

Occupancy and Utility Services

Once a Certificate of Occupancy has been issued, a residence must have legal utility services connected before it can be occupied.

Applications for City utilities (water, sewer, trash) can be obtained from the Utility Accounts Specialist at the Utility Billing Division. Except for preclearances, an application for utility services must be submitted before the application for a Certificate of Occupancy.

Applications for utility services may be submitted between 8:00 AM and 4:00 PM, Monday-Friday. Only the primary occupant of a structure may apply for utility services. Utility services, except for limited, temporary services for testing, cleaning or remodeling, may not be initiated by an absentee property owner.

In order to apply for utility services, certain documentation is required. For owner occupants, a copy of a closing statement or executed and filed warranty deed is required to prove legal ownership. For tenants, a copy of the lease agreement is required along with proof that the leasing party is the legal property owner or legal representative of the legal property owner. One form of photo identification for the primary occupant is also required, and must be presented in person.

Applications for utility service are subject to verification of information provided, including investigations into creditworthiness and prior utility payment history. Delinquent utility bills with other service providers may need to be resolved before services can be initiated. No services will be initiated for a structure until a valid Certificate of Occupancy has been obtained.

After approval of a utility services application, the applicant will need to pay the required deposit (or provide an acceptable Letter of Creditworthiness) and the \$25 non-refundable setup fee. **Please note that utility services will not be initiated after 4:00 PM Monday-Thursday or after 12:00 PM on Friday.**

The required deposits are as follows:

	<u>Water, Sewer and Garbage</u>	<u>Sewer and Garbage Only</u>
Owner-Occupants	\$90.00	\$60.00
Renters	\$120.00*	\$80.00*

*active duty military with valid ID pay the owner-occupant rate

Tampering with water meters (turning on or off or bypassing) is prohibited. The current tampering fee is \$100.00. Tampering can also result in criminal prosecution.

Occupying a structure or causing a structure to be occupied without a valid Certificate of Occupancy and/or without legal utility services is a criminal offense, subject to a maximum fine of \$750 and/or imprisonment for up to 60 days for each offense, with each day being a separate offense. Persons occupying an unlawful structure are subject to immediate eviction, with the structure being Condemned for Occupancy.

Housing Inspection Program

General Information



Department of Community Services

City of Del City

For additional information about the Housing Inspection Program, please contact the Community Services Department:

City Hall
4517 SE 29th Street
Del City, OK 73115
(405) 671-2814

For information regarding City utility services, please contact the Finance Department, Utility Billing Division, at (405) 671-2820. Please note that utility accounts can only be established in the name of the primary occupant of the property, and that this applicant must appear at City Hall in person to open an account.

Program Description

The Housing Inspection Program "Program" is intended to ensure safe and sanitary living conditions for all city residents. Additionally, the Program seeks to improve the City's housing stock, preserving property values and decreasing costs associated with providing services to substandard properties.

Pursuant to City Ordinance Number 1324, a residential structure cannot be occupied without a valid Certificate of Occupancy. Each time the primary occupant of a residence changes, a new Certificate of Occupancy is required. In order to obtain a Certificate of Occupancy, the legal owner of the property (as well as the primary occupant, if different) must apply for an occupancy inspection through the Program. Once the inspection is completed and no violations are found, a Certificate of Occupancy can be issued. Only after a Certificate of Occupancy has been issued can the residence be occupied.

The inspection covers basic life-safety and property maintenance, as outlined in the 2003 International Property Maintenance Code.

Residents will not be permitted to live in a structure until it has passed this inspection. As such, the City is not able to provide utility services (water, sewer, trash pickup) until the Certificate of Occupancy has been issued.

Inspections will be conducted by a qualified inspector within a reasonable period after a completed application form is submitted. Applicants will be able to schedule their own inspections during established "windows", minimizing any inconvenience.

The application fee is \$40, payable when the application is submitted.

Inspections performed under the auspices of this program are not intended to substitute for transactional home inspections or inspections required by any other entity. Inspection criteria may change at any time depending on enforcement focus. As such, the results of these inspections do not create any sort of warranty and should not be relied on for any purpose other than the process of investigating a structure's suitability for issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy.

Application Procedures

Applications can be submitted to the Community Services Department from 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM, Monday—Friday. At this time, a non-refundable fee of \$40 is due. After paying the fee, the applicant schedules an inspection. Inspections scheduling is available in set time slots, either morning or afternoon. If all set slots are full, the applicant can choose an overflow inspection slot (although overflow inspections will be balanced over a rolling 72 hour period). **In all cases, an inspection will be scheduled within 72 hours, unless otherwise requested by the applicant.**

Applications must be signed by the legal property owner and the primary occupant of the residence (if not the owner). A licensed real estate agent serving as property manager may sign for the owner, but a copy of the property management contract must be provided. If the legal property owner is different from the property owner on file with the Oklahoma County Assessor, proof of ownership will be required before an application can be submitted.

PRECLEARANCE—A special accommodation has been made for property owners seeking to obtain "preclearance" to avoid any delays when selling or leasing a property. Property owners (or their agents) may submit an application for inspection without a prospective occupant's signature. The same \$40 fee applies. Preclearance inspections may not be scheduled in overflow slots except in extraordinary circumstances. Preclearance inspections are valid for 180 days or until the residence is occupied, whichever is sooner.

Inspection Procedures

Inspections will be conducted according to an established protocol developed based on the city's adopted codes. The inspection will include the following:

- Exterior Property Maintenance
- Interior Property Maintenance
- General Sanitation
- Occupancy Limitations, Light and Ventilation
- Plumbing and Mechanical Systems
- Electrical Systems
- Fire Safety

In addition, properties will be checked for current code enforcement violations, open permits, repairs and improvements completed without proper permitting and inspections, and past code enforcement abatements.

Property owners, agents, and/or potential occupants must be present for the inspection. In the event that an inspector arrives and finds no one present at the residence, the inspection will need to be rescheduled and a reinspection fee (\$100) paid, unless the inspection has been rescheduled at least 24 hours in advance.

Inspection results will be available beginning at 9:00 AM on the day following the inspection. If a residence passes the inspection, a Certificate of Occupancy can be obtained from the Community Services Department permitting window. If a residence fails the inspection, a written correction notice can be obtained.

Applicants are not generally required to have water, gas and/or electric service initiated for the inspection. If such services are required for further evaluation of plumbing, mechanical or electrical systems, the applicant will be notified and a reinspection scheduled at no cost.

In some cases, the inspector may need to set up a reinspection in order to further evaluate one or more potential violations. In this case, the inspector will contact the applicant and arrange for a reinspection at no cost. The inspector may request that additional city staff conduct this reinspection (e.g. Chief Building Inspector, Fire Chief, Fire Marshal).

If violations are found and a written correction notice is issued, the property owner will be given a deadline to make needed repairs. As soon as these repairs are made, the property owner or agent may schedule a reinspection at no cost. If the violations are found not to be corrected, further reinspections may incur a reinspection fee of \$100.

Repairs involving plumbing, electrical, or mechanical systems (or involving concrete or fencing) must be completed by a licensed contractor. A property owner who is the intended occupant of the residence may complete some or all of this work without a license. Permits and inspections will be required in either case.

At the discretion of the inspector, a property having only minor violations may be issued a provisional Certificate of Occupancy. This Certificate will allow the residence to be occupied but will require that the minor violations be corrected within a specified time period (and, in all cases, before any further occupant changes).