



MECKLENBURG COUNTY
 Land Use and Environmental Services Agency
Code Enforcement

Permitting & Plan Review Requirements for Projects Involving Existing Communication Towers & Installations; 9-28-16 (updated 1-2-20)

When work is performed on existing cell towers, on the equipment mounted to the tower, in the compound area at the base of a tower, or on building mounted communication equipment, the permitting & plan review requirements differ based on ownership. The following six scenarios outline the different requirements:

Scenario 1

Freestanding Tower owned by **Public Utilities**

Communication antennas & equipment owned by **Public Utilities**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Addition/modification of tower antennas, equipment, equip cabinets/shelters unable to be physically entered, and backup generator (not natural gas or propane): 	No Permits or Plan Review*
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Addition of equip shelters that can be entered for servicing of equipment: 	Bldg Permit & Plan Review Req'd
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Addition or modification of electrical service to the tower compound up to the point of disconnect feeding the power supply of the communication equipment; this would also include the auto-transfer switch of a new generator: 	Elec Permit & Plan Review Req'd
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Addition of backup generator fueled by natural gas or propane w/ new gas lines brought to tower compound: 	Mech Permit & Plan Review Req'd
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Structural modifications to the existing tower: 	No Permits or Plan Review*

Scenario 2

Freestanding Tower owned by **private entity**

Communication antennas and equipment owned by **Public Utilities**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Addition/modification of tower antennas, equipment, equip cabinets/shelters unable to be physically entered, and backup generator (not natural gas or propane): 	No Permits or Plan Review*
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Addition of equip shelters that can be entered for servicing of equipment: 	Bldg Permit & Plan Review Req'd
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Addition or modification of electrical service to the tower compound up to the point of disconnect feeding the power supply of the communication equipment; this would also include the auto-transfer switch of a new generator: 	Elec Permit & Plan Review Req'd
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Addition of backup generator fueled by natural gas or propane w/ new gas lines brought to tower compound: 	Mech Permit & Plan Review Req'd
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Structural modifications to the existing tower: 	Bldg Permit & Plan Review Req'd

Scenario 3

Freestanding Tower owned by **Public Utilities**

Communication antennas and equipment owned by **private entity**

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Addition/modification of tower antennas, equipment, equip cabinets/shelters unable to be physically entered, and backup generator (not natural gas or propane):	Elec Permit & Plan Review Req'd
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Addition of equip shelters that can be entered for servicing of equipment:	Bldg & Elec Permits & Plan Review Req'd
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Addition of new electrical service to the tower compound feeding the power supply of the communication equipment (If the power supply feeds both private and public utility equipment then permits are required for all of the equipment):	Elec Permit & Plan Review Req'd
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Addition of backup generator fueled by natural gas or propane w/ new gas lines brought to tower compound:	Elec & Mech Permits & Plan Review Req'd
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Structural modifications to the existing tower:	No Permits or Plan Review*

Scenario 4

Freestanding Tower owned by **private entity**

Communication antennas and equipment owned by **private entity**

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Addition/modification of tower antennas, equipment, equip cabinets/shelters unable to be physically entered, and backup generator (not natural gas or propane):	Elec Permit & Plan Review Req'd
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Addition of equip shelters that can be entered for servicing of equipment:	Bldg & Elec Permits & Plan Review Req'd
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Addition of new electrical service to the tower compound feeding the power supply of the communication equipment:	Elec Permit & Plan Review Req'd
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Addition of backup generator fueled by natural gas or propane w/ new gas lines brought to tower compound:	Elec & Mech Permits & Plan Review Req'd
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Structural modifications to the existing tower:	Bldg Permit & Plan Review Req'd

Scenario 5

Building Mounted Tower or Equipment owned by **Public Utility** or **private entity**

Communication antennas and equipment owned by **private entity**

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Addition/modification of antennas, equipment, equip cabinets/shelters, & backup generator mounted to building:	Bldg Permit & Plan Review Req'd
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Addition/modification of antennas, equipment, and backup generator (not natural gas or propane):	Elec Permit & Plan Review Req'd
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Renovation of existing equipment rooms inside the building to accommodate new equipment:	Bldg & Elec Permits & Plan Review Req'd
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Addition/modification of backup generator fueled by natural gas or propane:	Elec & Mech Permits & Plan Review Req'd

Scenario 6

Building Mounted Tower or Equipment owned by **Public Utility** or **private entity**

Communication antennas and equipment owned by **Public Utility**

• Addition/modification of antennas, equipment, equip cabinets/shelters, & backup generator mounted to building:	Bldg Permit & Plan Review Req'd
• Addition/modification of antennas, equipment, and backup generator (not natural gas or propane) that affects the loads on the electrical panels of the building; including the auto-transfer switch of any new generator:	Elec Permit & Plan Review Req'd
• Addition/modification of antennas, equipment, and backup generator (not natural gas or propane) that does not affect the loads on the electrical panels of the building:	No Elec Permits or Plan Review
• Renovation of existing equipment rooms inside the building to accommodate new equipment:	Bldg & Elec Permits & Plan Review Req'd
• Addition/modification of backup generator fueled by natural gas or propane:	Elec & Mech Permits & Plan Review Req'd

All projects that involve antennas/equip mounted on a tower or building shall submit a sealed, structural analysis report as part of their documentation, verifying the structural adequacy of the existing tower or building to accommodate the work.

All projects that involve a Bldg Permit for **structural modifications to the tower** will require the Contractor to provide to the Field Inspector a sealed letter from a Structural Eng'r verifying their periodic inspections of those modifications (footing/foundation work, bolting, welding, etc.) Full special inspections through Meck-SI will not be req'd.

Projects requiring plan review for a freestanding tower **do not require** the submittal of an Appendix B with the project plans.

Projects requiring plan review for building mounted towers or equipment **require** the submittal of an Appendix B with the project plans, with information completed for the building.

For any questions about these types of projects or a scenario that does not exactly fit the information above, please contact our Code Information and Resource Center (CIRC) staff for assistance:

(980) 314-0916

* These projects still require City or County Zoning plan review. These zoning agencies utilize the Small Commercial (FIFO) electronic plan review submittal mechanism of Code Enforcement to facilitate their review. Because of this, Customers will need to have their Elec Contractor apply online for an Electrical Permit through the Elec Contractor's acct, look for the Plan Document upload link on the confirmation page after they submit their application, and upload the project plans & the structural analysis report. The appropriate Zoning agency will perform their plan review, and once complete, the approved plans will be posted to the permit. The project will be closed, the necessary Zoning Permits will be issued, and the original Elec Permit application will be canceled.