

2023 CODE ENFORCEMENT OFFICER (CEO) REPORT

13 building permits were issued in 2023. One was for a new home; the remainder were for accessory structures or additions.

Our largest change of landscape occurred from the storms we have experienced in December of last year. The combined effect created a scenario for excessive unexpected damages. The first storm warmed and saturated the ground with approximately 3 inches of rain. We then had a week of warmer weather which thawed our frost layer. The second storm brought more than four inches of rain and very high winds, snapping off and blowing over several trees.

Blown over or damaged trees can be removed from Shoreland Zone areas after consulting with the Code Enforcement Officer, and a replanting plan has been discussed. Damages to shorelines or erosion of camp roads and property leading to waterbodies may qualify for Grant assistance for repair and prevention of future erosion. Contact 7 Lakes Alliance, (207) 495-6039, for an assessment or more information.

While surveying the damages around waterfront properties I have discovered many unpermitted additions and structures. These vary from hot tubs on platforms, decks (on the ground and elevated), temporary shelters that have been made permanent, awning style additions to existing structures and sheds. I encourage any property owner with an improvement that did not go through the permitting process to remove the violating element from your property or begin the permitting process. I do not search for violations, but I do have my eyes open during my travels.

2023 LOCAL PLUMBING INSPECTOR (LPI) Report

In Smithfield 14 permits for septic work and 21 permits for internal plumbing were issued in 2023. Internal plumbing encompasses new construction, renovations, additions, and repairs. Septic work can be new construction, expansion, or repairs to failed septic fields or faulty tanks and drain lines.

In September the State enacted new Subsurface Wastewater rules. These rules included new and updated definitions, guidelines, and protocols. Many of these changes were in response to the new allowance of ADU's, accessory dwelling units. An accessory dwelling unit is an independent living space that can be attached to an existing dwelling or a detached structure with its own utilities.

Up to this point in time, many Maine municipalities only allowed one dwelling per lot. Now two dwellings per lot can be allowed if all sanitation criteria are met. These provisions are not allowed in Shoreland Zone areas. The permitting process of the local municipalities must be followed, and local ordinances must be updated to create guidelines for this allowance. Accessory dwelling units can be a room over a garage, a garage conversion, a finished basement, an addition to a dwelling or a separate building. They must be at least 190 square feet, but not exceed 1200 square feet in footprint. ADU's are subordinate to the primary dwelling and may not be sold separately unless dimensional lot standards can be met creating a conforming lot.

Respectfully submitted

Hans Rasmussen
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Town of Smithfield