by the City of West, and contractors can call the city at 826-5351 to schedule the inspection. ***Bureau Veritas cannot perform any inspections on a new home if the city has not already performed a passing form survey.***

Building packets are available at city hall, or on the city's website at www.cityofwest.com under "Forms" on the left side of the page. Those with additional questions are encouraged to call West City Hall at 826-5351 or Bureau Veritas at (877) 837-8775, or email clerk@cityofwest.com.