

### **Q1: What are the fees due for a Building Permit in Ventura County?**

A: Fees for permits issued by Building and Safety in Ventura County vary. The fees vary depending on the permit type, the size and scope of the project, and the value of the proposed work to be done under the permit.

Building permits for new buildings and structures are usually calculated based on the [valuation](#), or value, of the proposed structure. Building permit fees typically include an Application Fee, Plan Review Fees, Building Inspection Fees, an Issuance Fee, some development fees, and some State of California fees.

The Application and Plan Review Fees are collected when the permit application and construction Plans are submitted to B&S. All other B&S fees are collected when the B&S Permit is issued.

Single trade permits for plumbing, mechanical, and electrical installations that are not part of a Building Permit are usually calculated on the equipment/apparatus/fixture type and/or rating, on a “per-unit” basis. Fees for most MEP systems and fixtures installed with the construction of a new building are calculated on a square footage (area) of the building and added to the permit fees in the Building Permit record.

[Development fees](#), utility connection fees, and service fees from other agencies, may be due to other County agencies, departments and/or districts in order to obtain a Building Permit. When required, these must be paid directly to these entities. Building and Safety will inform you during the Building Permit application process which outside agencies, if any, must review and approve your project, and collect separate fees, prior to Building Permit issuance.

For a complete listing of Building Permit Fees, see the most current adopted [B&S Fee Schedule](#). Also see [Permit Fees Collected by Building and Safety](#).

### **Q2: Some B&S fees are based on a project’s “valuation.” How do I determine the valuation for my project?**

A: The valuation of your project is simply an estimate of the replacement construction value for the permitted project. This value represents the average cost, as determined by normal construction practices and construction methods. The valuation does not include the value of the land on which the building/structure is situated.

However, the valuation is intended to include all reasonable labor and material costs for construction and installations associated with the project. For example, the valuation should include the estimated cost of all building systems, such as plumbing, mechanical, and electrical systems, and finish materials.

The building valuation is not always determined based on real-life circumstances for your project, say, if you do the work yourself to save on labor costs and you receive financial assistance from your uncle to help pay for some construction materials for your project. In this case the final cost of your project would be very low, but the true replacement cost, or “valuation” would be much higher.

### **Q3: Where can I find the latest adopted Fee Schedule for Ventura County?**

A: Here is the latest adopted [Fee Schedule](#) for Building and Safety Fees. This schedule does not include State fees, other County agency fees, or Special District or development fees that are not collected by Building and Safety. For a more complete reference to the fees that may be assessed to your project during the Building Permit process, click [here](#).

**Q4: When did the current Fee Schedule for Ventura County become effective?**

A: Generally, the latest adopted Fee Schedule becomes effective shortly after the beginning of the County's fiscal year, which begins July 1<sup>st</sup> of each year. See the latest adopted [Fee Schedule](#) for the effective date of the current fiscal year.

**Q5: What happens if a different Fee Schedule is adopted before I pay my permit fees?**

A: Nothing. Your fees do not change if the Fee Schedule changes before you obtain your permit and pay your remaining fees. The effective Fee Schedule for your project is tied to your Building Permit application date. As long as your permit application does not expire, your fees will remain unchanged from the original estimate you received when you first submitted a Building Permit application.

**Q6: What is the difference between a permit fee and a development fee?**

A: A permit fee is intended to pay for services rendered during the permitting process, such as review of plans, permit issuance, and inspections.

A development fee is intended to pay for future infrastructure that becomes necessary as a result of new development. For example, as new development gradually creates the need for new fire stations, new roads, and new schools, the funds accumulated over time from development fees help to pay for these buildings and capital improvements, instead of funding these projects with tax revenue. Since the public in general did not create this need for the new schools and fire stations, then these projects should not be funded by the taxpayers. Instead, the County's intent is that the schools and fire stations be funded by the development of new buildings, which created the need for these schools and fire stations in the first place.

**Q7: Why do my B&S fees seem high in relation to the services I received from B&S?**

A: Fees collected by B&S may include development fees and permit fees collected on behalf of other RMA departments, other County agencies, and the State of California, which can make your B&S fees seem high in relation to the direct services received from B&S. ([See Permit fees collected by B&S](#))

The County's cost recovery policy is intended to achieve cost recovery for the Building and Safety program through Building and Safety fees, as listed in the adopted [Fee Schedule](#).

The adopted fees are based on average costs incurred for the delivery of these services for similar projects. These fees are generally accurate in achieving cost recovery for issuing a permit, reviewing plans, and conducting inspections during construction. For some projects, the B&S service fees may seem slightly higher, or slightly lower, than the actual cost to deliver that service. However, the County does not track time for each project individually, as this could add even more time to process the permit. In order to be most expeditious with the permitting process, the County uses an adopted Fee Schedule, as is done for similar services by most Cities and Counties in the State of California.

**Q8: How can I appeal or dispute the Building Permit fee?**

A: If you feel your permit fees have been calculated in error, please bring this to the attention of the Permit Technician who is assisting you with the issuance of your permit. He/she will promptly correct the error and recalculate your fees accordingly. If the fees have already been paid, ask the Permit Technician for guidance on requesting a refund for the overpaid fees.

If the permit fees paid were not calculated in error, but you feel the fee amounts are still too high and not commensurate with your project, please ask to speak with the Permit Section supervisor, who will review your fees to determine if a fee was incorrectly applied and explain the fee in greater detail, or process the refund when appropriate.

Further appeals to fees may be submitted to the B&S District Manager or the County Building Official. (see "[How to Appeal a Code Interpretation](#)")

Fees cannot be waived by B&S staff, as these fees have been adopted by the Board of Supervisors.

**Q9: Are any of my permit fees refundable if I cancel my project?**

A: Yes, most fees for a canceled project are refundable if the services have not been rendered. For example, the Issuance Fee for an already issued permit cannot be refunded, as the permit was already issued. However, if no inspections have been made, the inspection fees are refundable in accordance with the County's refund policy, as outlined in [Article 2, Section 109.6 of the VCBC](#).

**Q10: How do I request a refund for a cancelled permit?**

A: To request a refund for fees paid to B&S, please complete and submit a [Refund Request Form](#) in person at the B&S public counter or send it to [building@ventrura.org](mailto:building@ventrura.org).

**Q11: How do I request a refund for a fee I paid in error?**

A: To request a refund for fees paid to B&S in error, please complete and submit a [Refund Request Form](#) in person at the B&S public counter or send it to [building@ventrura.org](mailto:building@ventrura.org).

**Q12: How long does it take to receive my refund, from the date requested?**

A: Please allow three to four weeks from the date we receive your refund request, to receive your refund from the County of Ventura.

**Q13: Do I need to pay additional fees after my permit is issued?**

A: No. All B&S fees are collected during the application and permit issuance process, including fees for inspections conducted during construction. Additional fees may be assessed for a project after the permit is issued, for changes made to the project or for added new services requested, after the permit has been issued.

**Q14: Why are there so many fees associated with my Building Permit?**

A: That is because in addition to fees collected for B&S Building Permit services, Building and Safety collects fees for other Departments, Agencies, and the State of California. For a more complete explanation of fees collected by Building and Safety, see [Building Permit and Development Fees](#).

**Q15: Where do I pay my Building Permit fees in Ventura County?**

A: Fees collected by B&S can be paid in person at one of the B&S public counters in Ventura or Simi Valley, or on-line using the County's permit portal at [ACA](#). For more information on paying your Building Permit fees see [Where and How to Pay Building Permit Fees](#).

**Q16: Does the County of Ventura accept credit card payments for Building and Safety fees?**

A: Yes, Building Permit fees may be paid by credit card, in person or on-line.

**Q17: Does the County of Ventura have a credit card transaction fee when paying Building and Safety fees with a credit card?**

A: Yes. There is a nominal credit card transaction fee of approximately 3%. The minimum transaction fee is \$1.00.