



Board of Commissioners

Anthony J. Badalamenti
Sabrina Christian-Bennett
Mike Tinlin

Portage County Building Department
Floodplain Administration
Joseph L. Bodnar - Director

CELL TOWERS

Policy – Procedure

Section 3108 of the 2017 Ohio Building Code covers Telecommunication and Broadcast Towers (Cell Towers) and their specific classifications.

Using Section 3108 as a base; Cell Towers and their components within the tower compound, generally follow one of the following categories, when considering Building Department approvals and permit requirements:

1. A new installation – whereby the tower, its structural base, the equipment building (typically an Industrialized Unit), and the power supply (service meter, panel, etc) are contained within a fenced and locked area.
2. An electrical service update or addition – whereby new electrical service is being installed at the location and/or a back-up generator is being installed, or a similar process.
3. Co-location of service providers, antenna replacement and/or antenna upgrade – whereby the only work being performed is the changing of antennas on the cell tower itself and the potential need for low-voltage, fiber optic, and/or coaxial cable installation for the antennas, as well as their control cabinetry.

Therefore, based on the above basic and known project "scopes of work" the following defines which of these require approvals and/or permits.

1. A new installation – requires a full plan approval and applicable building and electrical permits. Please refer to the information found within the Portage County Commercial Policy, Application, Plan Review & Permit Guidelines document, which can be found on our web site, or at our office.
2. An electrical service update or addition, such as, but not limited to, addition of a back-up generator (and associated switching equipment), addition of elevated equipment platforms, ice bridges, etc.) requires that a licensed electrical contractor (that is registered with this office) apply for, and obtain, an Non-Residential Electrical Permit from our office. A Non-Residential Electrical Permit Application as well as Contractor Registration information can be found on our web site, or at our office. Any service update or addition that increases loading on the existing cell tower, requires a complete structural analysis that exhibits the existing tower and foundation system can accommodate increased loading(s).
3. Co-location of service providers and/or antenna replacement does not require approvals or permits and is considered part of normal or routine maintenance, which also includes the installation of low-voltage, fiber optic and/or coaxial cables for these antennas, as well as their control cabinetry.



July 2021