

Dept. of Safety and Professional Services: Dawn Crim launches second phase of building plan process improvements, calls on councils to address review submission thresholds

Posted on Thursday, Feb 6, 2020

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MADISON, Wis. – Department of Safety and Professional Services Secretary-designee Dawn Crim is calling on the Commercial Building Code Council and the Plumbers Code Advisory Committee to study thresholds that trigger when the agency must review plans and to provide recommendations about potential changes to those thresholds.

As a part of the second phase of her plan review process overhaul, Secretary-designee is asking councils to consider using a risk-based approach to determine submission thresholds for commercial building and plumbing plan review. Current Commercial Building Code thresholds are based primarily on size and plumbing code thresholds are based primarily on fixture number. New risk-based guidelines could vary depending on building type, use, occupancy and the project's eventual public risk exposure.

“This approach allows the department to focus our limited resources on projects with the greatest potential impact on public safety,” Secretary-designee Crim says. “Our professional councils and the public meetings process ensure that any changes we implement will be informed by the expertise of professionals who have deep knowledge of the code, who have vast experience in the industry, and who

share our commitment to public safety.”

Last month Secretary-designee Crim announced the first phase of plan review process improvements. Those included requiring payment upon plan submission instead of invoicing afterwards along with adjustments to the calendaring process to encourage customers to submit complete plans in advance of their scheduled review dates. She is also exploring legislative changes that would give the department greater flexibility in how it manages the plan review intake and billing process.

“Once again, our goal is to shorten the amount of time it takes for our customers to have their plans reviewed by our staff, and we are excited about the improvements we are making and the efficiencies they will yield,” Secretary-designee Crim says. “We are now looking to our councils for their expertise and insight, and we welcome their recommendations for new thresholds that increase agency flexibility and promote efficiency while still prioritizing safety.”

Now into her second year of leadership, Secretary-designee Crim is eager to implement process improvements across agency services and programs. The Department of Safety and Professional Services issues more than 240 unique licenses, administers more than 100 boards and councils that regulate professions, enforces state building codes, and maintains the Wisconsin Enhanced Prescription Drug Monitoring Program, which is a key tool in the multi-faceted public health campaign to stem excessive opioid prescribing. A fee-based agency, the Department of Safety and Professional Services is self-sustaining and receives no general fund tax dollars for its day-to-day operations. With five offices and 250 employees throughout Wisconsin, DSPS collaborates with constituents and stakeholders across a wide range of industries to promote individual and state economic prosperity.