Guest Columnist Tom Tette, Director of Building and Zoning, Fire Marshal and Code Enforcement

It is a pleasure to be a guest columnist on behalf of the Building and Zoning, Fire Marshal and Code Enforcement department. We serve the community in many ways, some more visible than others. It is our job to ensure homes, businesses, and projects small and large, come to fruition in a way that meets compliance requirements and keeps our community safe.

To do this, we issue permits for construction, renovations, and operations as required by New York State and international building codes. The Town of Penfield has additional building and code compliance regulations for the well-being of all who live in, work, and visit our town.

Although there is still snow on the ground and winter hasn’t let up, warmer weather will come, and so will “building season.” Before the season hits, I would like to remind everyone of the necessity for building permits.

What projects require permits? Anything you wish to build or erect—sheds, decks, pools, home additions, and new homes. We receive applications year-round, however most permitting for new builds or remodeling projects in our region occurs in the warmer months. That’s when our department gets busy and the processing time for permit applications can become extended.

If you are already planning a project for this spring or summer, I encourage you to begin the permitting process as soon as you can. Permits are valid for one year from date of issuance. We process applications in the order they are received. Typical turn-around time on review and issuance of permits is two-to-three weeks. Depending on the queue this can take less or more time. Turnaround time to issue a permit is important to you and our department. We want to deliver prompt customer service, and you want to get started on your project as soon as you can. So if you have a project in mind, we look forward to seeing you at our counter on the second floor of the town hall very soon!

With spring comes yard sales and other events that generate temporary signs. If you are planning a sale or other activity, please review Town of Penfield rules for placement of temporary signs before your event. (See the “Rules for Temporary Signs” flyer online at www.penfield.org, under Building and Zoning, Documents.) You want your signs to be seen, and we don’t want to remove them because they are creating a hazard to motorists or pedestrians.

I’d like to reinforce the importance of the visibility of house numbers. Not only is visibility important to the U.S. Post Office and other delivery services, it is critical to emergency responders. Emergency agencies may be called to your home for police, medical, or fire emergencies. Clear, visible, contrasting colors for house numbers are required by law. So please take the time to make sure your house numbers are unobstructed and visible from the road.

Before you begin any project, we welcome your questions to help ensure your safety and success. Drop in and visit us on the second floor of the Penfield Town Hall or call us: Building Department 340-8636, Code Enforcement 340-8635, or Fire Marshal 340-8643. Also visit the Building and Zoning section of www.penfield.org for forms and documents.

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