

Permit Me To Assist You

Editor's note: ONA resident Sam Lipscomb has been a licensed general contractor since 1978. He shares some thoughts on why having a permit for certain projects is important. His company is Witchet Remodeling Co. Inc.

When it comes to remodeling projects, owners often grapple over whether or not they need to get a permit for the work.

Permits are for the safety of the family, their friends and future owners of the house. Safety of the structure can mean the roof will hold the snow load, the deck will carry a good-sized party or the house isn't in danger of a fire because incorrect wiring.

Roger Clark, assistant building commissioner, refers to doing the work correctly and with proper permits as "life safety." He considers that the most

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important of his job and that of the inspectors.

You need a permit to do almost everything. There are a few exceptions, for example, floor covering, patching dry-wall or painting. For almost everything else, such as installing new windows, adding a room and redoing the bathroom, you do need a permit. Find out for sure at the Allen County Building Department by calling 449-7131 from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday-Friday.

You should know the approximate the cost of materials and labor to deter-

mine the value of the permit. The price usually varies from \$25 to \$100, depending on the job.

If the work is outside of the footprint of the house, you need to get a permit from the City Planning Department (427-1129). You'll need a survey. Tell them what you are doing, for example, deck, garage, room addition, sidewalks or fencing. Tell them about the setbacks, size and where it is going on the lot. Permits are around \$60 to \$70. Permits may seem like a hassle, but in reality they ensure proper construction with a goal of ensuring safety after the job is done.