



What is Copyright?

Copyright is a form of protection provided by the laws of the United States under Federal Copyright Regulation Title 17 of the United States Code to authors of "original works of authorship." This protection applies to both published or unpublished works and sealed or unsealed plans/drawings/documents.

Plans, construction drawings and other documents submitted to Planning & Development (P&D) are public records and will be made available for viewing. However, reproduction of plans/drawings/documents must be authorized by the original author as outlined in Title 17.

Obtaining Copies

Customers must receive written consent from the copyright owner/registrant on company letter head and present the **original** letter of consent to P&D as authorization to reproduce the requested document. Customers may fax the original letter to start the reproduction process; however the original is necessary to receive the copies.

The letter of consent should include:

- Date
- Plan number and description of document
- Name of person being granted authorization to receive copies
- Wet seal and signature of registrant or notary and signature of author as printed on the document

P&D staff will compare the signature and registration number on the document to the signature and registration number on the letter of consent. If there is any question as to the validity of the letter, P&D staff will contact the registrant/copyright owner by phone to verify the consent for reproduction.

Notes:

- If the professional no longer works at the firm listed in the title block of the document, P&D will accept written permission from the firm on their letterhead. If the professional now works for a different company, the professional can still authorize reproduction. If the firm no longer exists, and the professional cannot be found, P&D cannot reproduce the document.
- Plans/drawings/documents do not need to be sealed to be copyright protected.
- One misconception is that the owner of the structure is entitled to reproduction of the building or site plan. However, only the author of the plan is entitled to reproduction and only the author can authorize reproduction for others.
- For plans that have a "Consent to Reproduce" on them that is signed and dated by the copyright owner, P&D will allow reproduction of the plans for amendment purposes only without requiring a letter from the copyright owner.