

Requirements

REGARDING THE USE OF PROFESSIONAL SEALS AND THE PRACTICE OF ARCHITECTURE AND ENGINEERING IN THE STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA

TO SAFEGUARD THE PUBLIC LIFE, SAFETY, WELFARE AND PROPERTY, THE STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA REQUIRES THAT INDIVIDUALS WHO PRACTICE ARCHITECTURE AND ENGINEERING BE PROPERLY LICENSED. ANSWERS AND ILLUSTRATIONS TO FREQUENT QUESTIONS ARE PROVIDED FOR CLARITY - DETAILED REVIEWS OF THE NORTH CAROLINA BUILDING CODE, THE GENERAL STATUTES AND RULES OF THE STATE BOARDS OF ARCHITECTURE AND ENGINEERING ARE NECESSARY.

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? WHICH TYPE OF LICENSEE MUST PREPARE AND SEAL THE PLANS?

CAN ARCHITECTS PREPARE AND SEAL ENGINEERING PLANS?
a e Although "incidental" engineering is allowed, architects generally should not seal electrical, mechanical, plumbing, civil or structural engineering drawings.

CAN PROFESSIONAL ENGINEERS PREPARE AND SEAL ARCHITECTURAL PLANS?
a e Although building design is allowed, if within the competency of the professional engineer, professional engineers cannot represent the work as architecture and should not seal drawings labeled as architectural ("A Sheets").

? ARE THERE SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS REGARDING THE SEALS?

CAN A LICENSEE USE AN ELECTRONIC SEAL?
a e Permitted subject to detailed requirements described in rules.

CAN A LICENSEE SEAL ANOTHER LICENSED DESIGNER'S STANDARD DESIGN (PROTOTYPICAL) PLANS?
a e Yes, subject to special requirements detailed in rules, including disclaimer.

CAN AN INDIVIDUAL LICENSED IN ANOTHER JURISDICTION ENGAGE IN TEMPORARY PRACTICE IN NC BEFORE OBTAINING A LICENSE HERE?
a No.
e Individuals may obtain a temporary permit for up to 90 days.

SECURITY OF SEAL - CAN SOMEONE ELSE USE AN INDIVIDUAL'S SEAL?
a e No.

MUST PROFESSIONAL CORPORATIONS USE CORPORATE SEALS ON PLANS?
a Yes.
e No.

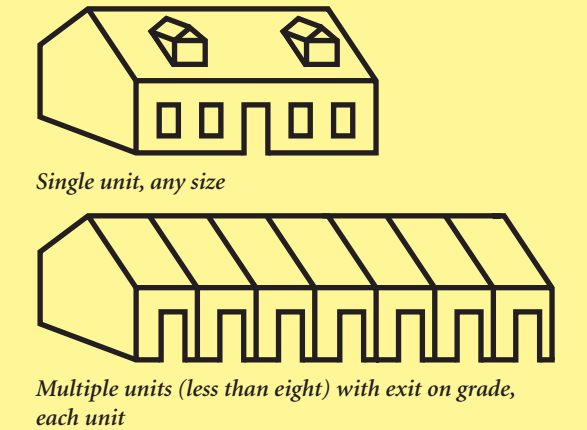
MUST THE LICENSEE SEAL, SIGN AND DATE EACH SHEET OF ORIGINAL DRAWINGS ISSUED FOR BIDDING, PERMITTING OR CONSTRUCTION?
a e Yes, required on original or reproducible.

MUST THE LICENSEE SEAL, SIGN AND DATE INDEX PAGE IDENTIFYING EACH SET OF SPECIFICATIONS OR TECHNICAL SUBMISSIONS?
a e Yes.

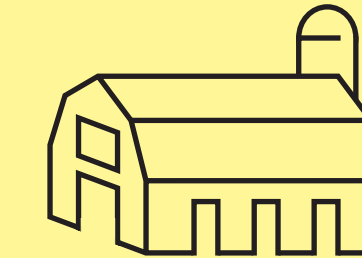
? WHAT PROJECT PLANS MAY BE EXEMPT IN THE BUILDING CODE FROM THE 'a' OR 'e' REQUIREMENTS AND PREPARED BY OTHERS?

While there are certain exemptions from the requirements of a professional architect's or engineer's seal, it is important that the code official exercise judgement to require seals where necessary to protect the public.

RESIDENTIAL PLANS?
a e Exempt if less than 8 units and each unit has its own exit on grade level.

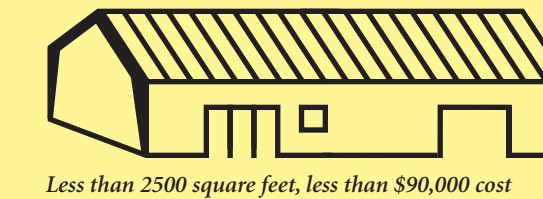


FARM BUILDING PLANS?
a e Exempt if not for public use.

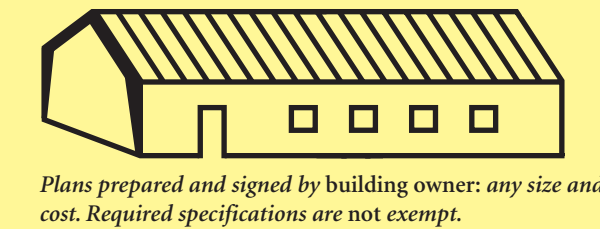


PLANS FOR COMMERCIAL STRUCTURES UNDER 2500 SQ. FT.?
a e Exempt, but in calculating total, "square footage" must include all total gross floor area, both heated and unheated, within inside perimeter of exterior walls.

PLANS FOR COMMERCIAL STRUCTURES LESS THAN \$90,000 IN VALUE?
a e Exempt, but "value" is defined as probable completed construction cost including change orders (but not including land value) and the total value of the building for an addition to a building.



PLANS FOR ONESELF?
a e Exempt, but must be drawn and signed by an actual owner of the building (i.e., minister cannot sign church's plans). Preparation of specifications required to obtain a building permit is not exempt.

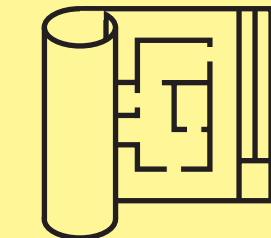


Plans prepared and signed by building owner: any size and cost. Required specifications are not exempt.
PLANS FOR CHANGES TO PREVIOUSLY EXEMPT STRUCTURES?
a e Exempt if finished structure would still qualify for its original exemption.

PLANS FOR CHANGES TO NON-EXEMPT STRUCTURES?
a e Exempt if changes:
• Do not alter or effect the structural system
• Do not change access or exit patterns
• Do not change live or dead loads

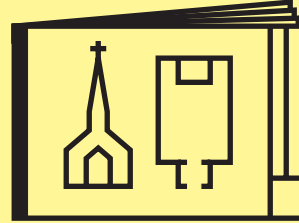
PLANS FOR ALTERATIONS OR UP-FITTING OF A SHELL OR UNFINISHED STRUCTURE?
a e Not exempt unless the structure has a current certificate of occupancy.

SHOP DRAWINGS?
a Exempt.
e Not exempt.



ARE CHURCH PLANS EXEMPT?

a e No.



? WHAT KINDS OF DOCUMENTS REQUIRE A SEAL?

MUST A LICENSEE SEAL ALL PLANS PREPARED FOR BIDDING, PERMITTING OR CONSTRUCTION?

a e Yes.

ARE SPECIFICATIONS REQUIRED TO BE SEALED?

a e Yes.

MUST A LICENSEE SEAL PLANS HE/SHE PREPARES FOR EXEMPT PROJECTS?

a e Yes.

ARE CHANGE ORDERS REQUIRED TO BE SEALED?

a e Yes, if the documents can only be lawfully prepared by a licensee.

ARE ADDENDA AND FIELD CHANGES REQUIRED TO BE SEALED?

a e Yes, if changes are presented in a

document of a type that must be prepared by a licensee.

ARE "RECORD DRAWINGS" REQUIRED TO BE SEALED?

a No, optional with disclaimer.

e Yes, with disclaimer.

? WHAT KINDS OF DOCUMENTS DO NOT REQUIRE A SEAL?

MUST LICENSEES SEAL PRESENTATION DOCUMENTS (RENDERINGS USED TO COMMUNICATE CONCEPTUAL INFORMATION ONLY) NOT A PART OF A SET OF DRAWINGS?

a e Not required to be sealed or signed.

CAN OR MUST LICENSEES SEAL INCOMPLETE DOCUMENTS?

a May be released for interim review without architect's seal or signature, but shall be dated, bear architect's name and be conspicuously marked "not for construction."

e Not required if marked, "preliminary, not for construction".

CAN LICENSEE SEAL SHEETS OR PAGES PREPARED BY LICENSED PROFESSIONAL CONSULTANTS?

a No, sheets or pages prepared by licensed professionals such as structural, mechanical or electrical engineers retained by architect

shall bear seal and registration number of consultant responsible therefore.

e No, not unless licensee is engineer "in responsible charge".

CAN NON-EXEMPT PLANS BEARING SEAL OF ONE DISCIPLINE (CIVIL ENGINEERING, STRUCTURAL ENGINEERING, MECHANICAL/ELECTRICAL ENGINEERING OR ARCHITECTURE) COMBINED WITH NON-SEALED DRAWINGS OF OTHER DISCIPLINES BE ACCEPTED FOR BIDDING, PERMITTING OR CONSTRUCTION?

a e No, all drawings must be sealed and signed by the appropriate licensee.

CAN LICENSEES USE SIGNATURE REPRODUCTIONS SUCH AS RUBBER STAMPS OR COMPUTER GENERATED OR FACSIMILES?

a e No.

? UNDER WHAT CIRCUMSTANCES ARE LICENSEES LIMITED FROM SEALING CERTAIN DOCUMENTS?

CAN A LICENSEE SEAL AN OPINION LETTER OR REPORT CONCERNING WHETHER PLANS THAT HE/SHE DID NOT PREPARE COMPLY WITH THE BUILDING CODE?

a No.

e No, unless hired by an agency or the

owner to specifically do a code review of plans already bearing the valid seal of the licensee.

CAN A LICENSEE SEAL A DOCUMENT THAT WAS NOT PERSONALLY PREPARED BY LICENSEE OR UNDER HIS/HER DIRECT RESPONSIBLE CONTROL?

a e No.

CAN A LICENSEE MODIFY AND SEAL DECEASED LICENSEE'S SEALED DRAWINGS WITHOUT COMPLETELY REDRAWING THEM?

a e Yes, only if licensee clearly marks modifications and puts written disclaimer on the plans.

CAN LICENSEE MODIFY AND SEAL DRAWINGS PREVIOUSLY SEALED BY ANOTHER LICENSEE WHO WAS TERMINATED BY THE OWNER WITHOUT COMPLETELY REDRAWING THEM?

a e Yes, if licensee clearly marks modifications and puts written disclaimer on the plans.

CAN A LICENSEE SEAL PLANS BEGUN OR CONTRACTED FOR A PERSON NOT PROPERLY LICENSED?

a e No, unless the licensee redraws the plans, making them his/her own work product.

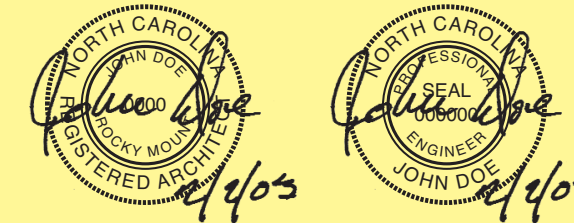
? WHOM CAN I CONTACT?

a (919) 733-9544 ncbarch@ncbarch.org

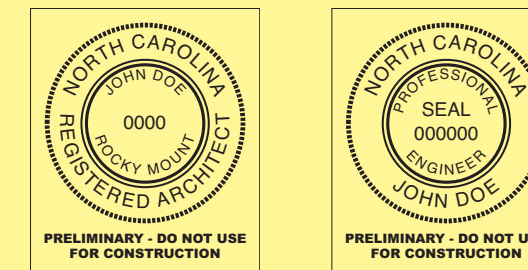
e (919) 841-4000 ncbels@ncbels.org

PROPER SEALS

SEALS PROPERLY SIGNED AND DATED:



SEALS PROPERLY NOTED FOR INTERIM REVIEW:



Acceptable statements include:

- Preliminary - Do Not Use for Construction
- Progress Drawings - Do Not Use for Construction
- Final Drawing - For Review Purposes Only

a & e "RED FLAGS" FOR PLAN REVIEWERS!

BE ALERT TO THESE ISSUES:

- Architectural ("A") sheets sealed by an engineer

- Engineering ("E") sheets sealed by an architect
- Plans sealed by an architect or engineer who is an employee of a non-licensed firm or company
- Incomplete documents sealed without a disclaimer
- Plans that have not been sealed, signed and dated by the licensee
- Standard plans that do not bear the seal of the original preparer
- Standard plans that do not bear the seal of a NC licensee and disclaimer
- Plans for upfitting a shell structure without a current certificate of occupancy
- Unsealed church plans stating that the "plans are for oneself"
- Seals appear to be cut and pasted
- Contact person is not the licensee or it is difficult to contact the licensee
- Plans, details, letter reports, etc. do not appear to apply to the project
- Plans have numerous or serious code violations
- Non-dated revisions

WHAT TO DO?

- Question the professional as to circumstances and qualifications
- Get corrected
- Reject
- Contact licensing board
- File complaint