



City of Yakima

News Release

Subject: Permit Fee Adjustment

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Permit Fees to increase 1.1% in 2014

After the first of the year, the cost of building, plumbing, mechanical, and sign permits in the City of Yakima will increase slightly. The 1.1% adjustment that will be implemented is based on the Consumer Price Index (“CPI”) that is applicable to the Northwest region of the U.S.

The CPI is published by the Bureau of Labor Statistics (“BLS”), which is a unit of the U.S. Department of Labor. According to the BLS website, the CPI, “...is a measure of the average change over time in the prices paid by urban consumers for a market basket of consumer goods and services.”

Annual adjustments to permit fees based on the applicable CPI were approved by the Yakima City Council in 2005 as a way to keep rates current and avoid the problem of having to play catch up.

"The method that we use to set permit fees helps create stability for builders and developers and prevents the sticker shock that can occur if permit fees are raised after having remained unchanged for years," said Code Administration Manager Joe Caruso. "Utilizing the CPI to set permit fees provides a tangible justification for any necessary increase, even if it is a modest one like the increase that will take effect in 2014," said Caruso.

The 1.1% adjustment to permit fees that will be applied beginning January 1st, 2014 is lower than the adjustments that have been made the last two years. Based on the applicable CPI, in 2013 fees were increased by 2.7% and in 2012 by 3.2%. Due to a lower CPI in 2010, permit fees were actually decreased that year by 0.6%.

It has been a busy year for construction activity in Yakima. Through the end of September, the City had issued building permits valued at \$73 million compared with a valuation of around \$62 million for the same period in 2012.

Additional information on permits is available on City of Yakima website at <http://www.yakimawa.gov/services/codes/permits/>

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