WHAT IS GRADING?

Any excavation or earthwork construction, including fills and embankments.

WHAT COUNTY ORDINANCE REGULATES GRADING?

Sections 15.08.080 and 15.08.090 of the Napa County Code (NCC) adopt Appendix J of the 2013 California Building Code (CBC) as the County's Grading Ordinance and assign administration of grading permits to the Director of Planning, Building and Environmental Services (PBES) Department. In addition, County Code Section 18.108 governs any earthmoving activities associated with vineyard development which is administered by the Conservation Division.

WHAT ACTIVITIES ARE EXEMPT FROM A GRADING PERMIT?

CBC, Section J103.2 lists exempted work. The Division of Engineering and Conservation (DEC) of PBES will determine exemption status. If a grading activity is determined to be exempt, DEC will so notify the applicant in writing.

New vineyard plantings and replants are exempt from a DEC issued grading permit; however, they may be subject to review and approval by the Planning Division per NCC Section 18.108. Additionally, grading activity can be subject to regulation by the County's floodplain ordinance (Floodplain Management Permit), the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (404 Permits), and the California Department of Fish and Game (Streambed Alteration Agreements).

Any grading associated with a building permit such as excavation for building foundations and driveways of 100' or less are typically considered incidental to the building permit at the discretion of DEC.

HOW CAN I GET A COPY OF THE CBC?

A copy of Appendix J of the CBC for grading activities is available on-line at http://www.countyofnapa.org/PBES/ and under 'DEPARTMENTlinks' click on Forms and Documents and then choose Engineering Documents., or at the office of PBES, 1195 Third Street, Suite 210. The CBC may also be accessed online at http://resource.org/bsc.ca.gov.

HOW DOES SOMEBODY APPLY FOR A GRADING PERMIT?

Submit a completed grading application along with any plans, specifications or reports required by the CBC. Special note: Plans for engineered grading must be prepared and stamped by a licensed Civil Engineer and must be accompanied by a soils engineering and geology report. The need for engineered grading is made at the discretion of the DEC.

HOW LONG DOES A PERMIT TAKE TO ISSUE?

The time required for reviewing the plans, visiting the site, and responding to the applicant in writing, is largely dependent upon the accuracy and completeness of the application submittal. Initial review and comment on application submittals can take from 14 to 28 days depending on the complexity of the proposed work, environmental issues, and the accuracy of the plans. Most grading permits can be issued in 30 to 40 days, however, the requirement of erosion control plans and/or environmental review can extend the time for issuance of a permit.

HOW MUCH DOES A PERMIT COST?

The grading permit is an hourly fee. A deposit in the amount **$1,000** is collected at the time of application. Typically the original fee deposit is adequate to fund the entire grading permit process; however, additional deposits may be requested to complete the processing of a grading permit. Fees will be assessed based on actual time worked on the permit.

HOW DO THE COUNTY'S NPDES REGULATIONS BECOME INVOLVED?

All applicants shall conform to Napa County's storm water regulations as a result of the federally mandated National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) program. Any grading activity within the County is subject to NPDES review and regulation. Information regarding the County's storm water program for post-construction and construction related activities can be obtained at http://www.countyofnapa.org/PBES/ and under 'DEPARTMENTlinks' click on **Forms and Documents** and then choose **Engineering Documents**.

DOES A GRADING PERMIT REQUIRE AN ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW?

Pursuant to Napa County CEQA Guidelines, an environmental review is required for grading and related earth disturbing permits involve grading in excess of 2,000 cubic yards; OR in excess of 1,000 cubic yards if the average slope is 10% or greater; OR if the grading activity is in an environmentally sensitive area.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW!!! WHAT DOES THAT MEAN?

The project will be reviewed to see if it is located within an environmentally sensitive area (landslide area, archeological site, rare and endangered plants, etc.) If the project is within one or more of these sensitive areas, additional study(s) may be required depending on the impacts. In general, most projects do not require additional documentation in order to complete the environmental review.

WHAT IS THE PROCESS FOR THE ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW?

The Engineering Services Division will transmit your grading permit application to the Planning Division to determine if an environmental review is required. If an environmental review is necessary, the applicant will be notified in writing of the required next steps.

CHECKLIST FOR GRADING PERMIT APPLICATION SUBMITTAL

The following items must be included or the project will not be accepted for processing.

- [ ] Transmittal form.
- [ ] Two (2) sets of plans.
- [ ] Drainage calculations, if installing drainage structures.
- [ ] Soils report OR request for waiver.
- [ ] Authorized Agent form.
- [ ] $ Deposit

A Tradition of Stewardship
A Commitment to Service

GRADING PERMITS

GENERAL INFORMATION

NAPA COUNTY PLANNING, BUILDING AND ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES
Division of Engineering and Conservation

Information (707) 253-4417
Fax (707) 253-4336

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