Building Permit Software Manual

Contents

Important Concepts

Before examining the details of how to use the Avitar Building Permit program, it is necessary to explore several important definitions and concepts used throughout this manual.

Parcel Identifier, PID, or Map/Lot/Sub Lot

Both Avitar Assessing and Avitar Building Permit maintain assessment and other parcel data based on a unique parcel identifier assigned to each parcel. This identifier, often referred to as the PID, is generated from the map, lot, and sub lot assigned to each parcel on your tax maps. The PID is an eighteen character code, consisting of six characters each for the map, lot, and sub lot. For example, the PID of the first parcel shown on tax map number seven would appear as follows:

000007 000001 000000

If this parcel was later subdivided in to three lots, the resulting PIDs might appear as follows, depending on the nomenclature used in your community:

000007 000001 000000
000007 000001 00000A
000007 000001 00000B

In this example, PID 000007 000001 000000 would typically remain with the original "mother lot", and the new sub lots carved out of the original parcel would be numbered 000007 000001 00000A and 000007 000001 00000B. Throughout this document, the terms record, parcel identifier, PID, and map/lot/sub lot will be used interchangeably.

It is important to note that PIDs are created and modified in the Avitar Assessing program, not the Avitar Tax Collect program. Tax Collect has many functions whereby changes to PIDs in Assessing are imported to Tax Collect, but there is no PID naming or assignment done in Tax Collect to ensure that PIDs maintained in Tax Collect correlate with those maintained in Assessing.

Custom PID Format
It is possibile to configure your system to display PIDs in a manner different from the standard six character map, six character lot, and six character sublot. This is in response to the growing number of communities (predominantly towns that have had a remapping/renumbering project by Cartographic Associates) that have PIDs that do not conform to this standard. Previously, this could be accommodated within the existing 18 character PID framework but it was not always clean.

The Custom PID function allows you to configure a PID mask that divides the 18 available characters up into as many as six distinct sections of any length (e.g. six sections of three characters or one section of ten characters and another of eight characters). Additionally, you can choose to indicate a character that will separate each section and/or you can choose to suppress leading zeros from each section.

Note that this function should only be enabled in consultation with Avitar Software Support and in conjunction with your Assessing department. However, review the description below and please contact us if you and your assessors are interested in implementing a Custom PID format.

By using the Custom PID Format option, you can choose to change the system format to an eighteen character PID in a manner different from the standard six character map, six character lot, and six character sublot format. For example, you could elect to choose six characters for the map, three for the lot, three for the sublot, three for a building number, and three for a unit number. Custom PID Mask -- You must use the # symbol to indicate the placement of the individual PID characters within the mask. Then use another character (for example a space or a dash or a slash) to indicate the character you wish to use to separate the component sections of the PID. However, you can only use one character as the separator character.

Custom PID Description -- Enter a brief description of the entire PID (e.g. "Map/Lot/Sub/Bld/Unit"). This is the label that will appear on reports. It is best to use a capital letter for the first letter of each component and then lower-case letters for the rest. This will match the format of the rest of the program and the report heading will look consistent.

Custom PID Section Names -- You can choose to enter a description for each component of the PID (e.g. "Map", "Lot", etc.). The Custom PID Section names are only visible when you hover over the individual boxes throughout the program used to enter PID values on which to search.

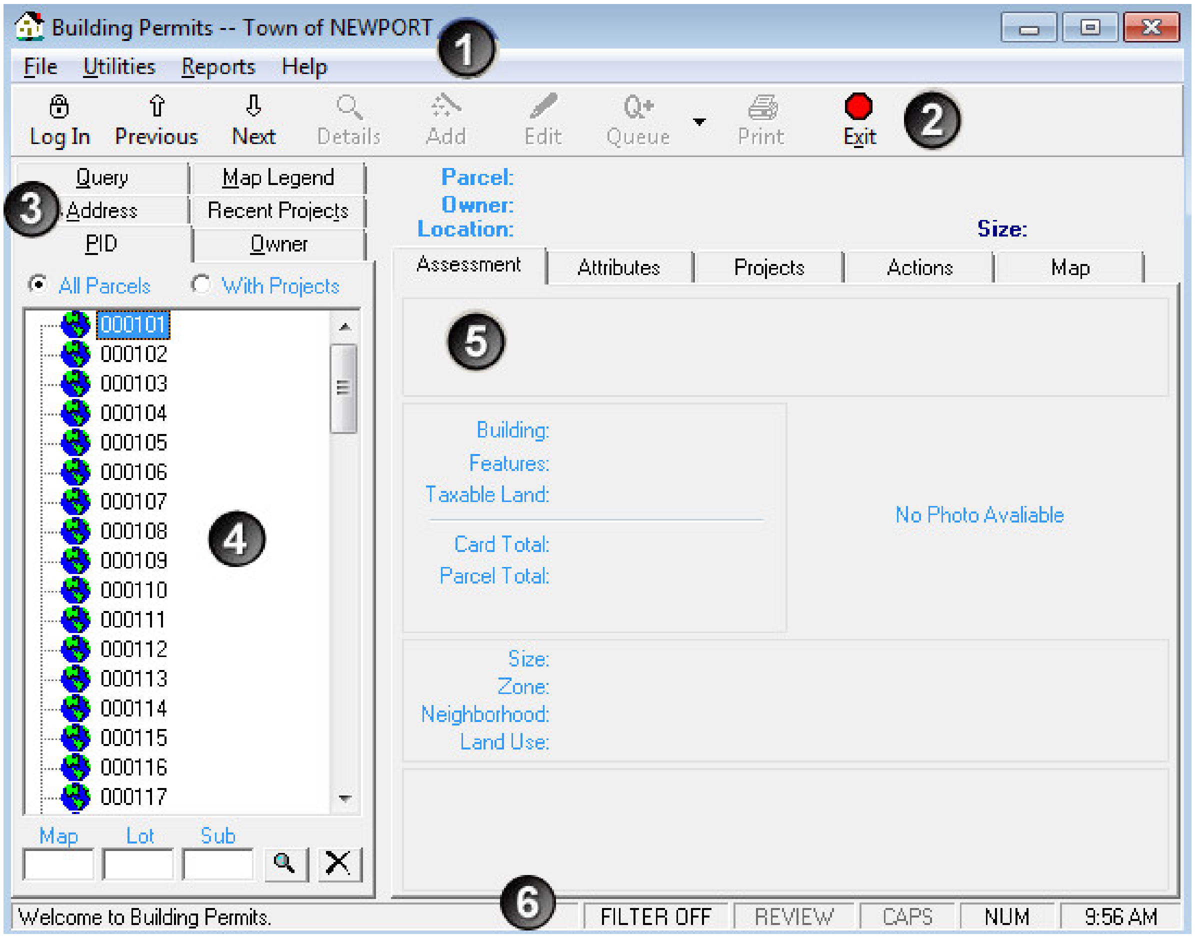
Suppress Leading Zeros -- Check this box to suppress the leading zeros in each section of the customized PID (e.g. "1/2/3" instead of "000001/000002/000003").

Pad Separators with Spaces -- Check this option to add a space before and after each separator, making it easier to read in some instances (e.g. "1 / 2 / 3" instead of "1/2/3").

Starting Avitar Building Permit

To start the application, simply double click on the desktop icon and the startup splash screen will appear. The program opens in public access mode. This means you can view any information, but will be unable to add, edit or change any data until you login.

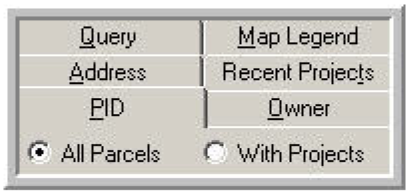
Building Permits Main Window



1. Menu Bar
2. Toolbar
3. Data Access Tabs
4. Record Tree
5. Information Display Tabs
6. Status Bar

Data Access Tabs

Each Data Access Tabs provide you with several different ways in which you can search, identify, and access records and each is discussed below. However, it is important to note the two radio buttons, All Parcels and With Projects which affect how the Record Tree displays its data; by Address, PID and Owner access tabs as follows:



All Parcels means that all parcels in the assessing database will be displayed and available for review.

With Projects means only those parcels that have Projects associated with them will be displayed.

PID Tab

The PID data access tab enables you to select parcels by Map and Lot. To do so, select the Map number from the first level of the tree view. The Map number will expand to display the parcels on that map. Choose the desired parcel by selecting its Lot and Sub Lot number. Alternatively, enter the Map, Lot, and/or Sub Lot numbers in the search text boxes at the bottom of the tab and press the magnifying glass symbol. If any match is found, the parcel will be displayed. You may select the X button to clear the search text boxes.

You can view information by PID, (for all parcels in town or only those with open projects), owner, address (property location), by recent projects, and by use of the query.

Owner Tab

The Owner tab contains a tree view of the alphabet, as well as a Find text box. As with the PID search, you can select the first letter of the last name and all owners will appear for you to scroll through and select. Otherwise, go to the Find box at the bottom of the list and start typing the owner's last name, the system will attempt to display the name as you type. When you see the name, click on it and the record will appear to the right.

Address Tab

The Address tab contains a tree view of street names within the town, as well as a Find text box. Within the tree view, you can select a street and a breakdown of street numbers displays. Select the number and the data of the location is displayed to the right. Here again, you can type the name of the street in the Find box and the system will locate the street for you. Then click the street for a list of street numbers.

Recent Projects Tab

The Recent Projects tab contains a list of recent Projects that are displayed by Project name. Scroll and select the Project you are looking for or find a Project by entering the Permit # or the Inspection # in one of the Find boxes at the bottom of the list. Enter the number and click the **Find** button.

You can also change the list display by clicking the drop-down list box on the right end of the List By field. This will display the options: Project name, PID, Owner and Construction Type. Clicking any one of them will arrange the list accordingly to help you find the project you want.

Query Tab

The Query tab is used to search the Building Permits database using the many different data elements of both the Building Permits system and the Assessing system. Click the Query tab and the left part of your screen changes similar to below. Depending on the table you selected from the Table drop-down list box, you will get different data elements to use in your query. The Permits table is shown here. Other tables to select from include Projects, Inspections, Documents, Assessing, Post-Its, Parcel Attributes, Water, Septic, and Actions.

Select a Field to Query

Once you have selected a Table on which to base your query, the available fields for that Table will populate the left column of the query grid; from here locate the field for which you want to add a query condition to find a record or group of records.

Choose an Operator

Within the "Oper" column of your query field's row, you will need to select the appropriate operator from the drop down list. These options will vary depending on the field type as follows:

Numeric Fields:< Less Than
<=Less Than or Equal To
=Equal To
>Greater Than
>=Greater Than of Equal To
<>Not Equal To

Alpha Numeric Fields: Like and Not Like

- **Like:** Enables you to compare data in an alpha numeric field by entering the exact value you wish to match or even just a pattern to be matched. For example, selecting Owner LIKE RANDALL would return only parcels where the owner value is "RANDALL." Or alternatively, you could use a wildcard character (the percent symbol) to search for values that match a certain pattern. For example, Owner LIKE RAN% would match all values beginning with RAN. Owner LIKE %Ran% would find any name that contained the string "Ran" anywhere in it. There is a lot of flexibility here, so with a little imagination you should be able to find almost anything.

- **Not Like:** This is just the opposite of LIKE and can also be used with complete values or just patterns with wildcards. Using the earlier example, Owner NOT LIKE RAN% would match "RASMUSSEN" but not "RANDALL" or "RANFORD."

- **True/False Fields:** The value maintained in Boolean (True/False) fields is either True or False, therefore the equals operator is the only operator needed to query such fields.

- **And** - means that all criteria of each query field must be true for the record to be included in the resulting record set.

- **Or** - means that if any one of the query fields is true or meets the criteria, the record will be included in the resulting record set.

If you have selected 2 or more fields to query at the same time, you will need to click on the appropriate "radio" button by the "Join with" label. You have two options, And or Or buttons and they will have very different effects. In our opinion, it is best to query no more than two fields at a time. The system is designed so that once you create a record set for a query, you can then query that record set with a new query to further refine your records. You can also query the file again and add that resulting record set to your previous queried record set.

If for any reason you are having a problem here and can't quite get the results you are looking for, give us a call and we will be glad to help. Software Support 603-798-4419.

Map Legend Tab

If your Building Permit system includes the optional Map functionality, you have the ability to display digital map files within your Building Permits system. These maps enable you to query and create town-wide maps that add a whole new dimension to your Permits data. The Map Legend tab contains labels and display options that relate to the map itself. To learn more about the map functions, refer to the special Map section at the end of this manual. If you do not have the digital maps enabled your Map Legend tab will be blank.

Logging In

In order to browse most parcels and permit information, you do not need to log in. However, to edit information and to perform most tasks such as printing reports, you will need to log in using the username and password you were given. Until you log in, most of the items on the toolbar and menus will be disabled.

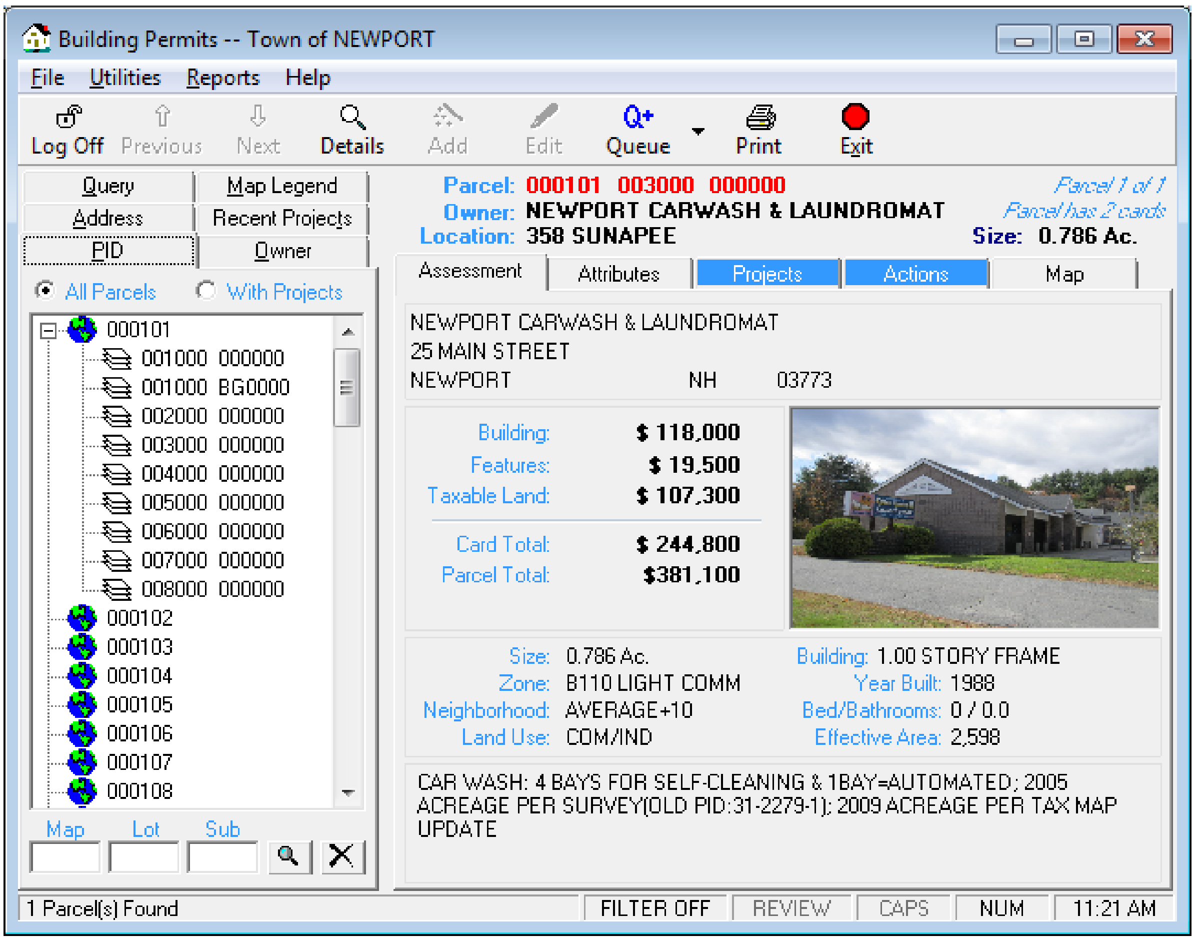
To log in, press the **Log In** button located on the toolbar across the top of the main window. You will be prompted to enter your username and password. Keep in mind that passwords are case-sensitive, such that "ABCDE" is not the same as "abcde." After successfully logging in, you will notice many of the toolbar buttons and the drop down items will be enabled depending on the access level associated with your username. Also, notice that the Log In toolbar button now says Log Off. When you are done editing records or printing reports, you can press the **Log Off** button to prevent further changes to the records, should you leave your desk or alternatively, you can just exit the system using the **Exit** toolbar button.

Information Display

Once you have selected a parcel or parcels using the Data Access Tabs, information relating to those parcels and any projects that may exist on those parcels will be displayed on the right side of the main screen.

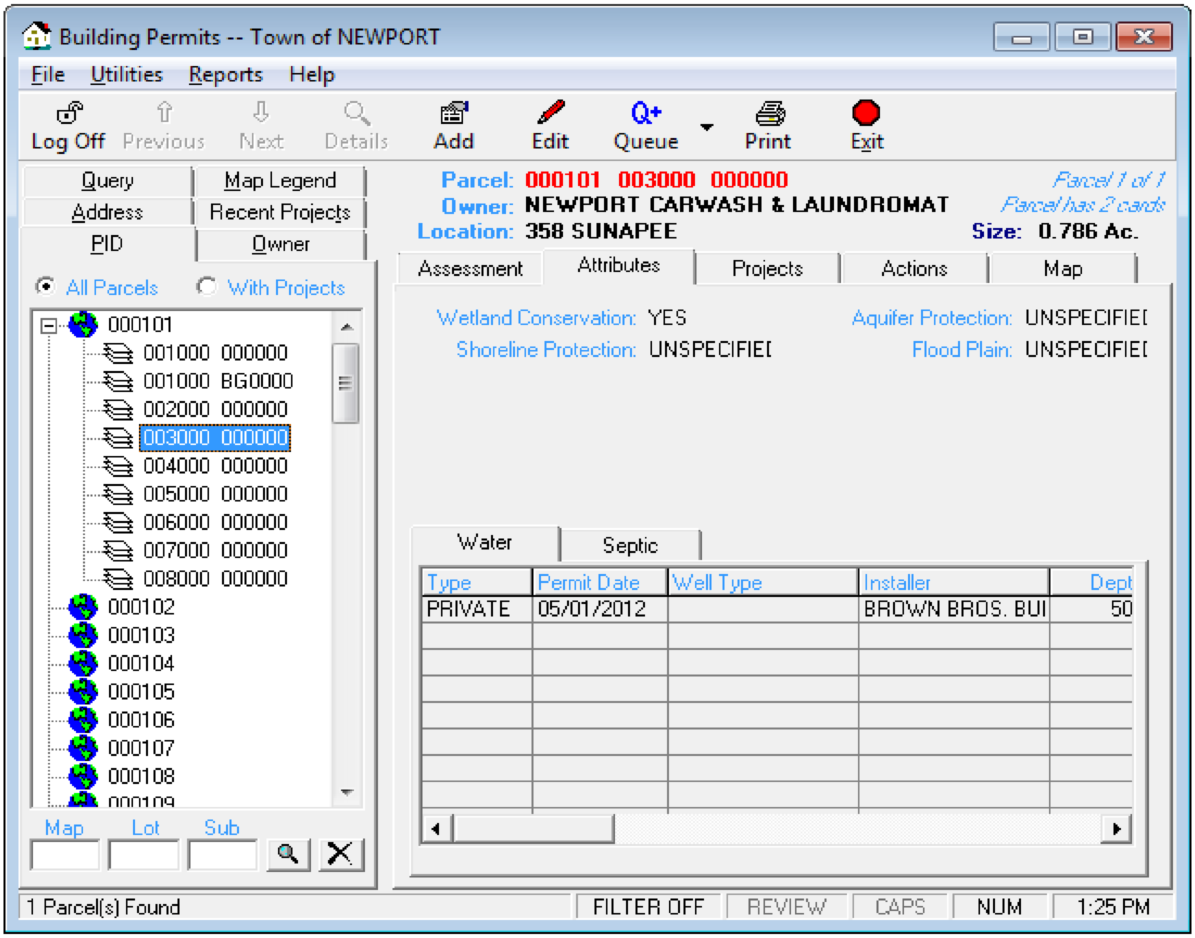
Assessment Tab

The Assessment tab contains information directly from the Assessing database, including things like owner name, owner address, building info, building picture, whether the parcel is in current use and any notes regarding the property. Changes made within the Assessing database will automatically appear in the Permits system the next time the parcel is displayed. When this tab is active, the **Details** icon on the toolbar becomes active. This toolbar icon displays more detail from the assessing database for review. If you click on the Details icon, a new window appears giving you five tabs to open details for the Land, Building, Sketch, Photo, and Features.



Attributes Tab

The Attributes tab essentially combines elements that describe the current parcel that are maintained within the Building Permits database (as opposed to within the Assessing database) and that are not Projects or Actions. This includes the Water and Septic information, which is displayed in a grid that presents detailed information, as well as the Yes/No/Unspecified values for the standard Parcel Attributes (i.e. Wetland Conservation, Shoreline Protection, Aquifer Protection, and Flood Plain). In addition, the Attributes tab will display expanded and any customized Parcel Attributes.



Add Parcel Attribute on Attributes Tab

The Attributes tab includes the following standard parcel attributes with a corresponding Yes/No field:

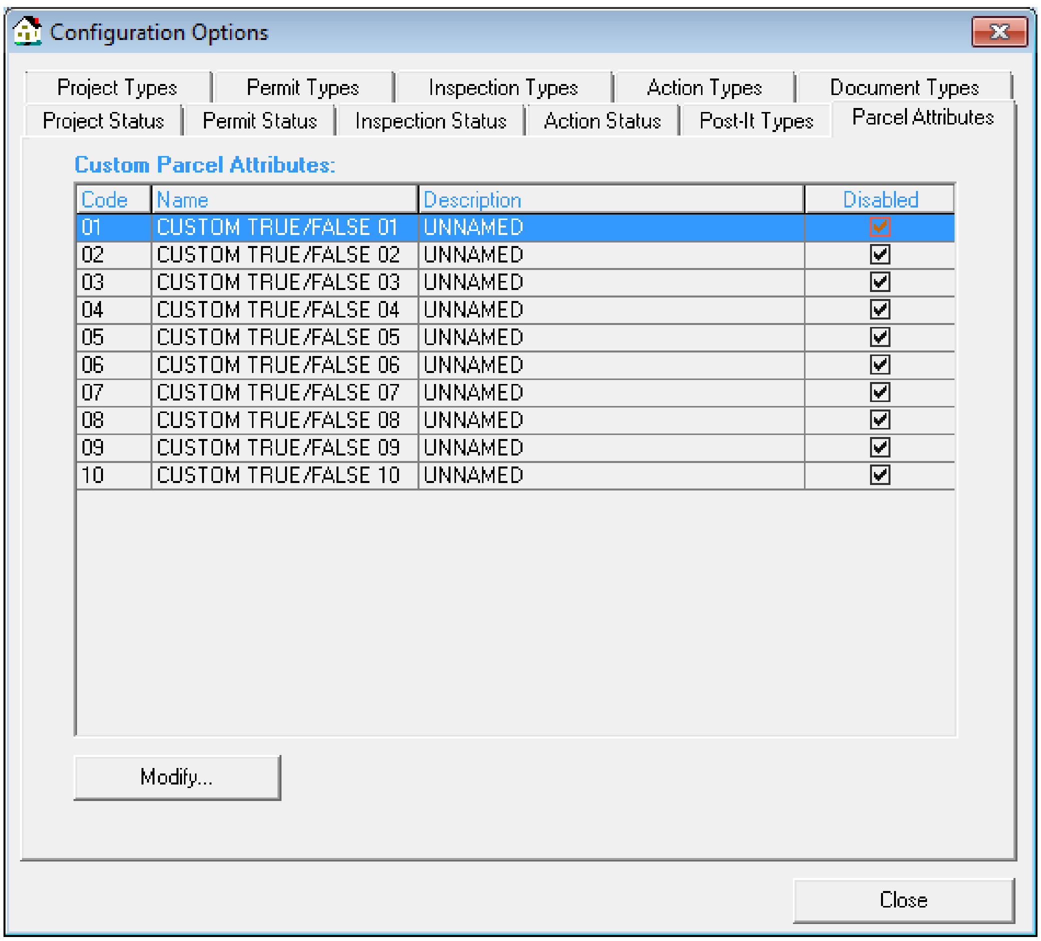
- Wetland
- Shoreline Protection District
- Aquifer Protection District
- Flood Plain

To add a parcel attribute, select **Edit** from the Attributes tab and use the corresponding radio buttons **Yes**, **No**, and Unspecified to make your selections. If there attributes you'd like to use that are not listed above, you can configure and use your own Parcel Attributes for up to ten categories that conform to the Yes/No/Unspecified format.

Customize Parcel Attributes

You can configure and use your own Parcel Attributes for up to ten categories that conform to the Yes/No/Unspecified format. For example, parcels may be within a conservation or historical district within town that dictates that owners must satisfy additional requirements in order to receive approval. One simple step you might consider would be to configure a custom Parcel Attribute so you could take the time to flag the affected parcels once so that in the future you can easily identify them by referring to the Attributes tab.

To utilize one or more of the ten customizable Parcel Attributes, you first need to name it and enable it. To do so, select **Utilities | Configuration Options | Parcel Attributes**. Unlike with many other configuration categories, the ten customizable Parcel Attributes will already exist in your system; you simply need to name and enable one for each category you wish to use. Select the first unused Parcel Attribute and select modify, provide a name, uncheck the Disabled box, and save your changes.

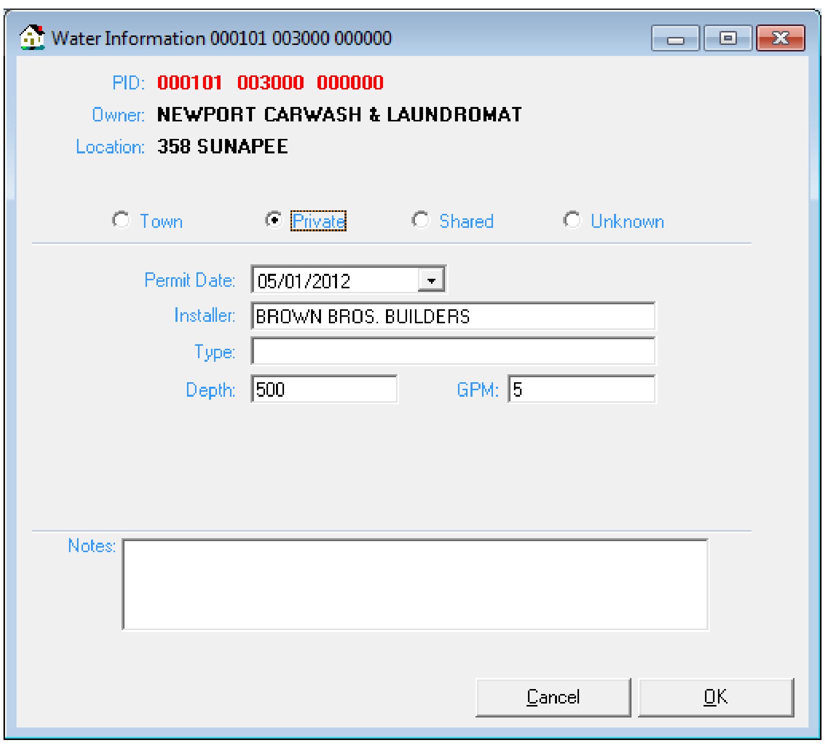


Once you have named and enabled one or more customizable Parcel Attribute you can edit the corresponding value on any parcel, just as you would for a standard Parcel Attribute. You can also query for parcels for which the custom Parcel Attribute is either True or False (i.e. Yes or No) on the Query tab.

Edit Parcel Water/Septic Info

To add water and septic information to a parcel, first select the parcel on the main screen and select the Attributes tab. If no water or septic information has been added, the Water and Sewer tabs will appear blank. If you are logged in, you can select Add or Edit from the toolbar menu to update the water/septic information. While in the Edit Parcel Attributes dialog box, select the Water or Sewer tab and then select New at the bottom.

Within the Water & Septic Information dialog box there are four choices for each water and septic description:
1. Town (i.e. parcel is on a town water or sewer network)
2. Private (i.e. a single well or septic system on the property)
3. Shared (i.e. water or septic system shared with one or more other property, like in a housing development or condo association)
4. Unknown.



If you select either Private or Shared to describe the septic system there are additional fields that you can enter pertaining to such attributes as number of bedrooms or state approval number. To save the information, press OK.

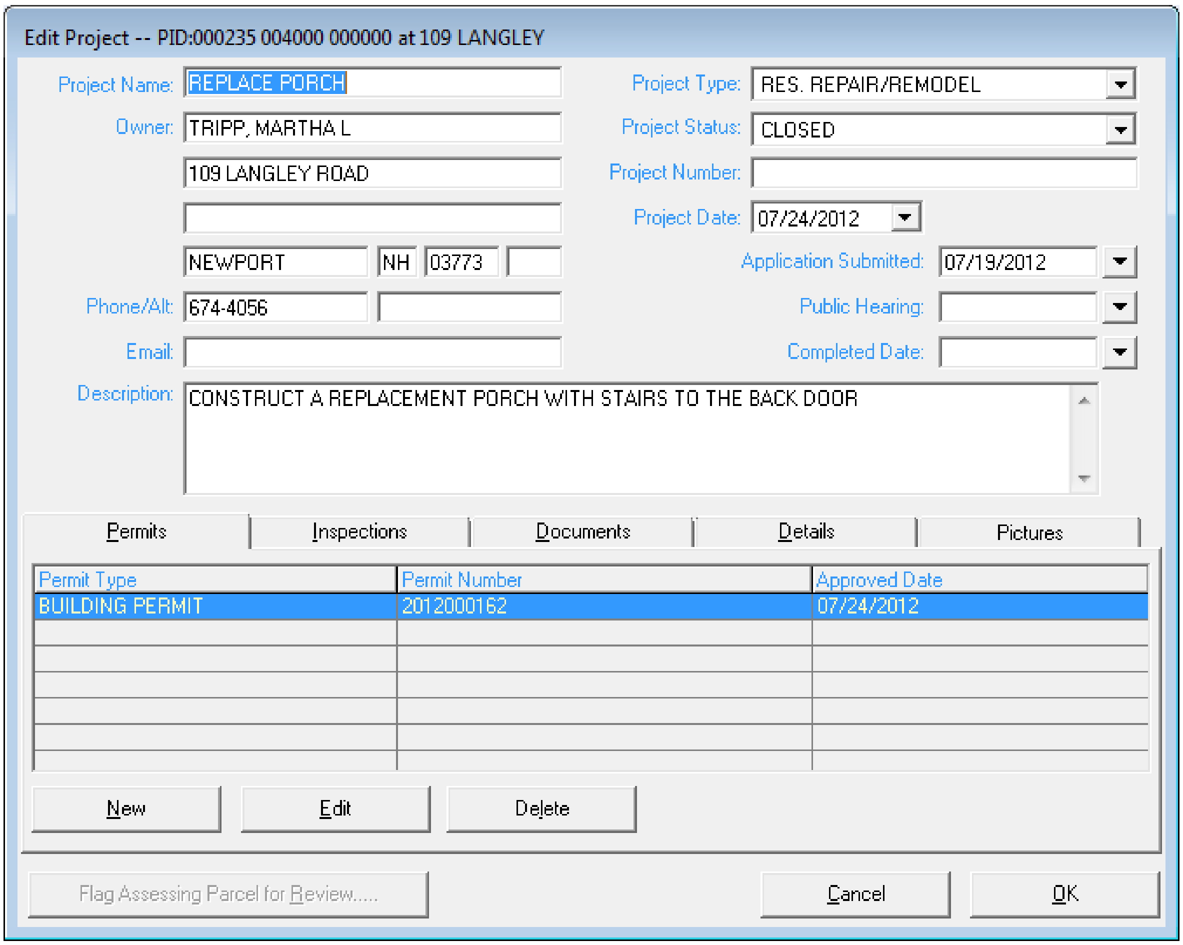
Note that whereas multiple Projects can be associated with a given parcel, you can only maintain one set of water/septic data with a single map and lot number. Furthermore, we have tried to presuppose the water and septic information that you might want to maintain based on our conversations with some of you. If you have additional information that you need to maintain please let us know for consideration in a future update.

Projects Tab

The Projects tab displays information from the chosen parcel and will display project information for any projects on the parcel. When you click on an individual project displayed in the top Project grid, the Permits, Inspections, Documents, and Details relating to that project are displayed on the corresponding tabs at the bottom of the Projects tab.

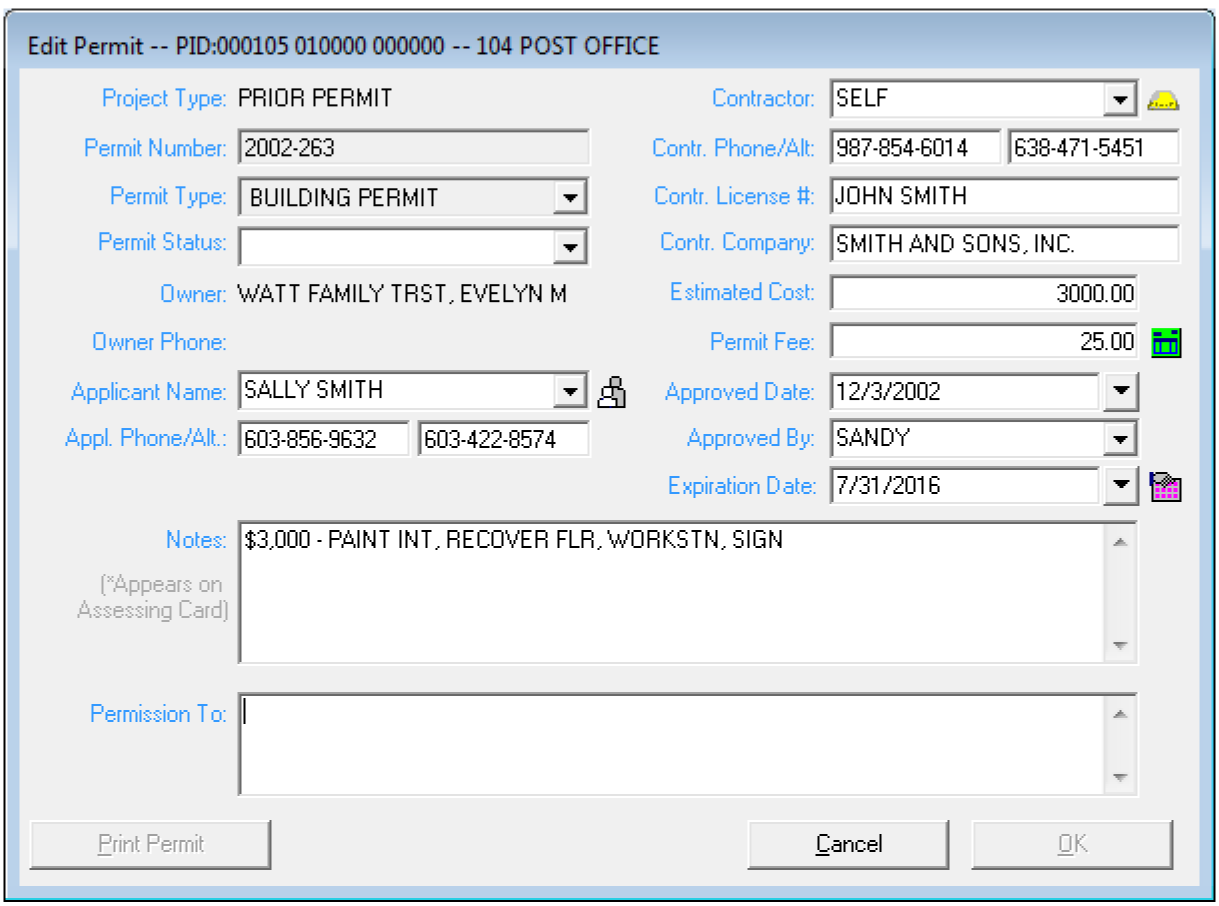
Editing Existing Projects

When a parcel with projects is selected, you may click on a project for which you want to view the current project and permits. At this point, the Edit button on the toolbar should be active and can be clicked. The **Edit** button will open the Edit Projects information screen, where the details about the project itself can be edited. Note that only the project that is selected in the top project grid is the project that you will be editing. Project information consists of a project name, owner information, the PID, location, construction type, status and notes.



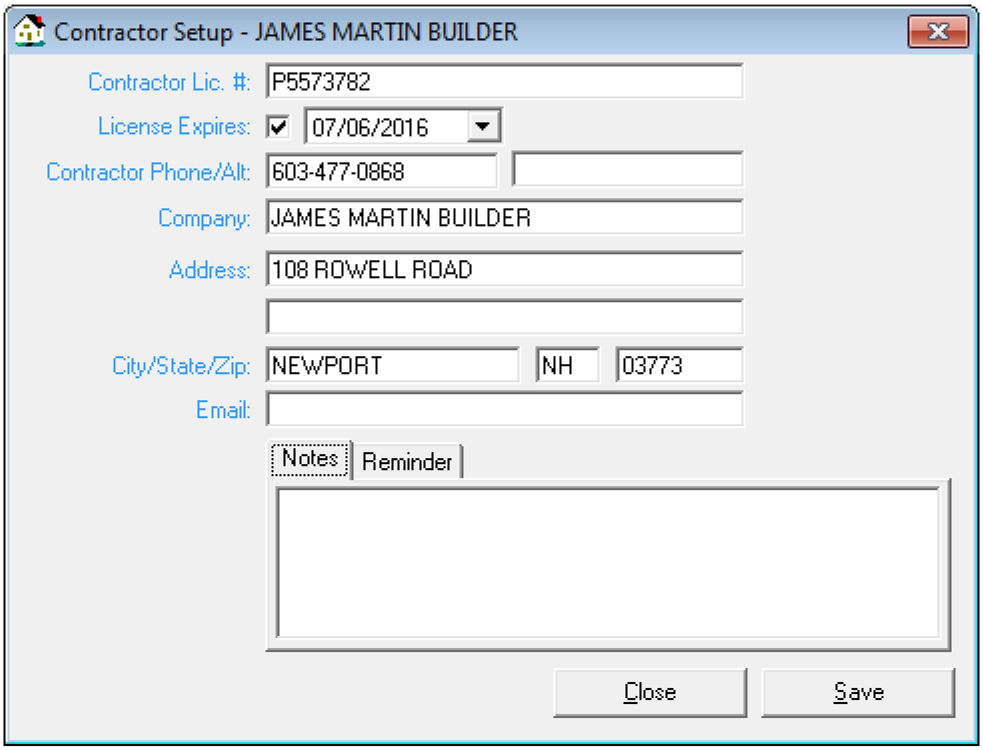
Editing Existing Permits

Once you have a Project open for editing, click on the **Permits** tab to add, edit or delete specific permits. If there is more than one permit to edit, be sure that the permit you want to edit is highlighted, then click **Edit**. This will open the edit permits screen, where information previously entered regarding the permit can be edited. Here also is where you will be able to print or reprint a formal Building Permit. This option is the same as the print option when the permit was originally created and produces a two page permit. On the second sheet (or back of the first sheet, if you set your printer to duplex) you will see a chart of inspections, which can be used by inspectors visiting the construction site to log Inspections that are completed. After closing the report generated by this button, you will be asked whether you wish to set the parcel for review in the Assessing database, so that the town's assessors will know the property needs to be reviewed. This is highly recommended on at least the first printing. Now you are ready to laminate the permit and you can add a town unique second page for your Building Department, if desired. Furthermore, if you have edited a previously created Building Permit by clicking the Print Permit, the Assessor's database will be updated with your edits.



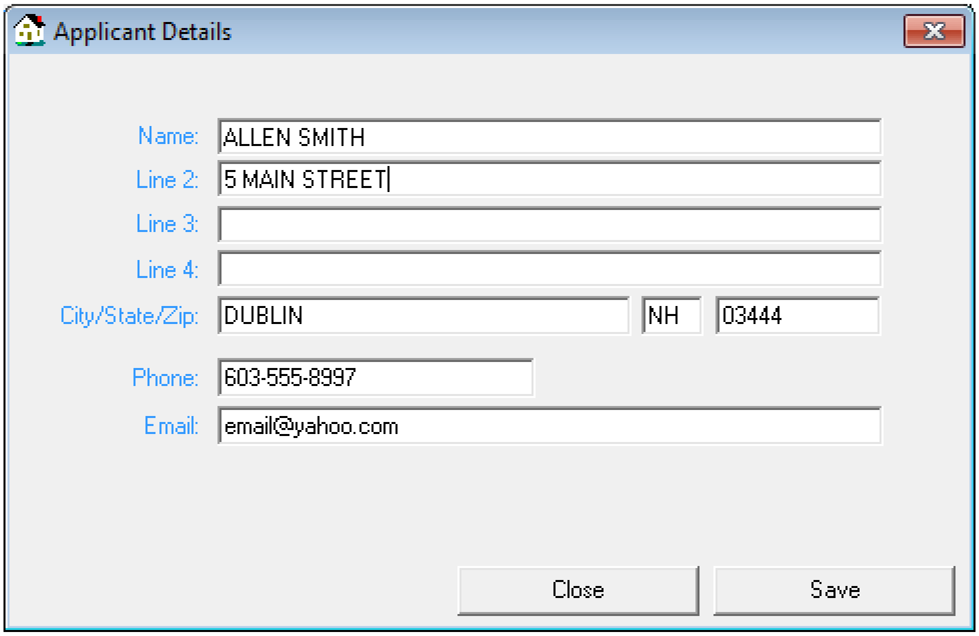
Maintain Contractor Details within Edit Permits Dialog Box

You can maintain contractor information in the Edit Permits dialog box. To add/edit a contractor within the Edit Permits dialog box, you will see the contractor icon to the right of the Contractor dialog box. If the dialog box is blank, select the icon to the right and you will have the opportunity to add a new contractor. To view/modify an existing contractor, use the drop down menu to select the desired contractor, and then select the icon to the right.



Maintain Applicant Information

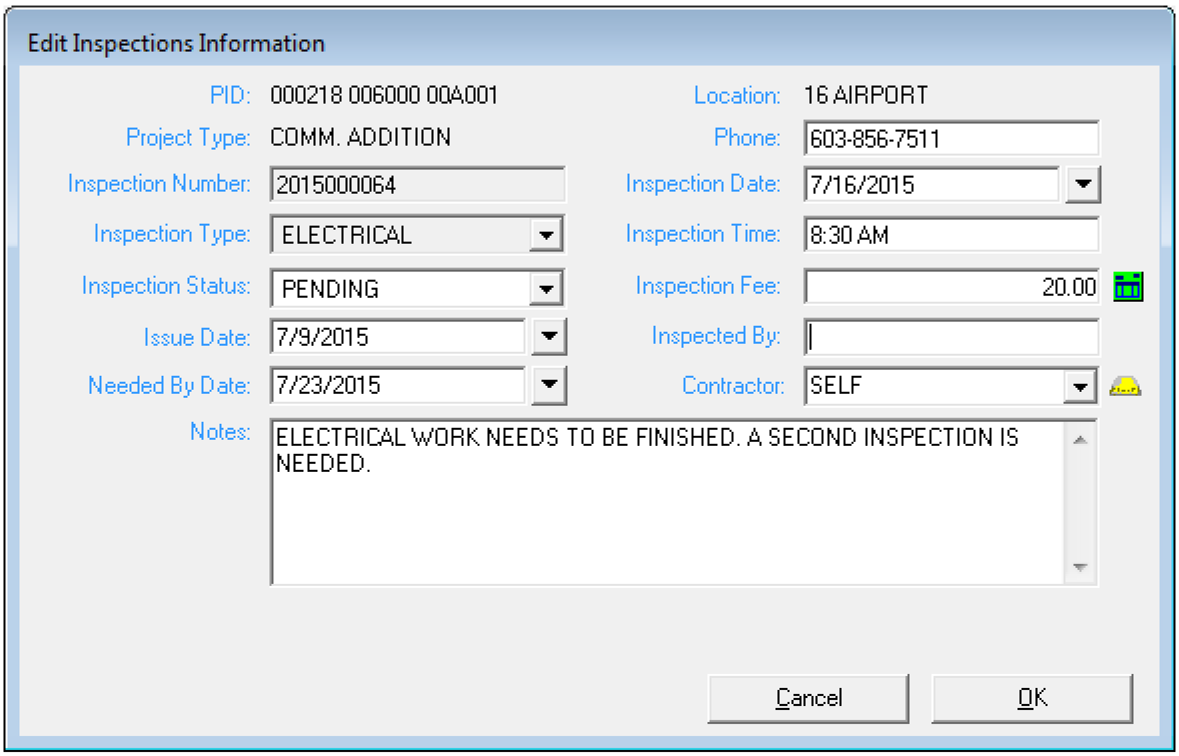
From within the Edit Permits dialog box you have the ability to maintain complete Applicant information (i.e. company, address, addres2, city, state, zip+4, phone, email) right in the Edit Permits dialog box. To view/modify an existing applicant, use the drop down menu to select the desired applicant, and then select the applicant icon to the right of the Applicant Name field. If the dialog box is blank, select the icon to the right and you will have the opportunity to add a new Applicant.


Applicant Details
Name:
ALLEN SMITH
Line 2:
5 MAIN STREET
Line 3:
Line 4:
City/State/Zip:
DUBLIN
NH
03444
Phone:
603-555-8997
Email:
email@yahoo.com
Close
Save

Edit Inspections

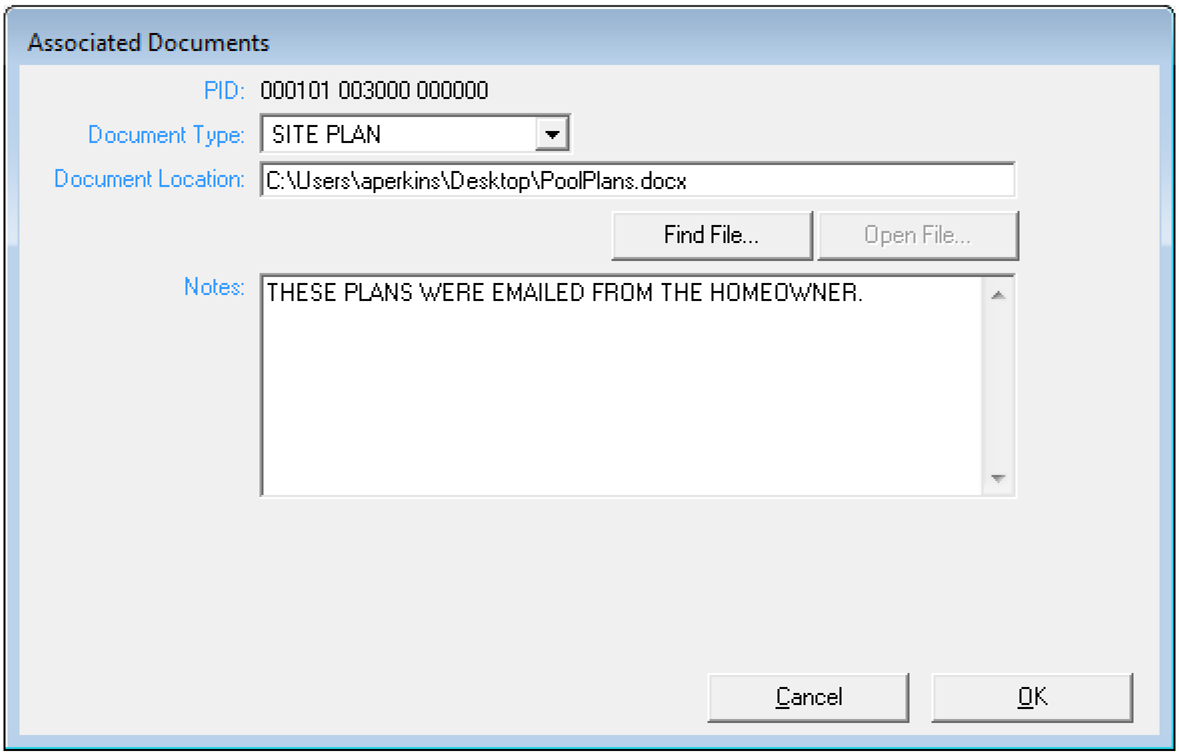
From the Projects screen, you can also select the Inspections tab and then click the Edit button to edit any Inspection information. The edit Inspections information screen displays PID, Location, Project Type, Phone, Inspection Number, Inspection Date, Inspection Type, Inspection Time, Inspection Status, Inspection Fee, Issue Date, Inspected By, Needed By, Contractor and Notes.

You can maintain contractor information from within Edit Inspections dialog box. To add/edit a contractor within the Edit Inspections dialog box, you will see the contractor icon to the right of the Contractor dialog box. If the dialog box is blank, select the icon to the right and you will have the opportunity to add a new contractor. To view/modify an existing contractor, use the drop down menu to select the desired contractor, and then select the icon to the right.



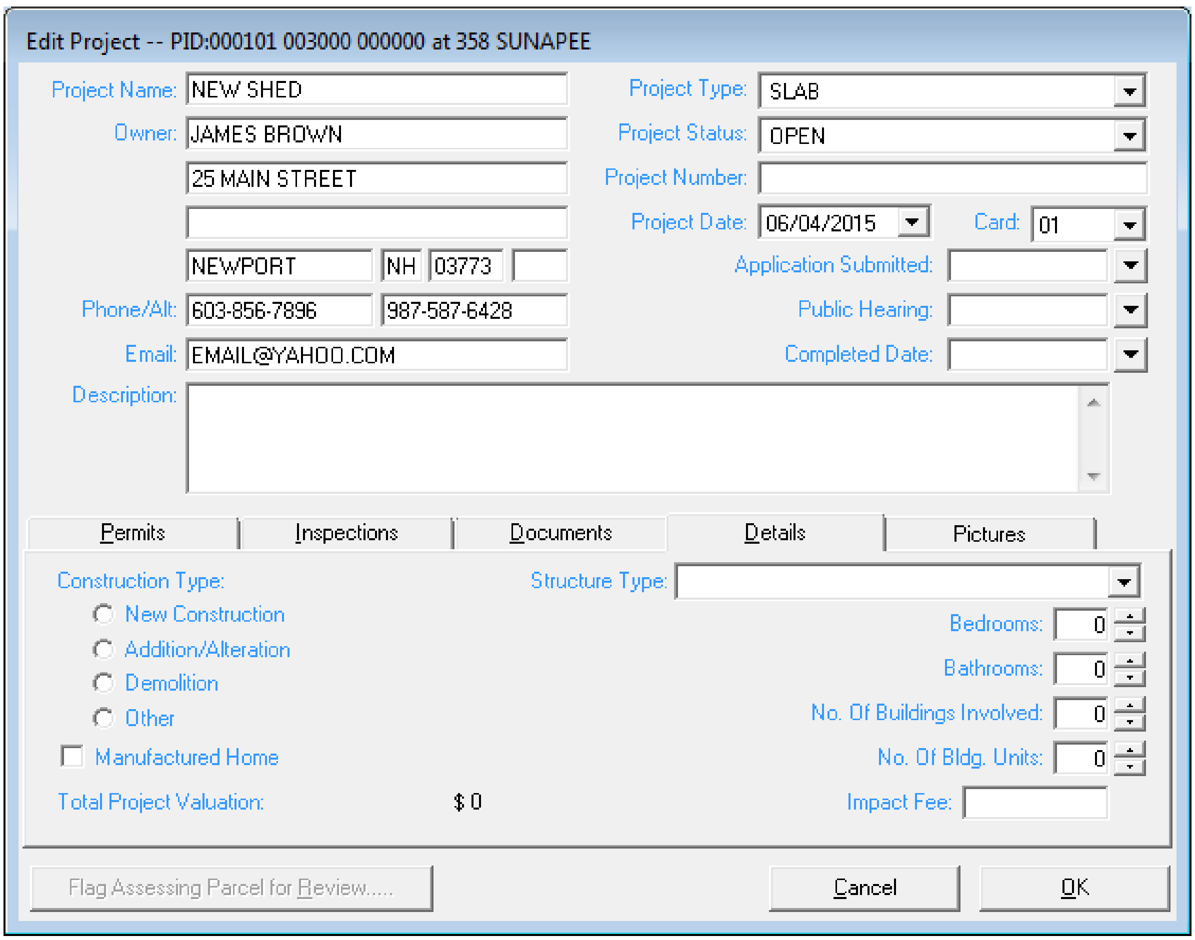
Edit Documents

From the Projects screen, you can also select an Associated Document to edit by selecting the Associated Document tab, selecting the document to view and then clicking the Edit button. The Documents screen displays the PID number, the type of document that is associated, a document location field and a notes field. The document location field is a text notation field with which to designate a physical location elsewhere within the office or the file system. The note's field is for notes that may give enough information to alleviate the need to hunt down the actual document.



Edit Details

When editing a project, select the Details tab on which you may update census data for a project and/or maintain an impact fee. The Impact Fee field is available for you to maintain separate impact fees that maybe associated with new construction distinct from the fees for any actual Permits or Inspections.If you use the Impact Fee, it will appear on both the Project Report and the Collected Fees Report.None of these Project Details data elements are required for you to manually add a new project, but you can choose to maintain this information if you think it will assist you with your reporting requirements. However, when adding Projects using the Project Wizard, the census data information is required at the final step.



Edit Pictures

To add Pictures to a Project, edit the Project as you would before. In the Edit Project dialog box select the Pictures tab and press the **New** button. Using the Browse button on the Add New Project Picture dialog box, navigate to the location of the JPEG file on your computer and press **Open**. Once the Picture is displayed, you can add a Note to describe the Picture. Additionally, the system will record the date on which you imported the image into the database.

Once you have added Pictures to a Project, thumbnail images of each Picture will display on the Pictures tab, both on the main application screen and in the Edit Project dialog box. In both places, you can hover over the image thumbnails to see the date on which the image was imported, as well as the first 20-30 characters of the Picture note. To see a Picture in a larger format, simply double-click on the thumbnail image. If there are more Pictures for a Project than can display on the tab, use the horizontal slider to display the additional images.

From the Edit Project dialog box, you can also double-click on the thumbnail image if you wish to delete the Picture, edit the Picture Notes, and/or export the digital image from the database so you can use it in another application.

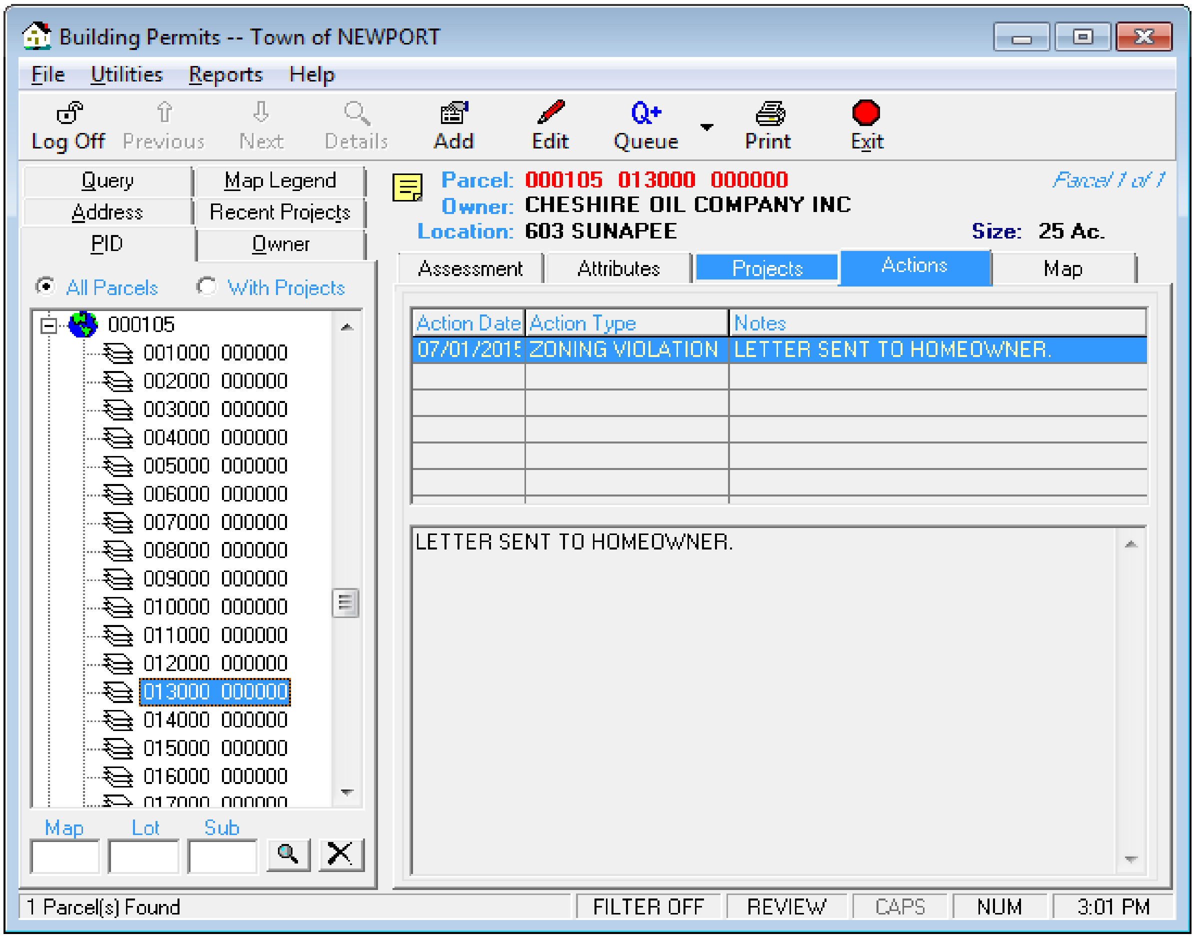
A few things to keep in mind before adding Pictures to every Project:

- Since the image files are physically stored in your database, adding large numbers of images will dramatically increase the size of your database. In and of itself, this is not necessarily a problem, provided your server and backup devices are prepared to handle the increased file size.

- In an effort to limit the unnecessary growth of the physical size of your database, the system will warn you when adding new Pictures if the size of the file exceeds 150 KB. You can still elect to add the image, but generally speaking you should limit the resolution of your images so they will not grossly inflate the size of the database.

Actions Tab

The Actions tab enables you to track Actions that relate to an individual parcel. This provides a way in which you can maintain parcel information for such things as zoning board variances, planning board decisions, etc. The intent was that these would be things relating to the entire parcel, not just to an individual project on a parcel. Initially, we have enabled you to enter a date, a type, and a description for each action. As with, permit and inspection types, you can customize the action types. The default type is Miscellaneous, but you can add new action types using the Configuration Options Setup process. The description allows notes up to 4000 characters and will accept things like carriage returns so you should be able to add fairly detailed notes as needed. To add actions to a parcel, select the parcel and then click on the **Actions** tab. If you are logged in, you can press the **Add** button on the toolbar. To modify or delete existing actions, again select the parcel and click the Actions tab. Next select the existing action you wish to modify or delete from within the Actions grid so that the action is highlighted. Then press the **Edit** button on the toolbar.



Set Custom Name for “Actions” Tab

You can set a custom name for the Actions tab as well as all references. Some towns wanted to refer to this tab as Planning rather than Actions. To rename the Actions tab, navigate to **Utilities | Town Settings | System Settings**. At the bottom of the dialog box, type in the new custom name under Actions Tab Label. You will need to restart the program in order for the change to be visible.

Associate Documents with Actions

You can associate external documents with actions. Select **Edit** while on the Actions tab to view/add/edit documents. The Documents screen displays the type of document that is associated, a document location, and any document notes. The Document Location field is a text notation field with which to designate a physical location elsewhere within the office (e.g. a drawer in the filing cabinet) or the actual location of a digital file on your computer or network (e.g. “p:\shared\buildingdepartment\file.doc”). The Notes field is for notes that may give enough information to alleviate the need to physically locate the document.

Add Status Attribute to Actions

You can add a status attribute to an Action (e.g. Open, Closed, Pending). For you to apply status attributes to Actions, you must first add status types to the database. To do so, go to **Utilities | Configuration Options | Action Status** tab. Here you will be able to add, modify, and delete any action status.

To apply a status attribute to an Action, select an existing project and choose the Actions tab. Once on the Actions tab, select Add for new action or **Edit** in the toolbar to modify an existing Action. Use the Status dropdown menu to select a status attribute.

Map Tab

The Map tab allows you to view digital map files within your Buildings Permits software, allowing you to find a property, view adjoining properties or create an abutter's list for mailing or review. To learn more about the Map functions, refer to the special Map section at the end of this manual. If you do not have the digital maps enabled, your Map tab will be blank. If your town has digital tax map files, contact Avitar about configuring your application to view them.

Toolbar Options

Previous and Next

These two buttons move you back and forth between parcels within the current record set created via the search routine or by use of the query option.

Details

This button allows you to get a better overview of a parcel as it appears in the Assessing database, it includes information about the land the building is on, the type of building, a sketch of the building, a photo if available and features of the house such as barns, sheds and pools. This is only active when a record is selected and displayed and the Parcel Info tab is selected. A new screen appears with the assessing information tabs for detail information on Land, Building, Sketch, Photo and Features. (Features are items like fireplaces, pools, sheds, barns and other structures not part of the building valuation).

Add

The Add button can look two different ways depending on whether the Add Projects Wizard is activated or not.

Active


Inactive

Edit

The Edit button will become active when you select the Projects tab on a parcel. This allows you to edit the information on the existing Projects.

Queue

This button is used to put a selected parcel into the Print Queue, where it can then be used for printing mailing labels or parcel information sheets at a later time.

Print

This button is used to print Project Information Sheets for the current record, current record set or records that you may have placed in a queue.

Exit

Exits the software.

Adding New Projects/Permits

Once you have found and are displaying the desired parcel and have verified the owner and location you are ready to add a new Project. You must add and name a Project prior to issuing any Permits. It is within the Projects Tab that you will then add Permits and Inspection information. Click the Projects tab. It will display any previously created Projects and let you know if they are open, still active, or closed (completed).

There are two ways to add new Projects:

- Add Project Using Wizard option in the Utilities menu, which if checked will automatically activate the wizard every time you click the Add option on the Toolbar. It will automatically walk you through each necessary screen to create a new Project. The wizard is only useful if you use the Project Setup option also in the Utilities menu to set up each Project type and what information will be required for each different Project type.

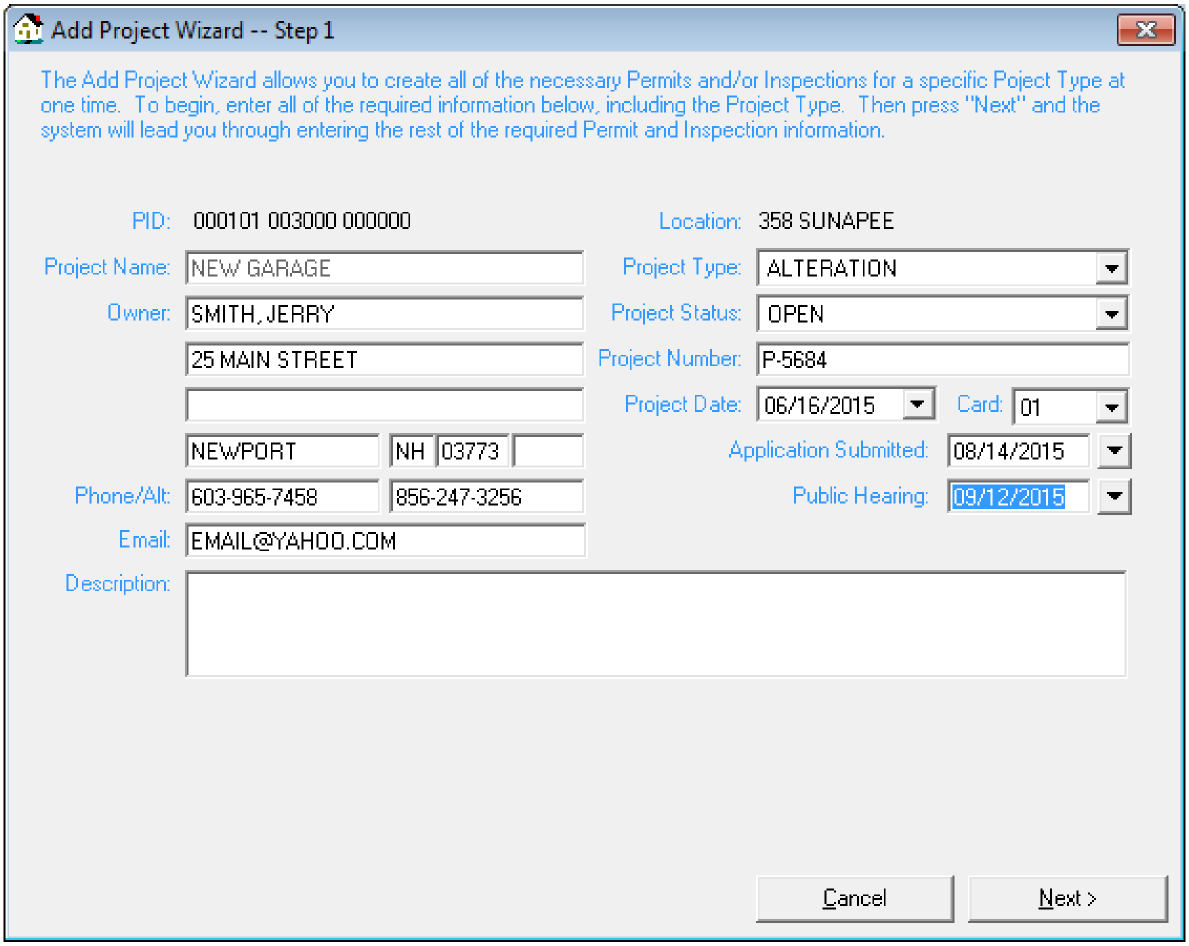
- Without activating the wizard, you will still be able to add Projects, but you will need to remember which types of Permits and Inspections are required for a specific construction type. Use of the wizard will help maintain required data for each Project and will ensure consistency.

Add Project Using Wizard

When this feature has a check to the left of it, an add button will be present on the toolbar thus enabling a walk thru Wizard allowing you to create all of the necessary Permits and/or Inspections for a specific Construction Type at one time. Before you can do this, you must have added all the Construction types you work with in your town. See the Permit/Inspection Setup option.

Adding Projects with the Project Wizard

Once you click on the Add button on the toolbar, the following screen displays:



Here you will need to give the Project a name, such as the property owner’s name, the contractor name or any specific Project name that makes sense to you and will help you find it at a later date.

The property PID and location are automatically filled in, as well as the property owner's name and address. You can edit the owner information, but the PID and location are controlled by the Assessing database.

The down arrows at the end of the Construction Type and the Status lines indicate a drop-down list box is available from which you can select options. Select the Construction Type and Status, enter a contact phone number, if one is available and enter any special notes pertaining to the Project. Once completed, click the next button.

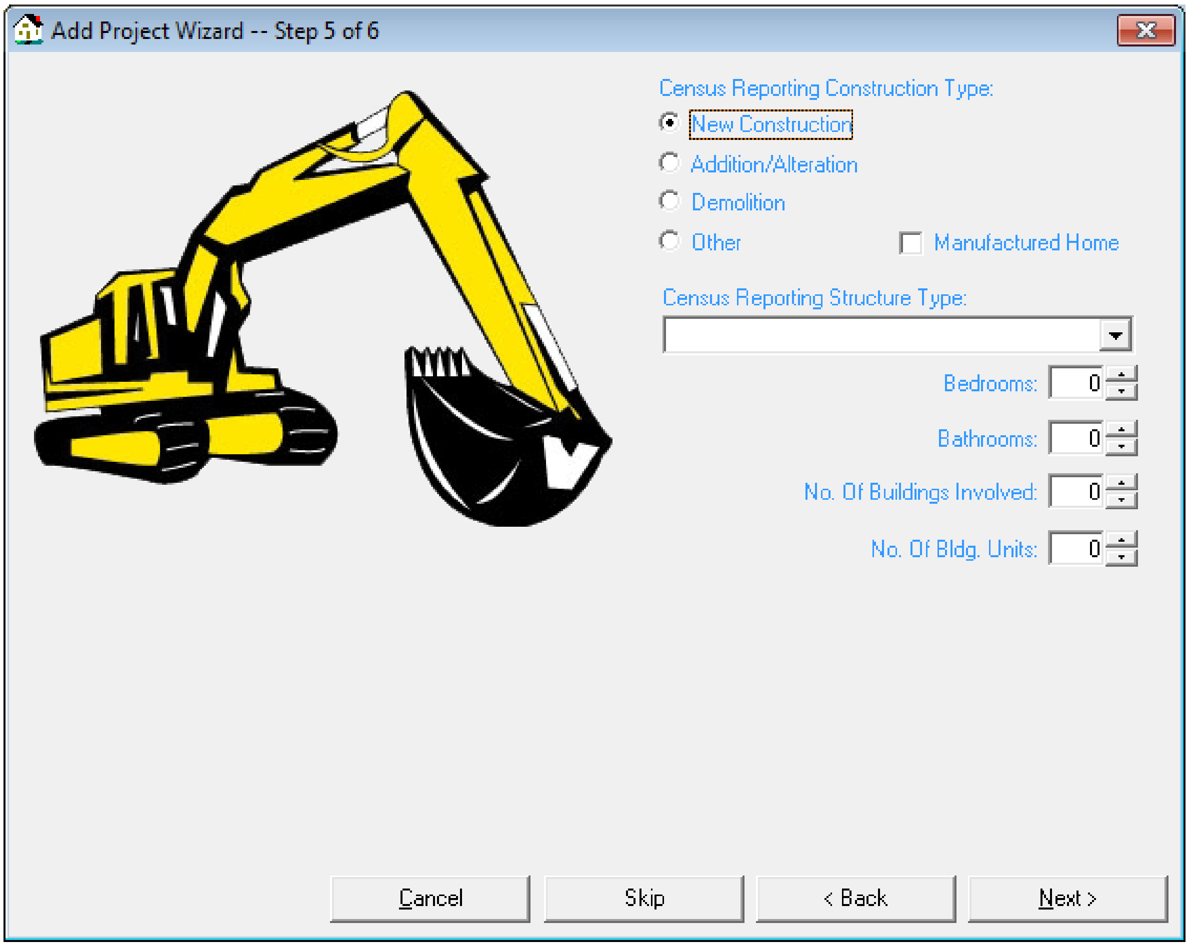
The Cancel button will cancel the Project Add Process erasing any entered data for this Project.

When using the wizard, Permits are done first and then the Inspections.

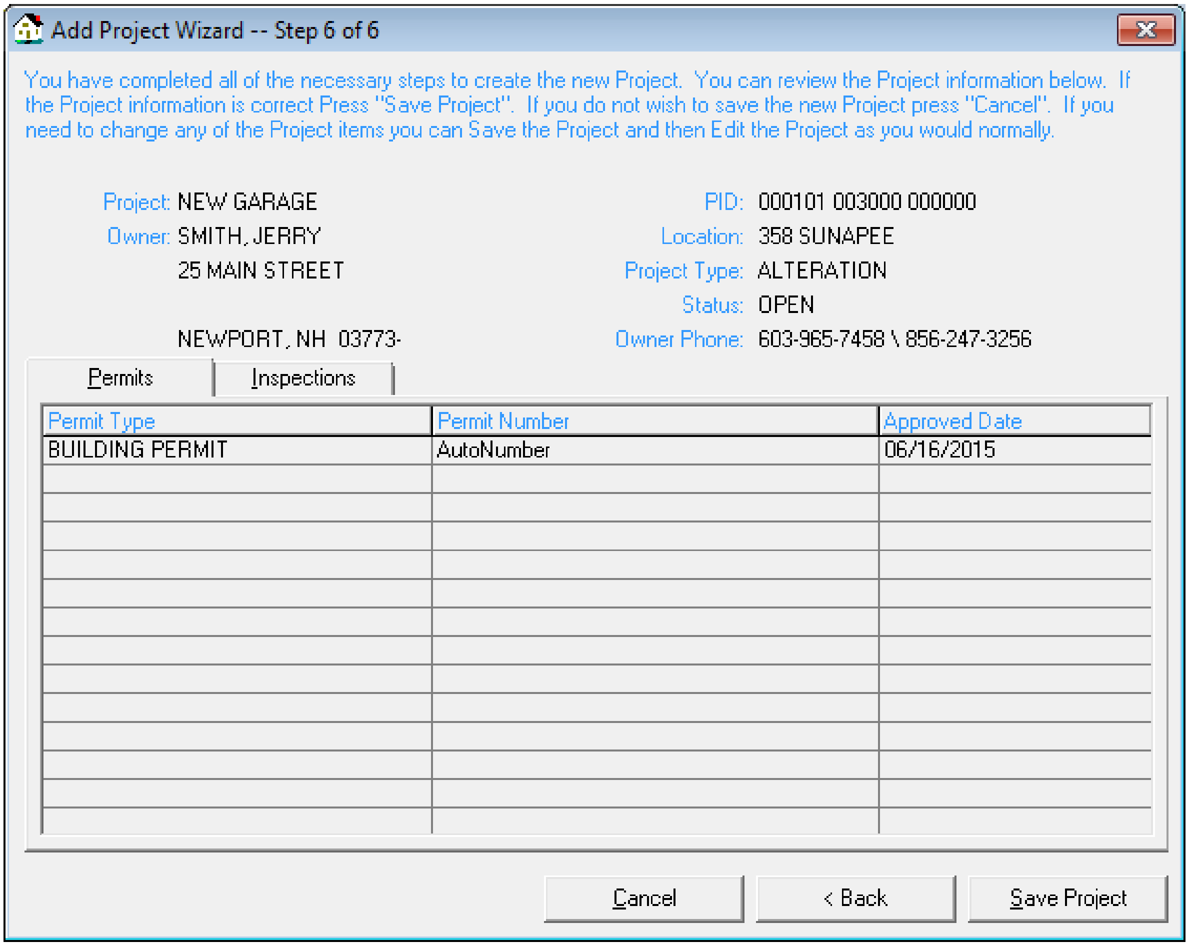
The next series of screens you see will depend on how many Permits and Inspections were required when the Project type was setup using the Project Setup option in the Utilities menu. If

“AutoNumber” appears in the Permit or Inspection number field, that is because the auto generate Inspection number option of the Permit / Inspection Setup Screen in Utilities has been activated. Otherwise, you will need to enter an Inspection number.

Enter the necessary data, as well as any specific notes for this Inspection, then click the Next Button to continue. Once you have completed all of the necessary Permit and Inspection screens, the screen to enter Census data will appear as shown below:



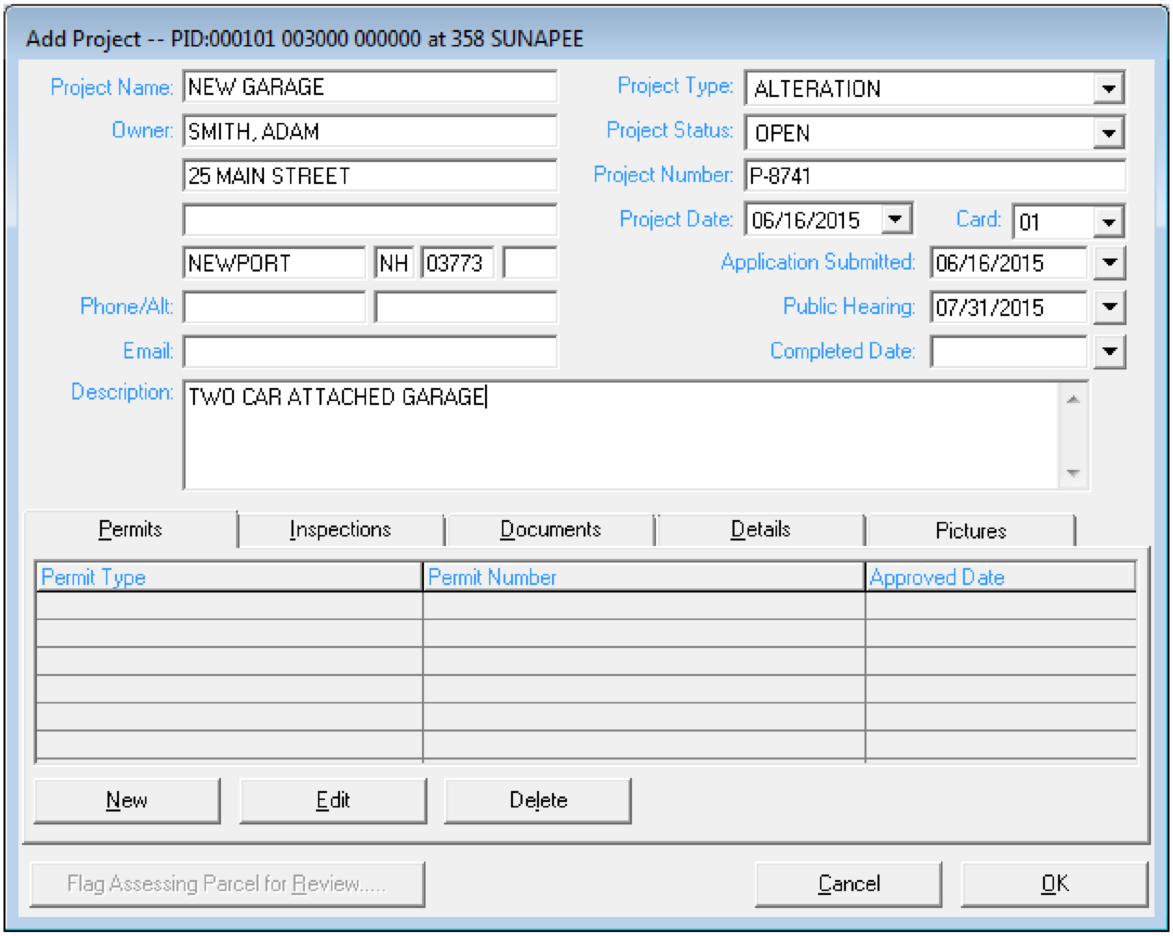
Select the appropriate radio button for the Census Reporting Construction Type then select a Census Reporting Structure Type from the drop-down menu and fill in any additional information that you have on hand. You may choose to bypass the Census Reporting Structure Type by selecting the Skip button. You can always edit an existing Project to add any new data that becomes available.



This is the last step of the Project Wizard where you should review the information and save your project. If you have made any mistakes you can select the Back button to edit any information or Cancel if you wish to exit the Project Wizard. Do not be concerned if the amount of steps in your Project differs from what you see in our screenshots. Projects will vary in the amount of steps depending on how many Permits and Inspections they require.

Adding Projects without the Project Wizard

Once you have selected the appropriate property, Click the Add button on the Toolbar. If your icon is different, then you must have the “Add Project Wizard” option activated and will need to uncheck it on your Utilities menu, otherwise the following screen will display:



The system will auto fill the PID and property location from the Assessing database and these fields are not editable. The owner's name and address information from the Assessing database will also be auto filled, but you can edit these, if necessary. You will need to select a Const. Type (construction type) and Status from the drop-down list boxes opened by clicking on the arrows to the left of each entry field. The options that display are based on the start up options provided at installation or the ones created by you through the Utilities Menu on the Permit/Inspection Setup option.

Select a Project name that is appropriate and relative to the project so it is easy find the Project via the query options or other search methods. Add a Project description as needed. Then click the OK button to save the Project. Once the project is saved, you can then select the new project and add new permits, inspections, or documents by clicking the appropriate tab and then clicking the New, Edit or Delete button as necessary.

Permits: Here you will Add Building Permits. Adding a new Building Permit and printing it will also send the data to the Assessor's database. This is an important function that helps eliminate the need to send paperwork to the Assessor's office, as well as eliminate the possibility of lost paper work between the two offices.

Inspections: Here is where you can add the necessary information for future inspections and notes or add the information from an inspection previously made.

Documents: This option is for entering associated documents and the document storage location, as well as specific notes.

Details: This is where you add census detail relating to a Project.

Pictures: Add pictures relating to a Project from digital images.

If the Permit # field is unavailable (grayed out) and filled with "AutoNumber" this means a function was set during installation which automatically creates sequential Permit Numbers. Otherwise, you will need to enter the Permit # and select the Permit Type from the drop-down list box, keeping in mind that only the Building Permit type when printed is electronically transmitted to the Assessor's database.

If you have set up contractors via the Contractor Setup option on the Utilities menu, that data will be displayed as options if you click on the Contractor drop down arrow. Fill in the other data as needed. The estimated cost field is important to the assessor and will be transmitted to that office with the Building Permit data and may be helpful in the assessment of the new building, addition or alteration. Any notes, or at least the first 50 or so characters are also sent to the Assessor's database. Clicking the Cancel button will cancel the Permit add. Clicking the OK button will save the data as entered and clicking the Print Permit button will display the Building Permit Summary to be printed, then click the print button on that screen to display the formal Building Permit. After review, close the window or click the printer icon to send to the printer.

Project Status Filter

The Project Status Filter, when enabled, will limit the display of Projects to only those which have a desired Project Status. This will allow you, for example, to limit the displayed Projects to only Projects with a Status of "OPEN" or "REVIEW" while Projects with a Status of "CLOSED" or "IMPORTED" are hidden.

To use the Project Status Filter you must first define the Statuses to be included (you only need to do this once -- not every time you start the system). To define the Project Status Filter, first select **Utilities | Configuration Options**. Within the setup dialog box, click on the **Project Status** tab and then press the **Filter...** button. Check the Include check box associated with each Project Status that you wish to see when the Filter is enabled and then press **Save**.

Once you have configured the Project Status Filter, you can double-click on the FILTER OFF panel, found on the Status Bar across the bottom of the program's main application screen. When you double-click on the panel, you are asked if you wish to turn the Filter on. Once you enable the Filter, the Filter panel will change to a blue background labeled "FILTER ON". After enabling the Project Status Filter, you will only see Projects with Statuses that match those defined in your Filter. To disable the Filter, simply double-click again on the FILTER ON panel.

A few notes about the Project Status Filter:

- The system maintains a single Project Status Filter for all users, as opposed to by user or by workstation. So it is a good idea to agree with your colleagues on the Statuses to be included in the Filter; otherwise you will be constantly overriding each other's choices when you configure the Filter.

- The Project Status Filter only affects the display of Projects on the screen. Reports are unaffected by the Project Status Filter, whether or not it is enabled or disabled.

- Each time the system starts up, the Project Status Filter will be off.

- If a Project does not have any Project Status at all, it will be Filtered out from the display when the Filter is enabled.

Permit Expiration Date

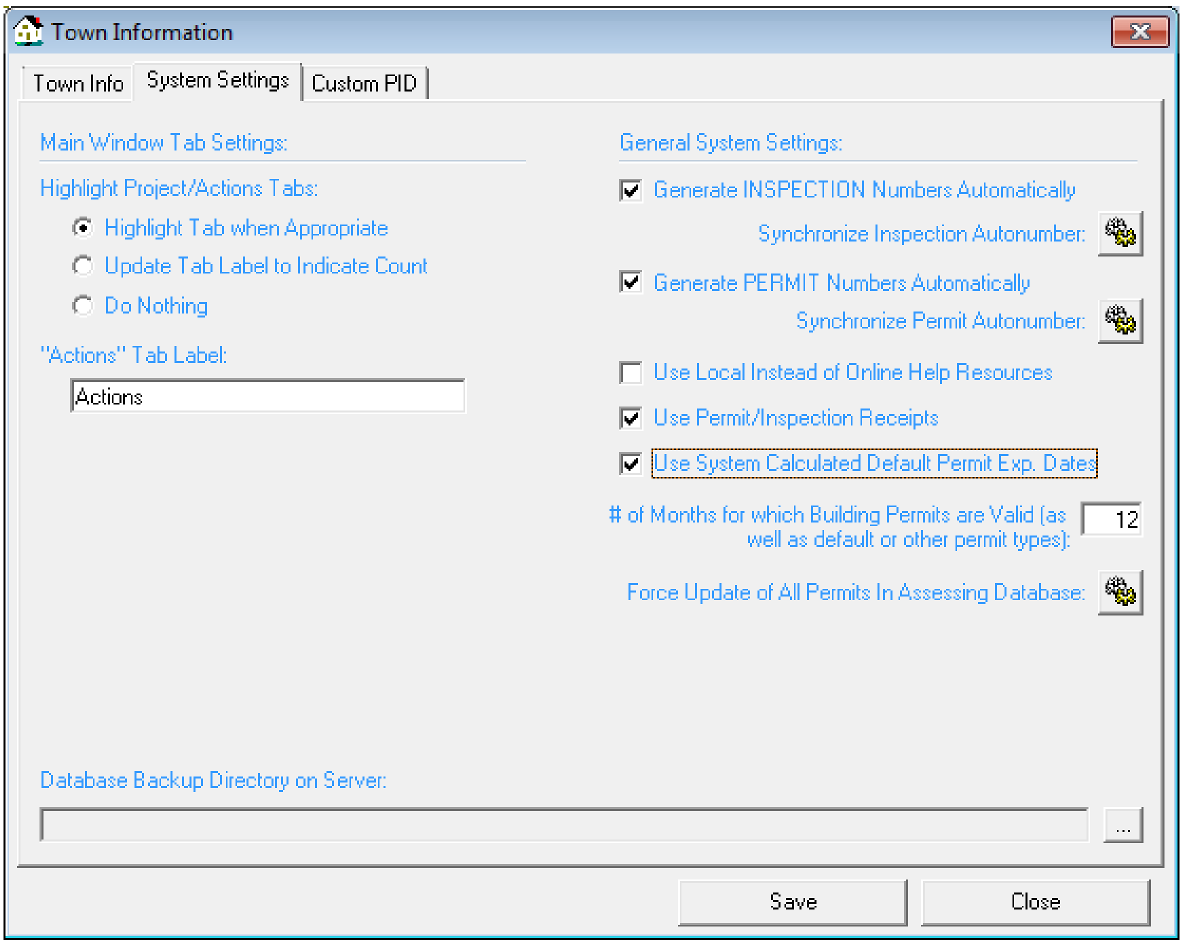
When adding or editing a permit, you can provide a specific expiration date for any Permit. To set an Expiration Date on a specific Permit, add or edit the Permit as you would normally. Either enter the date manually in the box labeled “Expiration Date” or click the corresponding down arrow to pick the date from the date picker calendar.

You can also enable a global default duration for any Permit, as well as a specific default duration for each Permit Type, so that when you create new Permits the specific expiration date can be preset. None of these expiration dates are required in the system. If you wish to not utilize permit expiration dates, simply don't use that field when entering permits.

Global Default Duration for Permits

The default duration for permits in the system will automatically set the expiration of your permit to the predefined expiration date with one click of a button.

To enable a global default duration for Permits, select **Utilities | Town Settings | System Settings** and check the box labeled Use System Calculated Default Permit Exp. Dates. Once you do, an additional text box will appear labeled # of Months for which Building Permits are Valid. Enter a numeric value for the number of months for which you want Building Permits to be valid by default.

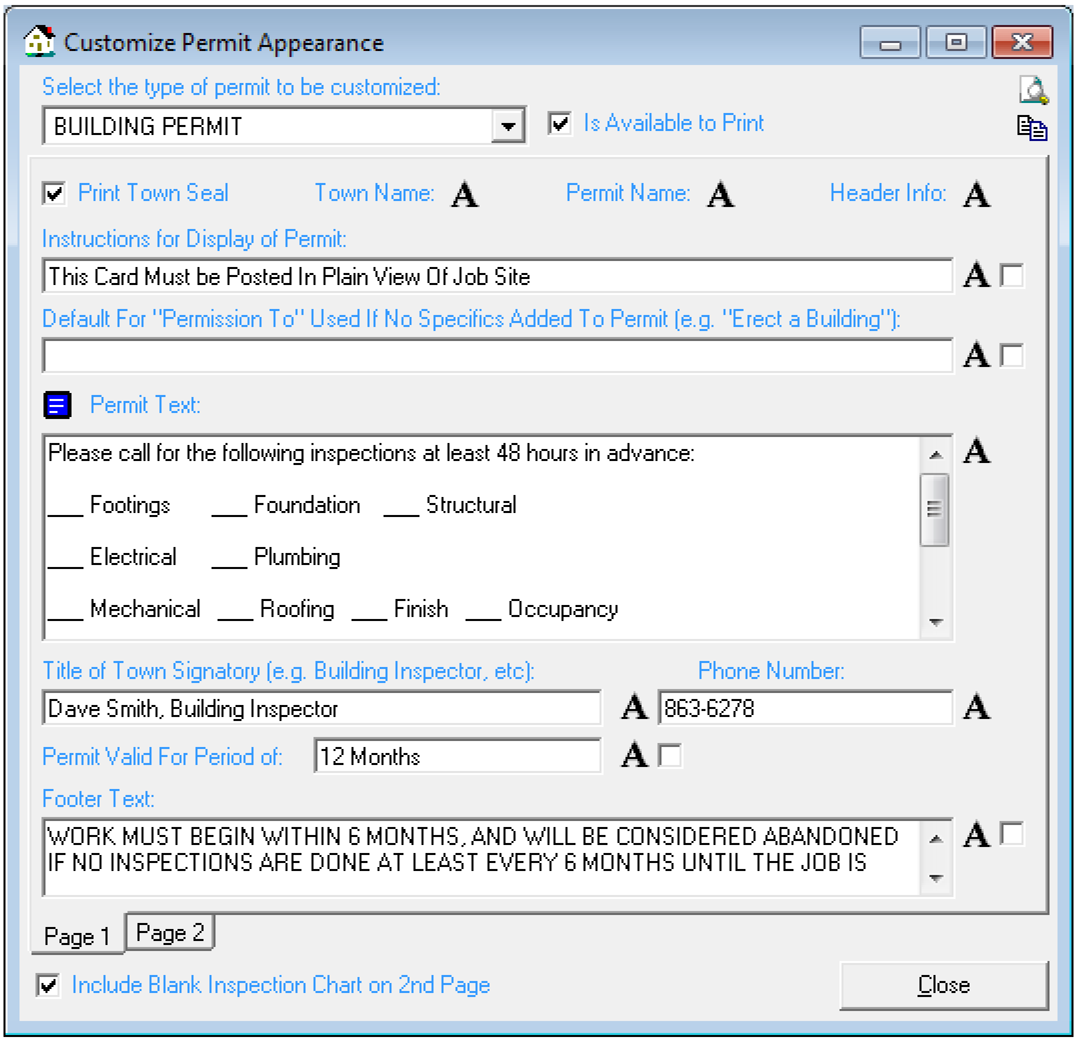


You can override the standard date on any individual Permit when you add or edit it. Once you have set the global default duration for Permits, the default icon will display when you edit or add a permit . This allows you to click the button and automatically set the permit expiration date to the predefined expiration date.

Global Default Duration for Specific Permit Types

You can set a default duration for specific permit types. For example, you can have Building Permits and most other Permit Types default to twelve months, but edit Sign Permits and Septic Permits to explicitly default to six months.

To enable a global default duration for specific Permit Types, you must first set the global default duration. Once you have, select **Utilities | Configuration Options… | Permit Types**. Within the Existing Permit Types grid, select the Permit Type you wish to edit and press Modify. Enter the number of months for which the Permit Type should be valid by default and press **Save**.



Receipt for Permit or Inspection

You can print and create a detailed Permit or Inspection Receipt whether you are creating a new or modifying an existing permit or inspection. The process of creating a receipt is virtually the same for both permits and inspections.

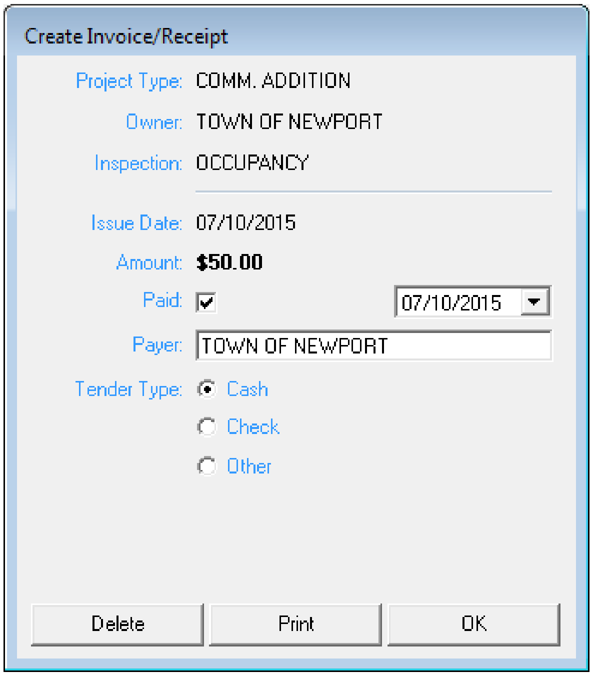
In order to use this function you must first make sure this feature is enabled. To do so, go to **Utilities | Town Information | System Settings** tab. Under the System Settings tab, check the box that says “Use Permit/Inspection Receipts”. Click the Save Button to save your changes.

To create a receipt for a permit/inspection, first select the project on which the Permit/Inspection exists. To create a receipt for a permit, make sure you have the Permits tab selected. To create a receipt for an Inspection, select the Inspections tab. The rest of the process is the same for both permits and inspections.

Select the Edit button from the Toolbar. You can add a receipt to an existing or new Permit/Inspection. Once in the Edit Permit/Inspection Information dialog box, you will need to enter a dollar amount in the Permit/Inspection Fee box. Once you have entered a fee amount, click on the  icon to the right of the Permit/Inspection Fee box to open the Create Invoice/Receipt dialog box. The Project Type, Owner, Permit/Inspection, Issue Date, and Amount will be populated based on the permit/inspection you have selected.

To print an invoice that displays a due amount for your customer, make sure Paid is unchecked and select Print. You will be prompted whether or not you wish to save this receipt as an unpaid invoice. If you select No, you will be unable to print the invoice. If you select Yes, the invoice will be saved and a preview of the invoice will be available on the screen for you to print or export.

To print a receipt that shows your customer has paid, check the Paid box. The Payer will default to the owner’s name. Choose the correct tender type below and select the Print button. You will be prompted whether or not you wish to save the changes to this receipt. If you select No, you will be unable to print the receipt. Select Yes and the changes will be saved and the receipt will preview on the screen for you to print or export.



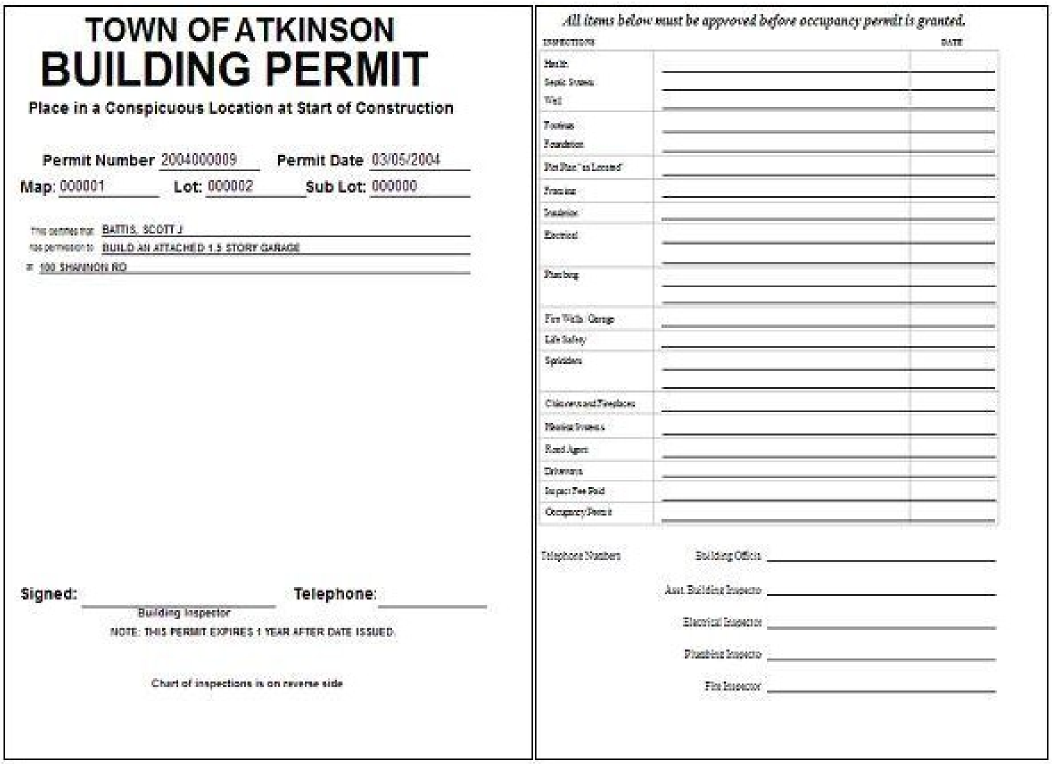
Once you save a receipt, the receipt icon to the right of the Permit/Inspection Fee box will turn green  to show you that you have a saved receipt. If you need to change the amount on the receipt, you will need to delete the original receipt and add a new receipt with the new fee.

After a receipt has been saved, the green receipt icon will display on the Edit Projects Information dialog box which produces a report of all receipts for the selected project.

Printing the Permit

Once the permit data has been saved, and the permit type has been customized, click the Edit Button and then the Print Permit Button to print a formal permit.

If printing a Building Permit (sample below), once printed you will be asked if you wish to set the review flag on the Assessing database. It is a good idea to answer yes but always check with your town assessor to see if this method works for them. Doing so will help ensure that the assessor is aware of the permit being granted.



TOWN OF ATKINSON

BUILDING PERMIT

Place in a Conspicuous Location at Start of Construction

Permit Number 2004000009 Permit Date 03/05/2004

Map: 000001 Lot: 000002 Sub Lot: 000000

This certifies that BATTIS, SCOTT J

has permission to BUILD AN ATTACHED 1.5 STORY GARAGE

at 100 SHANNON RD

Signed: Building Inspector Telephone:

NOTE: THIS PERMIT EXPIRES 1 YEAR AFTER DATE ISSUED.

Chart of inspections is on reverse side

All items below must be approved before occupancy permit is granted.

INSPECTIONS		DATE
Health		
Septic System		
Well		
Footings		
Foundation		
Plot Plan "as Located"		
Framing		
Insulation		
Electrical		
Plumbing		
Fire Walls Garage		
Life Safety		
Sprinklers		
Chimneys and Fireplaces		
Heating Systems		
Road Agent		
Driveways		
Impact Fee Paid		
Occupancy Permit		

Telephone Numbers

Building Official

Asst. Building Inspector

Electrical Inspector

Plumbing Inspector

Fire Inspector

Note: Once printed it is a good idea to laminate the Permit to make it weather proof.

File Menu

The following menu items are available from the File menu, located on the main program window of Avitar Building Permits.

Refresh Lists

The File | Refresh List menu item is used to refresh the tree view lists from the Assessor's database for PID, OWNER or LOCATION. It only needs to be used when data in the Assessor's database has changed since you started the permit application.

Startup Window Size

The Startup Window Size menu item allows you to configure the size to which the application's main window will automatically resize when you first open the program.

Map Settings

The File | Map Settings menu item allows you to configure the settings for the files displayed on the Map Data Display Tab. This is only useful if your system is configured to work with your town's digital map files. For more information on this function, refer to the Map Settings Dialog Box section of this document.

Print Setup

The File | Print Setup menu item allows you to select the printer and printer settings to be used by the program.

Backup Database

The File | Backup Database menu item allows you to backup your building permit data from your server to your local system at anytime. If the menu item is not enabled, even after you have logged in, it indicates that the backup settings have not been configured for your system. Call Avitar for assistance with configuring backup settings. If the menu item is enabled, simply browse to the location to which you wish to save the backup file.

FTP Data to Avitar

The File | FTP Data to Avitar menu item allows you to transfer data to Avitar's FTP server when your computer is connected to the Internet. The acronym FTP stands for File Transfer Protocol and it is a method by which you can transfer data from your computer up to Avitar's web server utilizing the connectivity of the Internet. In order for this function to work, your computer's configuration must satisfy several conditions:

1. Your remote backup must be configured such that you can use the **File | Backup Database** menu item to successfully backup your data to your local computer. If this function is not configured, call Avitar.

2. Your machine must have a connection to the Internet. If your connection is a dial-up connection that you must manually start, you will need to start the connection before selecting the FTP Data to Avitar menu item. If your database contains digital photos and your connection to the Internet utilizes dial-up, then the FTP function may be impractical due to the size of the database with photos. In such cases, you will need to find an alternative for transferring the data.

3. Any firewall application on your network must allow Avitar's civicftp.exe application to access the Internet. Firewalls exist in part to prevent malicious applications that may somehow get

installed on your computer from being able to connect to other computers on the Internet to exploit your machine. In most all cases, however, these firewalls can be configured to allow certain trusted applications to access the Internet. As with the steps outlined above, you may need to contact your local hardware or networking specialist in order to help configure your system.

If your system meets these criteria, select **File | FTP Data** to Avitar and then press the **FTP Data** button. The progress bars will indicate the time remaining in the total process.

Import Database Script

The File | Import Database Script menu item allows you to run update scripts as provided by Avitar. You will need a special, time-sensitive password in order to utilize this function. We will walk through this process as needed.

Exit

The File | Exit menu item allows you to close the program. Alternatively, you can use the Exit button on the program's main toolbar.

Utilities Menu

The following menu items are available from the Utilities menu, located on the main program window of Avitar Building Permits.

Delete Project

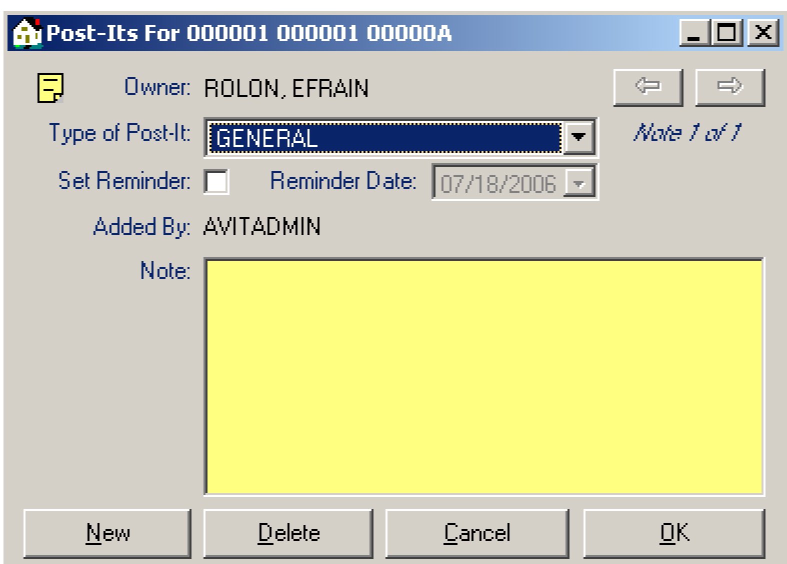
This button will allow you to delete an entire Project and all related Permit, Inspections and Documents of that project. First find and highlight the project, then use this option. A warning and chance to cancel the delete action will appear. Caution is highly recommended because once you delete the project you will NOT be able to restore the Project or any of its Permits, Inspections, and/or Documents, without restoring the entire database from a backup.

Add Parcel Post-It

This feature allows you to add a Post-It to a parcel with a quick blurb containing any pertinent information that you feel necessary to add. The Post-It will have the owner's name, the ability to set a reminder and reminder date. It will also show you who it was added by and any information typed in the notes section.

When checked, the Set Reminder option will allow you to enter a date on which you wish to be reminded. Once the date has arrived, the system will begin reminding you every time you log in that records exist with an active reminder and ask if you would like to review them. A positive response will cause all records with a reminder date that has been reached and still active to become the active record set for you to scroll through and review the Post-It notes.

This is a valuable feature that will help you remember inspection dates or any other critical dates. For this feature to work you must have a selected parcel displayed, then select **Utilities | Add Parcel Post-it**:



Once created a yellow Post-It icon will display on the main screen beneath the toolbar. Clicking that icon will open the Post-It for review, edit or deletion. This is not viewable unless the user is logged in.

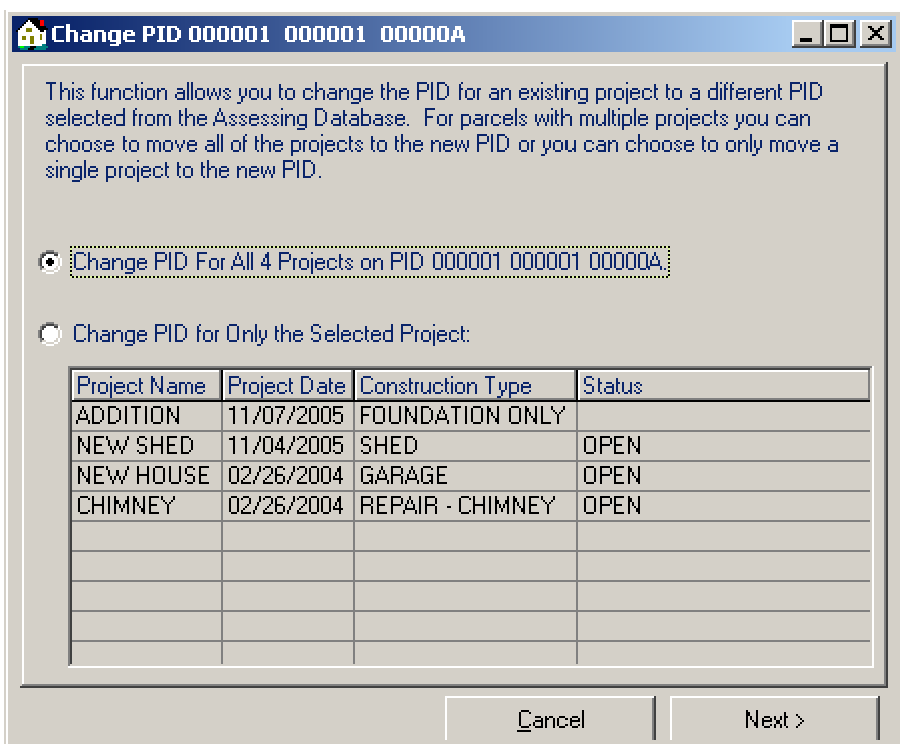
The system allows the user to choose a color to be associated with each category of Post-Its. Using this, Post-It categories could be created for each user and a color associated with each. To apply a color to a Post-It category, navigate to **Utilities | Configuration Options | Post-It Types**. Click **Modify** for an existing Post-It category or select Add for a new category. At the bottom, there is a Color field. Double click inside the color box and select the color you wish to associate with that Post-It category.

When a parcel is selected that has a Post-It, the Post-It icon visible on the main screen will display the corresponding color for the Post-it. Note, if there are multiple Post-Its categories on a single property that have more than one color, due to space limitations on the screen, this icon will be used to indicate multiple Post-It categories.

Change Project PID

This function allows you to assign this changed Building Permit Projects currently associated with one PID to a new PID. You may have to do this if a parcel in Assessing was divided splitting what was one parcel of land into two or more parcels. New PIDs are not a problem, but depending on how the map numbering is handled you could now have an orphaned project, as the once existing PID no longer exists. You would use this function, once the project was found, to change the deleted PID to the new PID.

By clicking on one of the radio buttons you can elect to change all Project PID in one action to the new PID or elect to change only a selected project. When you activate the Change PID for only the Selected Project radio button, the screen changes allowing you to select one project at a time.



Schedule Feature

The Schedule feature is designed to assist you with managing inspections and other events within the Building Permit application. The Schedule will display a month's worth of events, consolidating in one screen all inspections, events, or reminder Post-Its with which you have associated a particular date.

To access the Schedule, select Utilities | Schedule. The calendar will default to the current month, with the current day highlighted in yellow. To advance the calendar one week forward or back, use the green single arrow icons located above the calendar. To advance the calendar one month forward or back, use the green double arrow icons located above the calendar. For each day, the calendar will show any scheduled inspections or other events. If you hover over any item, a tooltip will display a brief description and any time that may be associated with the item. If you click on the item, you can see all of the item's details.

The Calendar will show the following three types of items:

1. Any Project Inspections for which an Inspection Date/Time has been indicated.

To set an Inspection Date and Time for a new or existing Inspection, use the regular Edit Inspection Information dialog. You can use the drop down arrow in the Inspection Date text box to display a month picker from which you can select the Inspection Date. Alternatively, you can now click on the "Inspection Date" label to display the Schedule calendar, showing you other items that have already been scheduled. To choose a date for the current Inspection, simply double-click on the day in the Schedule.

2. Any Parcel Post-Its for which the Reminder/Reminder Date option has been set.

Parcel Post-Its will also appear on the Schedule if the Reminder option is set on the Post-It. The Reminder option allows you to associate a date on which the system will begin reminding you about the Post-It item after you log in.

3. All Calendar Events
In addition to displaying Inspections and Post-Its for which a date has been indicated, the Schedule allows you to directly add Events that may not be associated with any particular Project or Parcel. For example, you can use add Events to the Schedule to remind you of upcoming meetings or appointments. To add an Event to the Schedule, right click on the particular day on the Schedule on which you wish to add an Event. From the Pop Up menu, select Add Event on... to display the Add Event dialog box in which you can enter any necessary information describing the Event.

There are several other items worth noting about the Schedule:

-- Entering Times: When adding a time of day to an inspection or event, it is useful either to indicate whether it is AM or PM or else input the time using 24 Hour military time. Otherwise, the system will assume the time is in the morning. Typing any of the following will indicate 2:30 in the afternoon: "2:30 p", "14:30", "2.3 p", or "14.3". Conversely, if you just type "2:30" the system will assume you mean 2:30 AM.

-- Printing a Daily Schedule: If you right-click on a particular day you can also choose to print a Daily Schedule for a single day. This will print all of the detailed information for the day's Inspections, Post-Its, and Events.

-- Displaying a Day's Additional Items: Each weekday on the Schedule can display up to four items. (Weekend days can display up to two.) Once the number of items for a particular day exceeds four, the Additional Items icon will appear in the day's upper left corner. Press this icon to display the full scrollable list of daily items.

-- Display Schedule on Login: If you wish to have the Schedule display automatically after you log in to the system, you can select Utilities | Display Schedule on Login. A check mark next to the menu item will indicate that it is enabled. To disable it, simply select the menu item again.

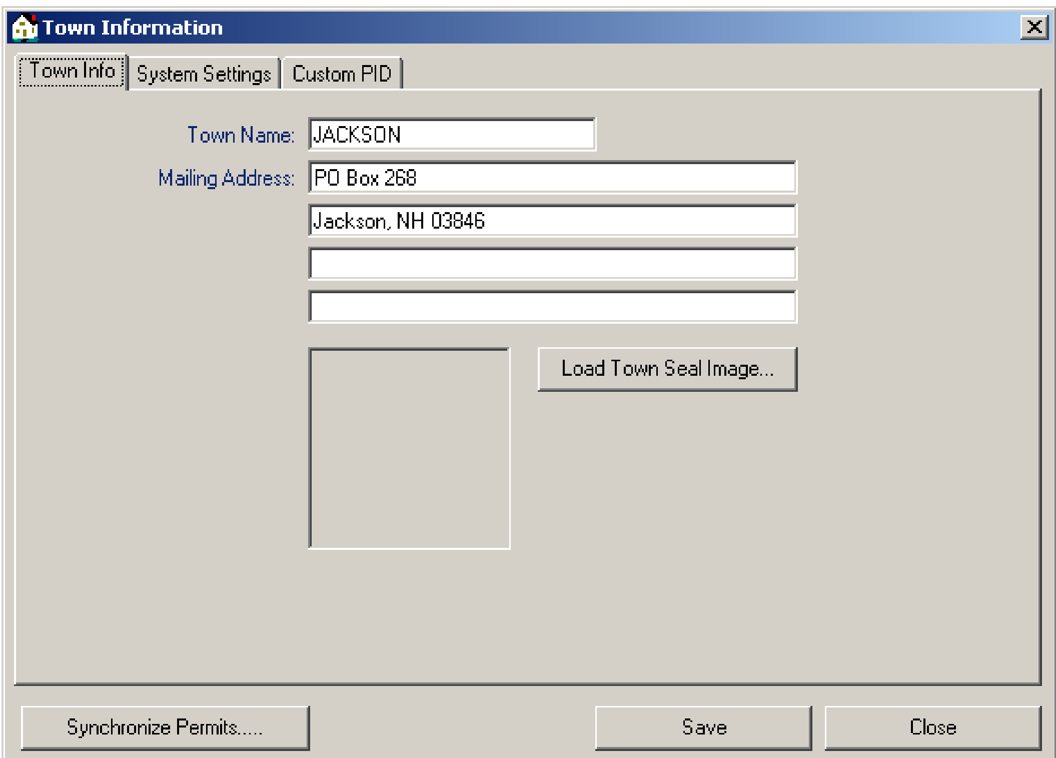
Town Settings

The Town Settings section is used to maintain all of your local information such as; town name and address, permit settings, and custom pid format.

To access Town Settings choose **Utilities | Town Settings**. The Town Information dialog box will display.

Town Info Tab

The Town Info Tab maintains the town name, address, and a Town Seal Image if you wish to apply one to the system. To view and/or update the information choose **Utilities | Town Settings** and select the **Town Info** Tab. Update the information if needed and press **Save.**



System Settings Tab

Main Window Tab Settings:

Highlight Project/Actions Tabs has a couple options for you to select. The first option is "Highlight Tab when Appropriate" which will highlight the Projects and Actions tabs if there is a Project or Action associated to that parcel. The next option is "Update Tab Label to Indicate Count" which a number will be displayed on the Projects and Actions tabs to indicate the number of Projects and Actions associated to that parcel. The final option is "Do Nothing" and no change will be made to the Projects or Actions tabs.

You have the ability to set a custom name for the Actions tab as well as all references. Some towns wanted to refer to this tab as Planning rather than Actions. To rename the Actions tab, navigate to **Utilities | Town Settings | System Settings**. At the bottom of the dialog box type in the new custom name under Actions Tab Label.

General System Settings:
This section is composed of mostly check box settings:

Generate PERMIT Numbers Automatically - Check this box to allow the system to automatically assign permit numbers.

Generate INSPECTION Numbers Automatically - Check this box to allow the system to automatically assign permit or inspection numbers.

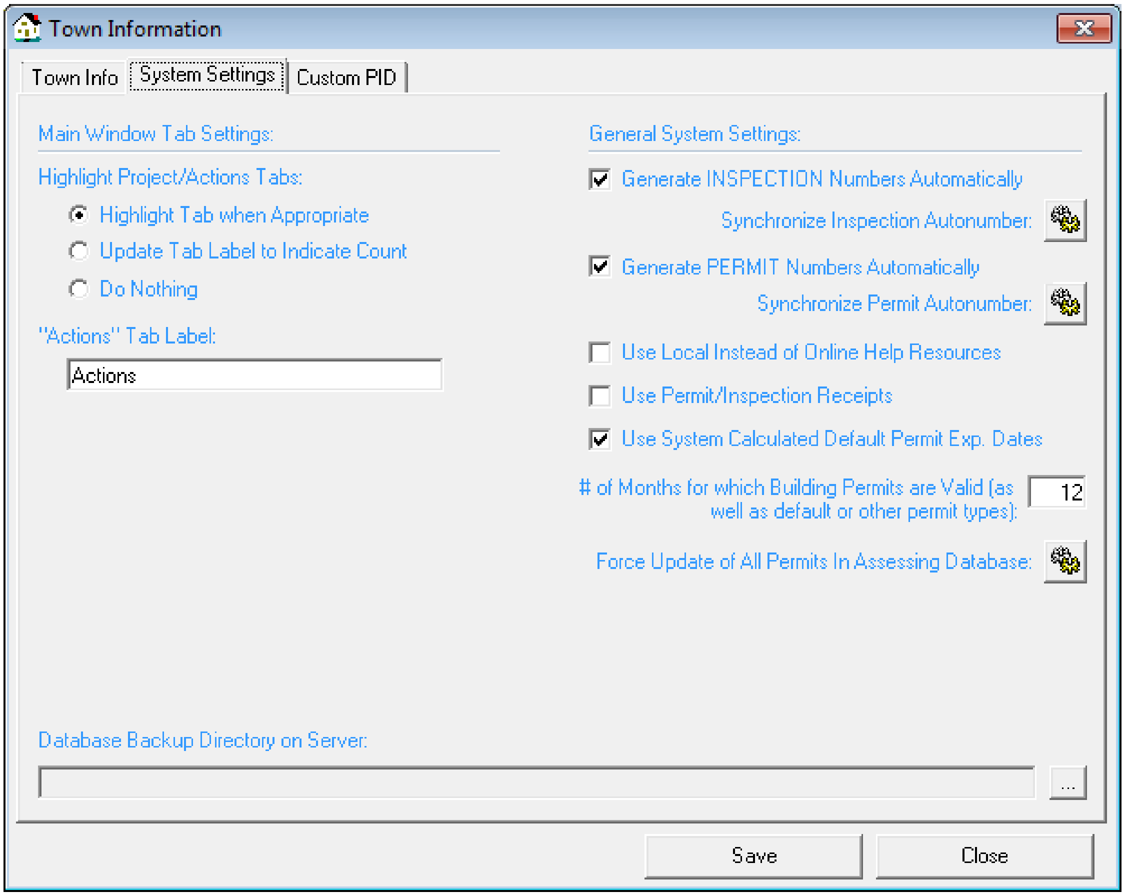
Use Local Instead of Online Help Resources - Check this box to use a local help file included in the Building Permit update. You only need to check this box if the computer does not have an internet connection to access the online help file.

Use Permit/Inspection Receipts - Check this box to enable the option of printing a detailed Permit or Inspection Receipt.

Use System Calculated Default Permit Exp. Dates - Check this box to set a global default expiration for permits. Once you do, an additional text box will appear labeled # of Months for which Building Permits are Valid. Enter a numeric value for the number of months for which you want Building Permits to be valid by default.

Force Update of all Permits in Assessing Database - This button will force the electronic transfer of all Building Permit data to the Assessing database, but will not duplicate data already sent to the Assessing database.

Database Backup Directory on Server tab is used to create and store the backup settings, you will be able to enter a location (directory) on the server for the automatic system backup to place the backup database in. This is critical, as most backup systems will not backup opened files and since the SQL Server software is running when the system is on, the data files are open. This option allows the Avitar system to back itself up to a separate location or directory, which will then enable your normal system backup to capture those files.



Set Custom PID Format

Note that this function should only be enabled in consultation with Avitar Software Support and in conjunction with your Assessing department. However, review the description below and please contact us if you and your assessors are interested in implementing a Custom PID format.

By using the Custom PID Format option, you can choose to change the system format to an eighteen character PID in a manner different from the standard six character map, six character lot, and six character sublot format. For example, you could elect to choose six characters for the map, three for the lot, three for the sublot, three for a building number, and three for a unit number.
To set the Custom PID format, navigate to Utilities | Town Settings | Custom PID. Check the box that says Use Custom PID Format. Below is a description of the corresponding fields that need to be completed in order to user the Custom PID format.

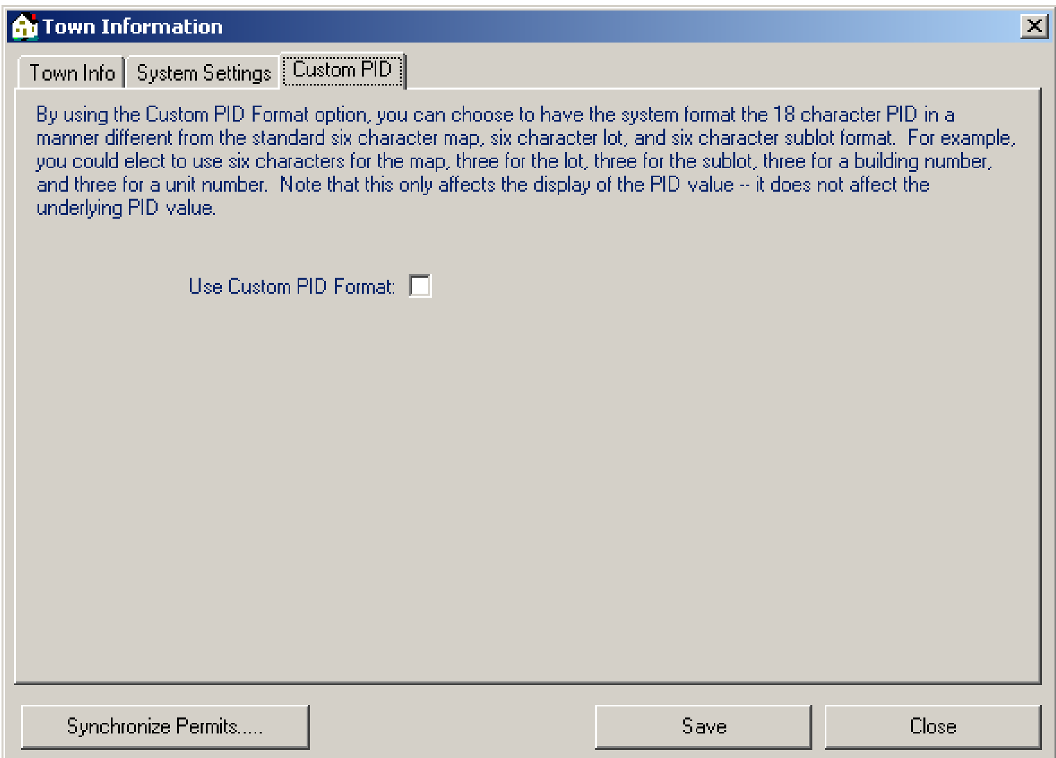
Custom PID Mask -- You must use the # symbol to indicate the placement of the individual PID characters within the mask. Then use another character (for example a space or a dash or a slash) to indicate the character you wish to use to separate the component sections of the PID. However, you can only use one character as the separator character.

Custom PID Description -- Enter a brief description of the entire PID (e.g. "Map/Lot/Sub/Bld/Unit"). This is the label that will appear on reports. It is best to use a capital letter for the first letter of each component and then lower-case letters for the rest. This will match the format of the rest of the program and the report heading will look consistent.

Custom PID Section Names -- You can choose to enter a description for each component of the PID (e.g. "Map", "Lot", etc.). The Custom PID Section names are only visible when you hover over the individual boxes throughout the program used to enter PID values on which to search.

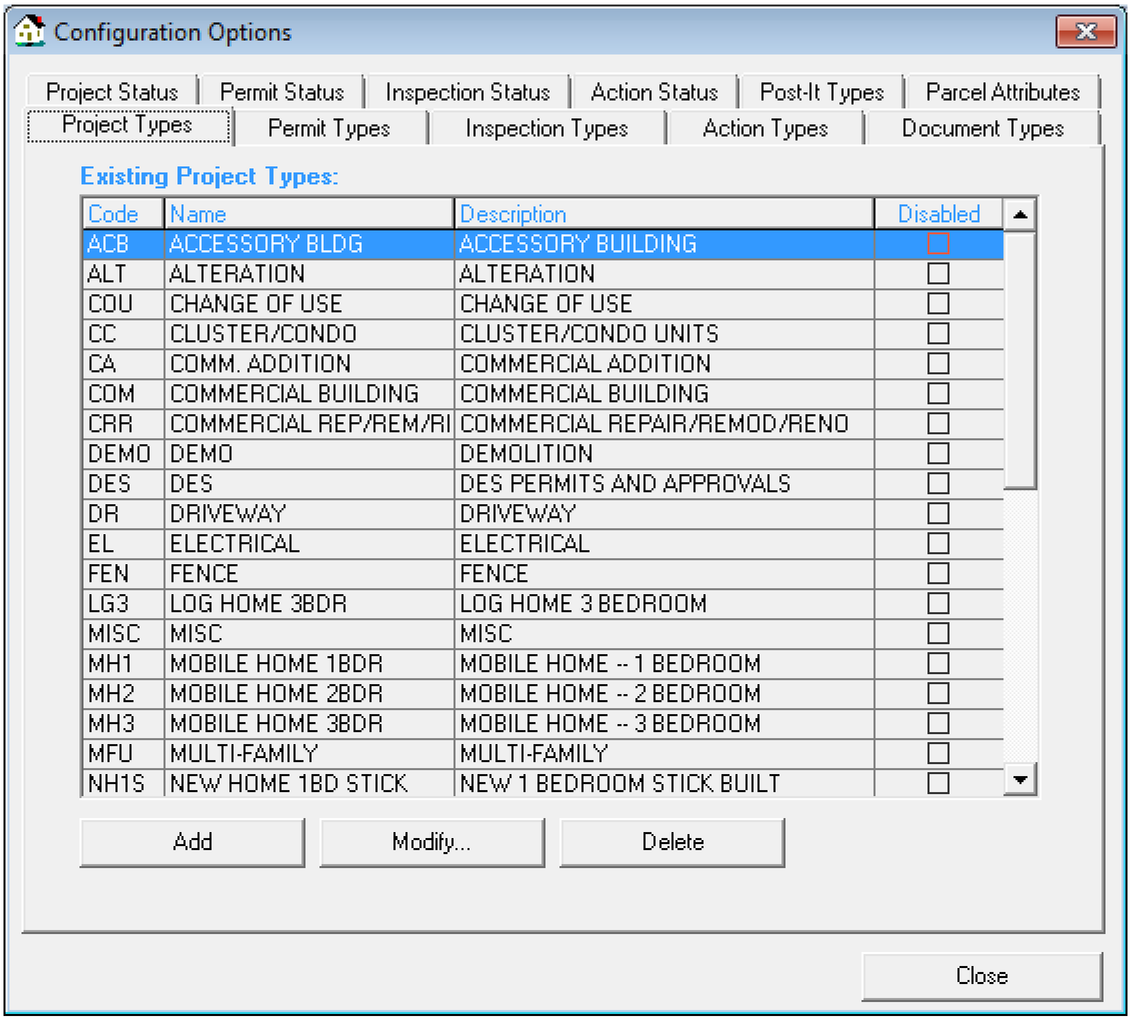
Suppress Leading Zeros -- Check this box to suppress the leading zeros in each section of the customized PID (e.g. "1/2/3" instead of "000001/000002/000003").

Pad Separators with Spaces -- Check this option to add a space before and after each separator, making it easier to read in some instances (e.g. "1 / 2 / 3" instead of "1/2/3").



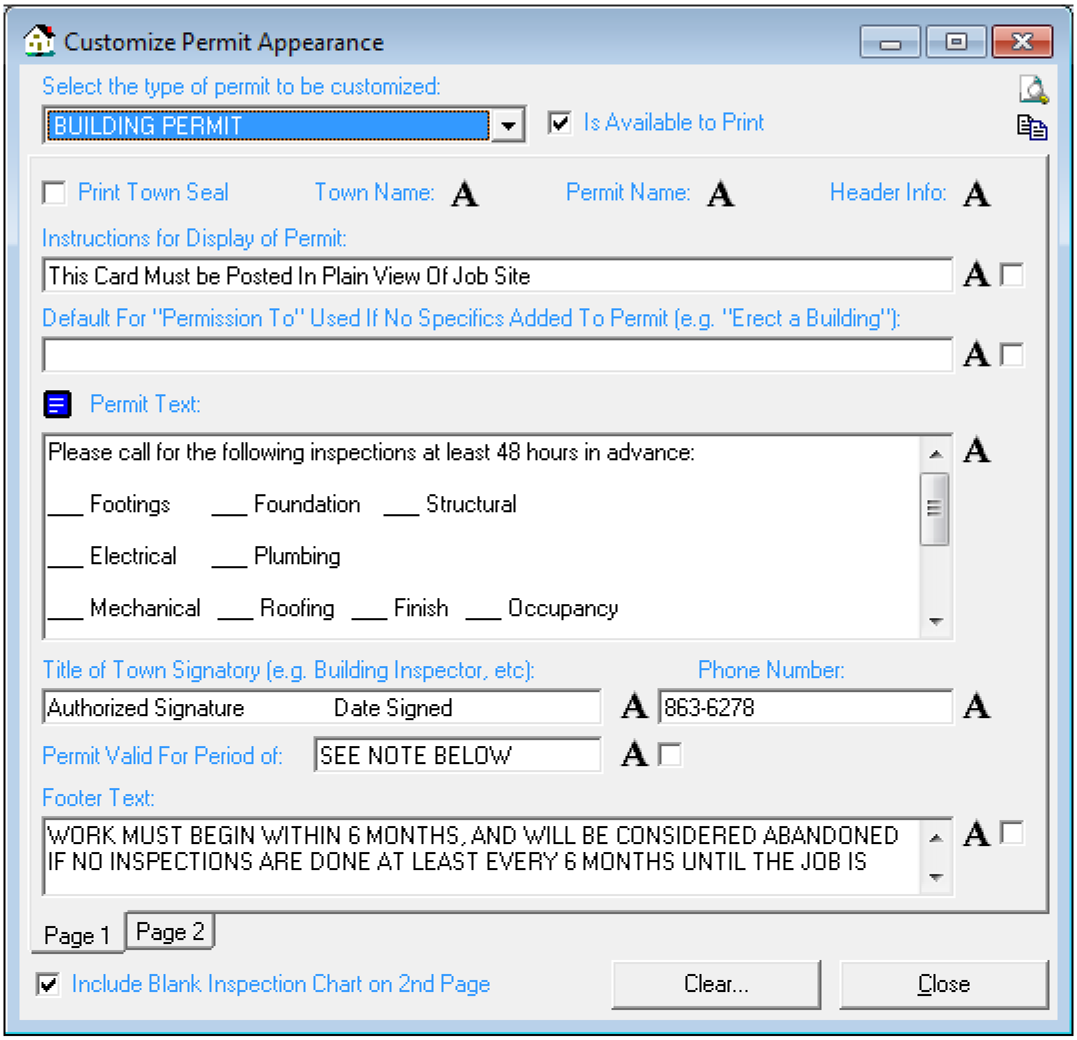
Configuration Options

This feature allows you to Update, Add, and Delete the following Codes and Descriptions: Project Status, Permit Status, Inspection Status, Action Status, Post-It Types, Parcel Attributes, Project Types, Permit Types, Inspection Types, Action Types, Document Types. Before adding Projects, Permits, and Inspections, you will need to spend time creating Permit and Inspection types that correlate to your town's required Permits and Inspections.



Customized Permit Setup

You can customize much of the text that appears on all of the permits printed by the system. It will allow you to enter messages in the text of the permit that may be unique requirements in your town. To do so, select **Utilities | Configuration Options**. Then click on the **Permit Types** tab and press the **Customize Permit** button to display the Customize Permit Appearance dialog box.



The Building Permit format has the following customizable features:

- **Instructions For Display of Permit-**Line that displays at the top of the Building Permit and generally says something such as "Display in a Conspicuous Location" or "Place So Visible from Street." You have enough room for one line of text.

- **Permit Text -**The actual text of the middle section of the permit. You will want to recreate the text of your town's original Building Permit here. You have space for up to 4000 characters of text and you can enter blank lines before or after paragraphs.

- You have the ability to set the body section of any customized printable permit to Rich Text Format, allowing you more flexibility to modify portions of the text to bold, underline, justify, and/or change the font type. Using this, you can customize each permit to a specific format. To do so, select the Configuration Options from the Utilities menu**.** Within the Configuration Options dialog box, select the Permits Type tab. Once on the Permit Types tab, select the Customize Permit button in the lower right corner. This will open the Customize Permit Appearance dialog box, within which you can select the existing type of permit to be customized. After selecting the permit, select the text icon on the left side of the dialog box. You will be asked if you wish to convert this portion to Rich Text Format. Select Yes to proceed or select No to cancel.

- **Permit Text Font Size -** Sets the font size of the text you enter in the Permit Text field. If your text is shorter, you can use a larger font size to fill up the space more completely.

- **Title of Town Signatory -**Title of the town official who will be signing the Building Permit -- for example, "Code Enforcement Official" or "Building Inspector."

- **Phone Number -**Phone number at which the town official listed should be contacted.

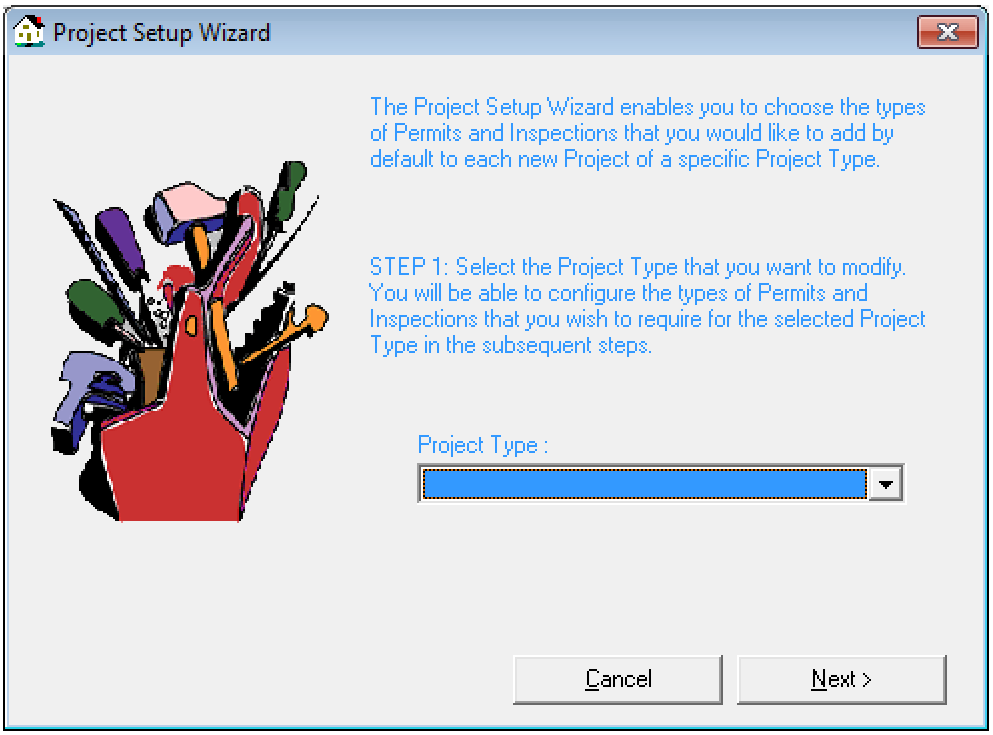
- **Permit Valid For Period of -**Indicates the length of time for which the permit is valid. Depending on your current permit expiration configuration you might have to indicate in this field when the permit expires.

- **Footer Text -** Space at the bottom of the permit. The first line of the footer is automatically formatted to display the Permit's expiration period. The second two lines of the footer are customizable and can be used for additional warnings or messages -- for example "Permit Must Be Renewed Prior to Expiration Data" or "Permit Must be Returned to Code Enforcement upon Completion of Work."

Include Blank Inspection Chart on 2nd Page - The check box is only available when customizing the building permit and allows you to choose whether or not you want the second page of the Permit (or back of the Permit if you are duplexing it) to display a blank grid on which you can maintain information regarding various inspections.

Project Setup

This feature allows you to choose the types of permits and inspections that you would like to require by default for each new project of a specific construction type when adding projects using the Add Wizard. For example, for a given construction type such as “Addition”, your community might require a building permit, a preliminary electrical inspection, a final electrical inspection, and a fire inspection. Rather than have to remember all of the requirements each time someone comes in for an Addition, the system will lead you through the required steps via the Project Add Wizard after you have setup all your project construction types and required permits and inspections. Click this option and the following display appears:



Click on the dropdown menu arrow and a list of all the Construction Types you created earlier will display for you to select from. If you are going to use the Add Project Wizard, you will need to setup each construction type you wish to use within the wizard via this method.

Select the Construction Type then click the Next button.

Step 1. Select the permits that you require for the selected project. If you do not want to require any permits for projects of this construction type, simply do not choose any permits and click the Next button.

Step 2. For each permit that was selected, you will enter a default fee amount for that permit. You will always be able to change the Permit Fee when a new project is created. You can change the sequence in which permits will be added to the project by selecting the permit in the grid and then using the “Move Up” or “Move Down” buttons. Permits at the top of the grid will be added to the project ahead of the permits at the bottom.

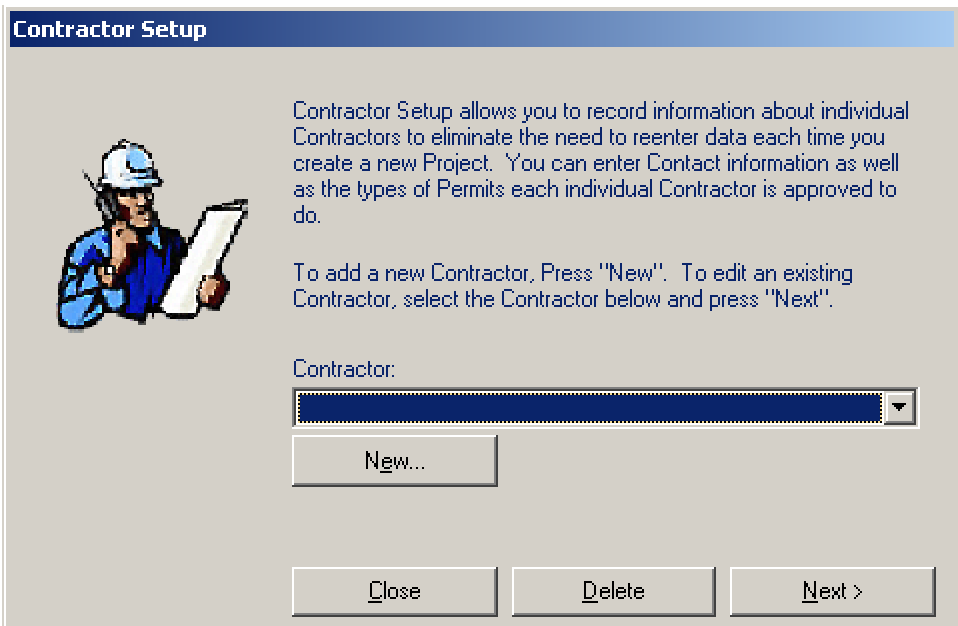
Step 3. Select the inspections that you want to require for the chosen project. If you do not want to require any inspections for projects of this construction type, simply do not choose any inspections and click the Next button.

Step 4. For each inspection that you chose you will be able to enter a Default Fee amount and a Default Status. You will always be able to change the Inspection Fee when a new project is created. You can change the sequence in which Inspections will be added to the project by selecting the Inspection in the grid and then using the “Move Up” or “Move Down” buttons. Inspections at the top of the grid will be added to the Project ahead of the Inspections at the bottom. Click the Next button to continue or the Cancel button to exit and not save the project information entered.

To utilize the configurations you made, make sure that the system is set to use the “Add Project Using Wizard”. (To do so, make certain that “Add Project Using Wizard” on the Utilities menu has a check mark in front of it). Then when you add new Projects, the system will lead you through creating each required Permit and Inspection for the Project’s chosen Construction type using the Wizard. To cancel this, go to the Utilities menu, and click the “Add Project Using Wizard” option and the check mark will disappear and the wizard will be turned off.

Contractor Setup

This feature allows you to record information about the individual contractors to eliminate the need to reenter data each time you create a new permit. You can enter contact information, as well as the types of permits each individual contractor is approved to do.



Step 1. Decide whether or not you are entering a new contractor or editing an existing one. If you are editing an existing one, you can use the dropdown menu to choose from existing contractors. If you are entering a new contractor, then press the "New" button to begin the "Contractor Setup".

Step 2. After pressing next, you will come to a screen that lets you edit the contractor's information or add it for the first time if it's a new contractor.

Step 3. The next step is to add the types of permits that the contractor is approved or licensed to do. You are now finished adding a contractor and it will be available for future use, unless the contractor information changes, you will not have to enter it again for that contractor.

Update PIDs from Assessing

This function updates PIDs to agree with any PID changes that have been made in the Assessing database. When this occurs that change will be brought over to Building Permits by this function, automatically changing the old PID to the new PID. Essentially, however, the process affects two categories of parcels: 1) parcels for which the PID changes from one value to another in Assessing, and 2) parcels for which the PID is deleted from Assessing.

If a PID with Projects, Actions, Post-Its, and/or Water/Septic information is CHANGED by Assessing:

- All of the Projects (and dependent Permits, Inspection, Documents, Pictures, etc.), Actions, and Post-Its will be transfered to the new PID.
- A new Parcel Post-It with a category of "PID Change" will be added to the Parcel indicating the Parcel's original PID and the date on which the change was made by the Update PIDs process.
- If the original PID has Water/Septic information and the new PID has none, the Water-/Septic information from the original PID will be moved to the new PID. If the new PID has existing Water/Septic information, that information will be maintained.

If a PID with Projects, Actions, Post-Its, and/or Water/Septic information is DELETED by Assessing:

- If the PID is deleted in Assessing and information exists in the Building Permit database, it will create an Orphan PID in Building Permit, whereby the PID Map/Lot/Sub will appear as:

ORPHAN 000000 00000n

where n is a sequential counter that will continue to increment as Orphan PIDs are added.

- All of the Projects (and dependent Permits, Inspection, Documents, Pictures, etc.), Actions, Post-Its, and Water/Septic information will be transfered to the new Orphan PID.
- If the original PID had Actions, Post-Its, and/or Water/Septic information but did not have any Projects, the system will create a temporary Project (with no Permits or Inspections) in the Building Permit system. This is simply to have something to which the original Actions, Post-Its, and/or Water/Septic information can be associated. You can then elect to delete the information or transfer it to another PID.

Update Locations:
There is a prompt at the conclusion of the Update PIDs From Assessing process at which you are asked of you wish to update the parcel locations for existing Projects based on the values maintained in Assessing. When a Project is created, the parcel location in the Assessing database is captured and associated with the Project. Unfortunately, if the parcel location is subsequently changed in Assessing (for example, E-911 changes) the original parcel location remains in the Building Permit database. If you answer Yes to this new prompt, the system will update the locations on existing Projects with the current locations in Assessing.

Prompt After Login:
After you have logged in successfully, the system will now prompt you if there are PID changes existing in the Assessing database that have yet to be imported into the Building Permit database. These may or may not affect any Projects in the Building Permit database, but it should serve as a reminder that changes have been made. Note that it is only a reminder -- in order to actually import the PID changes, you still must select Utilities | Update PIDs From Assessing.

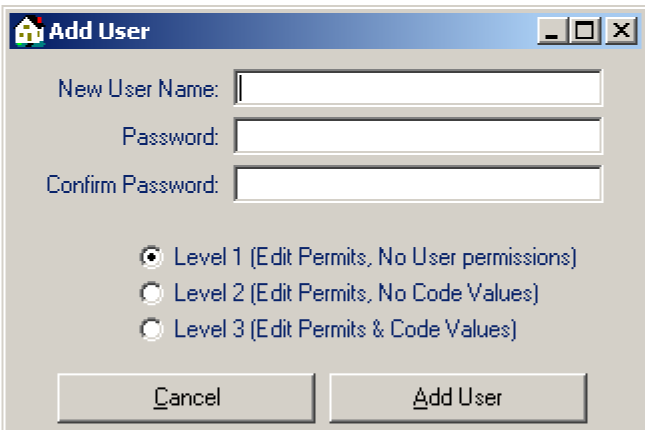
Maintain Users

The Utilities | Maintain Users function allows you to create different user logins for each person within your office that requires access to the software. You can set up different levels of access depending on your needs as follows:

Level 1 - View and print only, change their own password.

Level 2 - Edit Projects, Permits and Inspections no access to Project Setup or Permit/Inspection Setup, can add & delete users of equal access.

Level 3 - No restrictions.



Adding User

To add additional users to the system, enter a username, type a password and then confirm it by typing it again. Select a level of access for the new user from the choices listed. Note the descriptions of each level in the box. It is important to know that a Level 1 user can only add Level 1 users and a Level 2 user can add Level 1 & 2 users. Only Level 3 can add, edit, and delete. Each user can change their own password, when needed.

Deleting Users

To delete a user in the system, a dialog box will appear with an option for you to “Select User to Be Deleted,” then click on the down arrow and choose from the listed users. Level 3 access required.

Change Password

To change a Password, enter your new password once and confirm it by entering it a second time. If you forget your password, please contact Avitar and we can issue you a temporary password over the phone.

Reports Menu

The following pages will show you how to execute the various reports and options. You will note that each of the reports have a View and Cancel button on them. Cancel does just what it says and the View button will display the report of labels to the screen for your review at which time, if all is correct, you can then click on the printer icon at the top of the display to send it to be printed.

Reports Toolbar

None of the reports are automatically sent to the printer until you first view it on the screen and then press the Printer Icon found on the control toolbar of the report display.

You have the ability of exporting most all of the reports in Building Permits to a number of standard file formats. Your options range from distributable report formats like Adobe PDF files and HTML files, to formats like Microsoft Excel or delimited text files allowing you to share data with other applications. Please note that some reports may produce unexpected results when exported to certain formats and it may take a bit of trial and error with different export types to get just the type of format you are looking for.

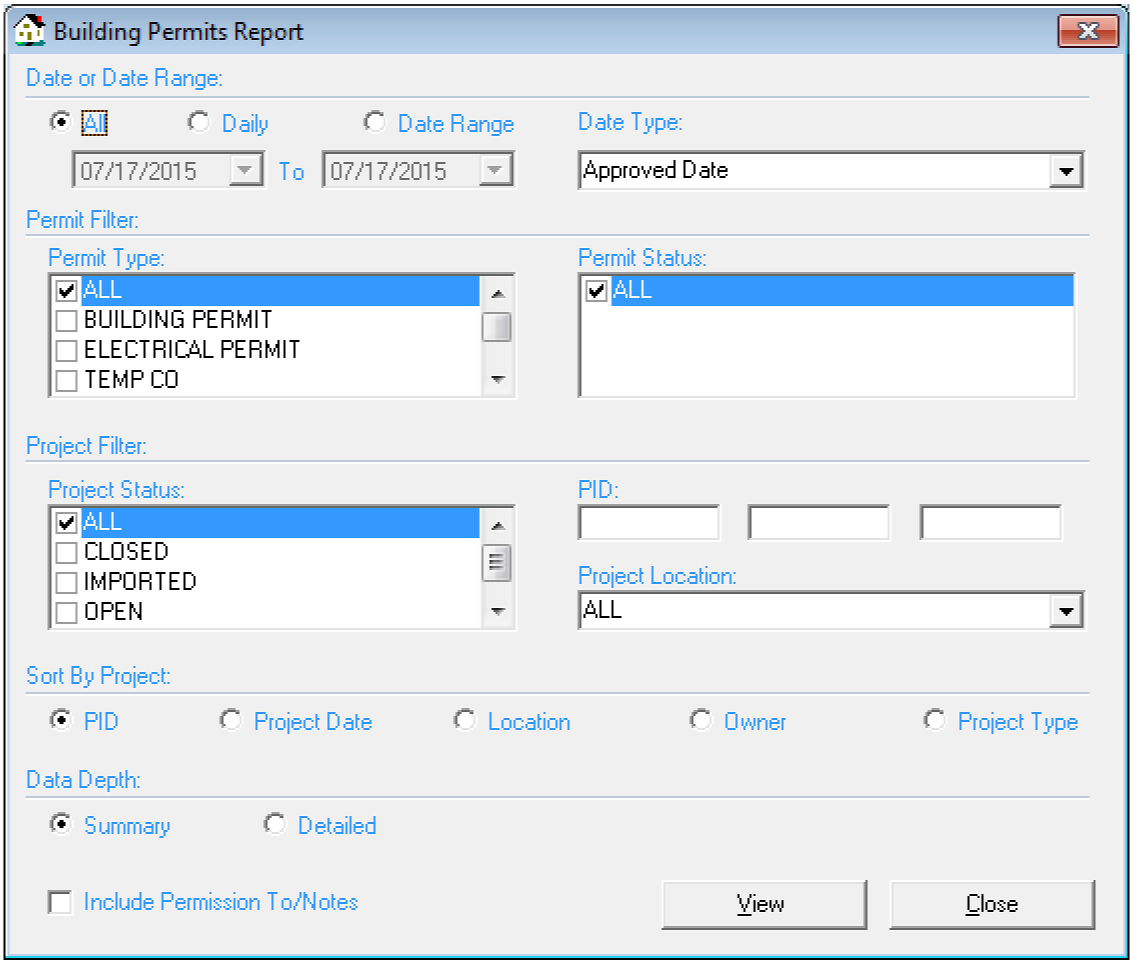
If you wish to scroll through the pages of the report within the preview mode, use the left and right arrows. The arrow icons with the additional black lines will move you straight to the first or last page of the report.
If you need to zoom in or out of the report, you can select a different resolution from the percentage drop down list.

If you are searching for a particular name within a report, you can type the name in the search text box and then press the binocular icon to search for the instance of the search text in the report. If the report does not return the instance for which you were looking, press the binocular icon again to search for the next instance.

Once you are done with any of the report previews, press the close icon (the black "X" located in the upper right-hand corner) to close the report window.

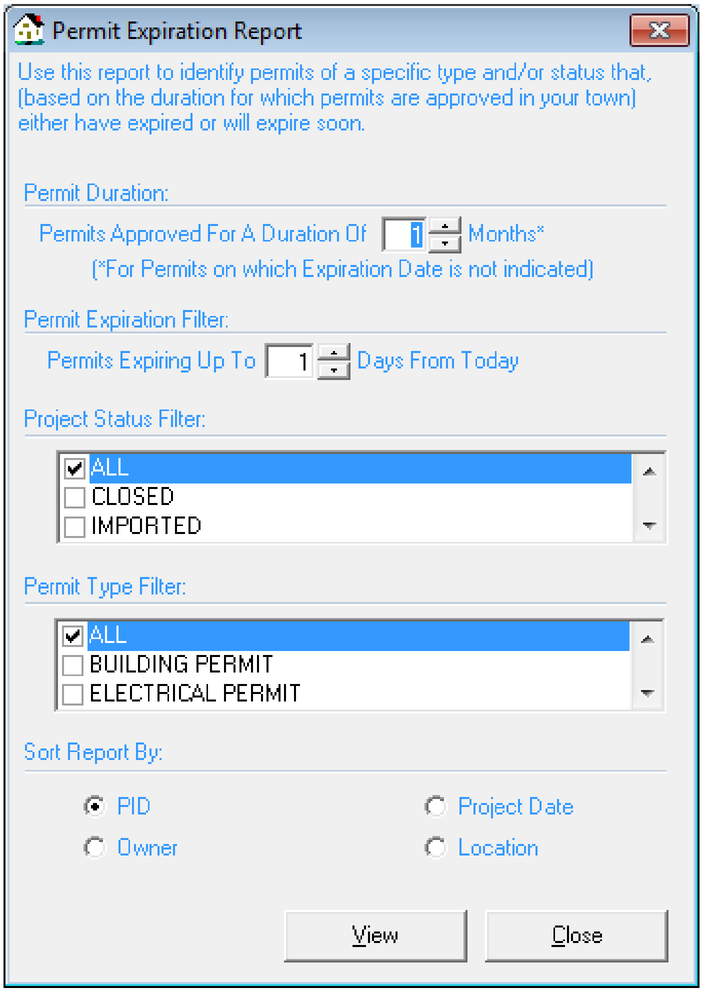
Permits Report

This report will allow you to get a tally of all Permits and the total cost of all Permits, within a Date Range. You can further filter the report by Permit type.



Expiring Permits Report

The Reports | Expiring Permits report will show which permits will soon be expiring. You may filter the records shown in this report by the number of days to expiration and by the expiration period that your town requires.



Inspections Report

This report acts as a filter form and will allow you various types of reports based on your choices in the filter form. You may choose to show pending inspections for a certain period, inspections completed by a certain inspector, upcoming inspections, etc.

Required Permits/Inspections

The Required Permits & Inspections Report is designed to act as a sort of checklist you can provide to owners to indicate the types of permits and inspections that are required for a particular project. There are two options for printing the report. The first option simply provides a blank checklist containing every type of permit and inspection you have configured in your system with an empty box you can manually check. The second method allows those of you who have configured selected construction types to work with the Project Wizard (using Project Setup from the Utilities pull down menu) to print a list of permits and inspections required for a specific construction type.

Under Construction Report

This option allows you to select, Daily or a Date Range to include records of new construction. The filter option lets you limit the data further based on the Project status, such as OPEN–CLOSED–DENIED and so on.

This report can be used to give quick listings of properties where construction is still under way.

Collected Fees Report

This gives you the ability to see what fees have been collected for the various Permit types up to the current date. Here again you have the ability to report All, Daily or by a Date Range and then further filter the report by all Permits and Inspections or by certain types via the dropdown menu of possible selections.

Then you can click the Summary button for a totals report by type or the Detailed report which will report all Permits and Inspections data with a grand total on the last page.

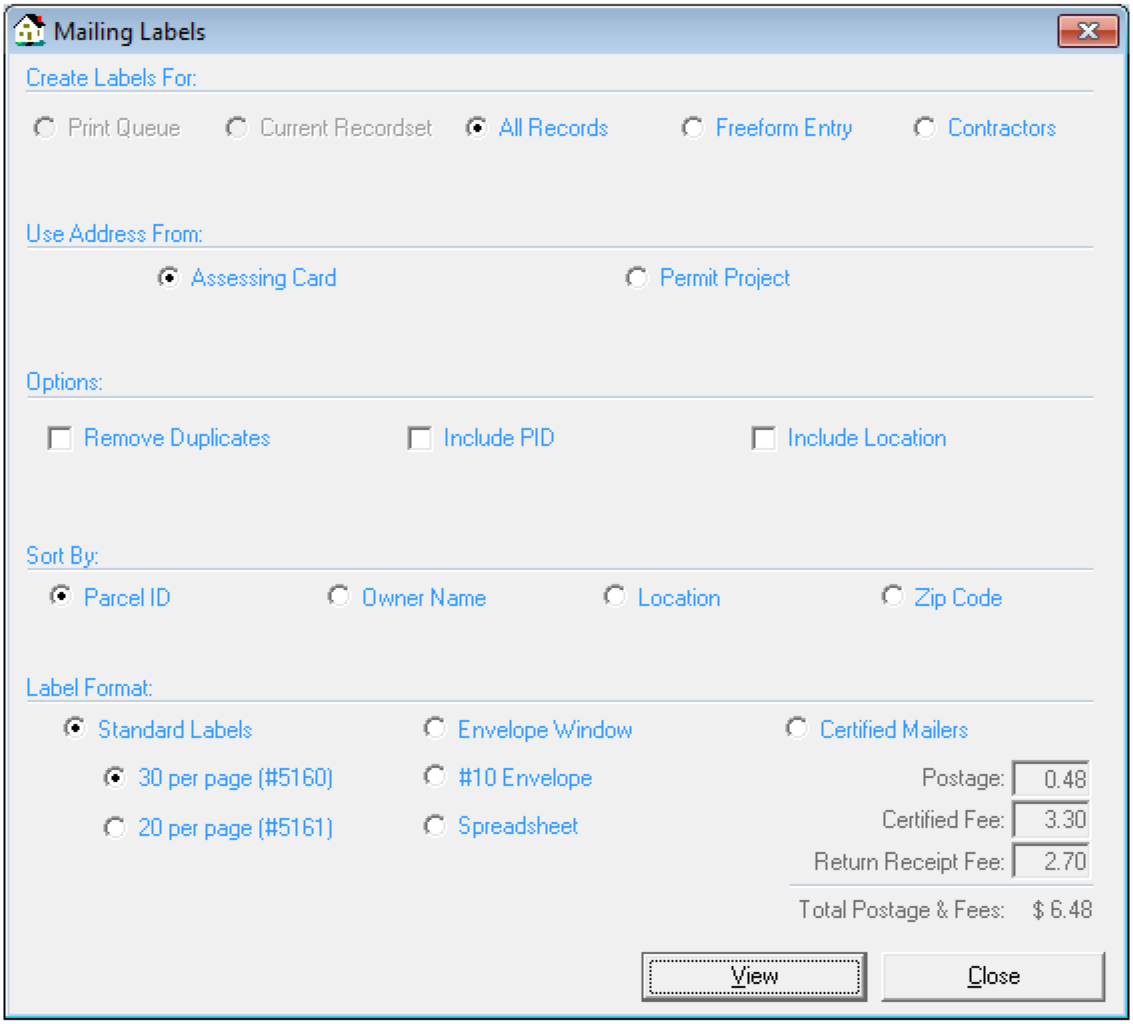
Census Data

Many towns need to complete monthly forms reporting information about building in the town. Under the Projects tab on the main form there is Details tab which displays data elements necessary for various census reporting needs. Also, when editing a project, there is a Details tab on which you may update census data for a project. For reporting purposes, you will find the menu item Census Data under the Reports menu drop-down. You can filter this report by a date range that represents project dates. None of these new Project Details data elements are required for you to manually add a new project, so you can choose to maintain this information if you think it will assist you with your reporting requirements. However, when adding projects using the Project Wizard, the information is required at the final step.

Assessment Card

This enables the Building Permit Department to print an assessment record card for the inspector, if needed. It is similar to the property record card from the Assessing Department, but it will have a Building Permit Department watermark print across the card, delineating it as being from the Building Department and not the official record.

Mailing Labels



Create Labels For: Print Queue, Current Recordset, All Records, Freeform Entry, and Contractors. The "Freeform" option allows you to create a label for someone to whom you do not send mail on a frequent basis. The Contractor option allows you to select a Contractor maintained in your database via the Contractor Setup feature on the Utilities menu. Both of these options can be most helpful for printing a certified mailer for someone that is either a contractor or a third party not maintained in the database.

Use Address From: You can select the Assessing database or the Building Permits database for the address information, should you have different information for some reason.

Options: Select either Remove Duplicates (meaning duplicate name & address) or Include PID or Include Location.

Sort By: This option will change if you select the Remove Duplicates option, as the sort will then need to be by Owner Name or by Zip Code which includes a secondary sort of Owner Name which enables the ability to remove duplicates.

Label Format: This is important as it dictates how the system will format the labels to be printed as follows:

Standard Labels Format: This format allows you to further select a 30 per page (also known as 3 across or 3 up labels.), or the 20 per page (also known as 2 across or 2 up labels.) format.

Envelope Window Format: This option prints one label per 8.5x11 sheet of paper in a location, such that when folded the address will appear in the window of a standard #10 window envelope. This is handy when you need to send out form letters. You can create the form copy and then have the name and address printed on each one in the proper location to be mailed in a window envelope.

Spreadsheet Format: This is simply a report of all the name and address information for the selected records in a one line per record format.

Once you have made your selections press View, a message box will open asking if you wish to skip any used labels on the sheet. Press no to continue on to view the labels on a full sheet. Press Yes and enter the number of labels you'd like to skip.

Mail Correspondences

The Reports Mail Correspondences menu item enables you to send notices to residents with any message for any particular purpose. You can elect to generate mailers for the current record set, the parcels in the print queue, or all records. In order to utilize a correspondence, you must first create the correspondence itself. To create, modify, or delete a correspondence select Reports | Mail Correspondences. Within the Mail Correspondences dialog box press the Setup button. Within the Setup options you have tabs for Add New, Edit, Delete, and Header Setup. Messages that you had previously configured under the old Speed Mailer function will be converted to the new format, but you should verify that this was done properly before generating them.

Use the Add New tab to create a new correspondence message. This is everything (aside from the owner's name and address information) that will appear on the actual correspondence. The message could be anything from a notice of a special town meeting for all town residents and another for your notice of an impact hearing for a handful of residents that abut a particular property. You have several options for creating a new correspondence: you can create a blank correspondence (to which you will subsequently add text on the Edit tab), you can create a new correspondence using an existing correspondence as a template, or you can import a correspondence from a file you already created in WordPad. If you are using correspondences for the first time, you will probably want to choose the blank correspondence option. Regardless of which option you choose, you will need to give the correspondence a title (e.g. Special Town Meeting).

Use the Edit tab to modify the text of existing correspondences. If you choose to add a blank correspondence, you should immediately select the Edit tab to modify the blank correspondence. To edit an existing correspondence, first select the correspondence by name from the drop down list. Once you do, the existing text (if any) of the correspondence will appear in the large text box below. Type any new text or modify existing text as needed. Use the alignment, font, bold, italicize, and underline buttons in the upper right to modify the appearance of any highlighted text as needed. There are also check boxes to Include Parcel Values and Include PID at the bottom of the Edit screen. Press Save once you are done.

Use the Delete tab to delete any existing correspondences which you no longer need. Simply select the correspondence by title from the dropdown list and press Delete.

Use the Header Setup tab to determine how the system should format the header of your correspondences. (Note that the header setup applies to all correspondences you generate within the system.) You have several options for formatting the header. If you just want to use basic return address information, select the Use Return Address option and enter the appropriate information in the text boxes provided. The recipient's address will print in an area suitable for use with standard #10 window envelopes. If you plan on printing your correspondences to special paper which is pre-printed with your office or municipal letter head, select the Use Letter Head option. In this instance, the system will not print anything within the header area of your correspondences. Finally, if you wish to use a digital image in place of a pre-printed letter head, select Use Image

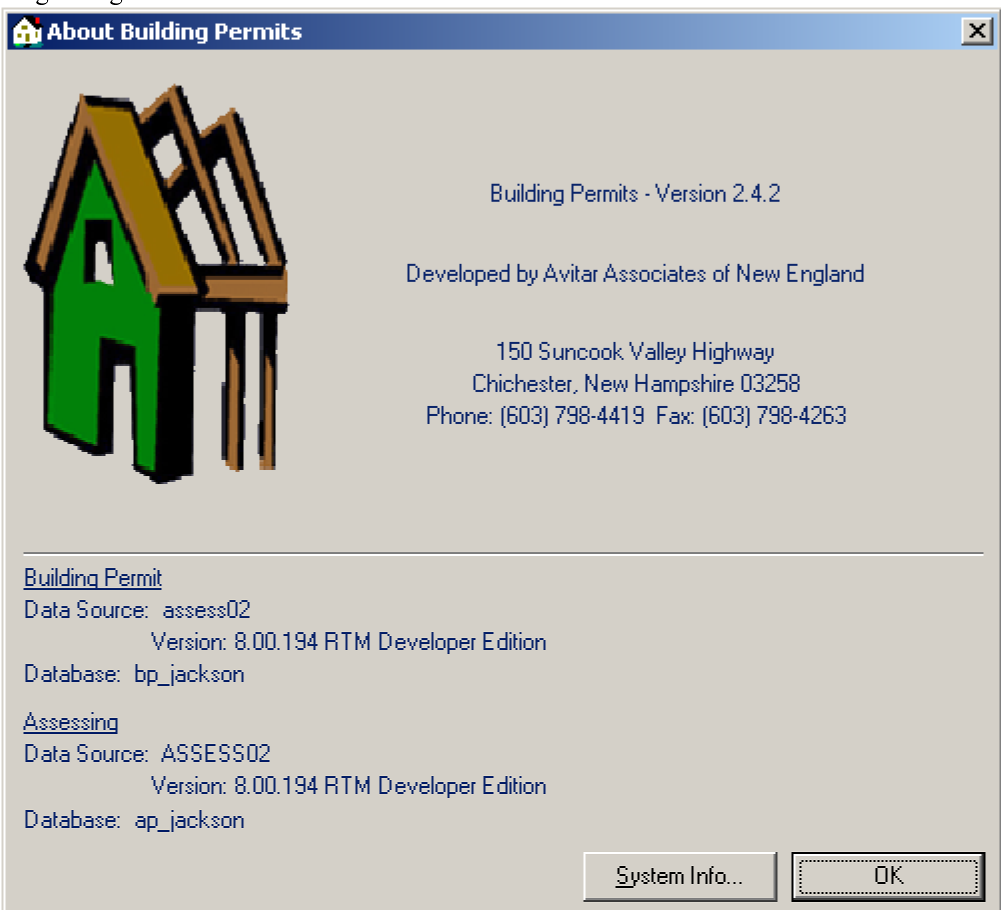
Header and then use the browse button below to identify the digital image to be used. Note the appearance of the image on the printed correspondence will depend on the size of the image you use. To avoid distortion of the image that may result from stretching, you should use images that are approximately 4.5 times as wide as they are high. Once you have configured your header, press Save.

Help Menu

The following menu items are available from the Help menu, located on the main program window of Avitar Building Permits.

About Building Permit

The Help | About Building Permit menu item provides information and utilities that may be useful in troubleshooting system problems. We may ask you to provide us with information from this dialog box when diagnosing errors.



Start Remote Help Session

The Help | Start Remote Help Session menu item allows you to launch a remote connection to Avitar Software Support. Using this utility, we will be able to connect remotely to your system to observe and/or resolve problems you may be having with the system if your computer has access to the Internet. Note that you will need to provide a User ID and Password for us to connect and it will only be used while you are on the phone with software support. Once the session has ended, we have no ability to connect to your computer unless you initiate this function and provide a new password.

Event Viewer

The Event Viewer is a new feature available from the Help Menu. It logs events in the program by Event Type, User, Date, etc. and can extremely useful in diagnosing technical problems.

Help Topics

The Help | Help Topics menu item launches the online help file for Avitar Building Permit.

Special Map Section

If the town has digital maps and they have been attached to the Avitar Assessing system, you will then have access to the following in the Assessing and Building Permits System.

If your Permits system includes the optional Map functionality, you have access to a wealth of expanded capabilities which enable you to query and create town-wide maps that add a whole new dimension to your data. The map data is displayed on the Map tab in the main window. With the map displayed, you have three basic ways in which you can query or display the map data: the Map Toolbar, the Map Pop-Up Menu and the Map Legend.

Map Tab Toolbar

The Map toolbar is located on the Map Data Display tab, to the right of the map itself. The buttons on the Map toolbar enable you to interact with the map in many different ways, from zooming in or out, to adding text or printing. In most cases, by clicking on the toolbar, you make a specific function active and it will remain active until you choose another function by clicking on another toolbar button. The specific toolbar button functions are described next.

Zoom Max Button – Map Toolbar

Find Button – Map Toolbar

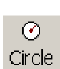
Zoom Button – Map Toolbar

Pan Button – Map Toolbar

Zoom In Button – Map Toolbar

Zoom Out Button – Map Toolbar

Poly Select Button – Map Toolbar



Circle Select Button – Map Toolbar

Clear Select Button – Map Toolbar

ID Button – Map Toolbar

Abut Button – Map Toolbar

Print Button – Map Toolbar

Text Button – Map Toolbar

Line Button – Map Toolbar

Shape Button – Map Toolbar

Rect Button – Map Toolbar

Dist Button – Map Toolbar

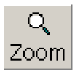
Zoom Max Button - Map Toolbar

The Zoom Max button restores the map display to the maximum extents of the map.

Find Button - Map Toolbar

The Find button zooms the map in on the currently selected parcel.

Zoom Button - Map Toolbar



The Zoom button allows you to zoom in on a selected rectangle. To use the Zoom command:

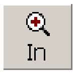
1. Click Zoom and the pointer icon will become a magnifying glass.
2. Using the left mouse button, click on the map (and hold down the button) at one corner of the desired zoom rectangle.
3. While continuing to press the left mouse button, drag the mouse to the opposite corner of the desired zoom rectangle, releasing the mouse button when the desired zoom window is displayed.

Pan Button - Map Toolbar

The Pan button allows you to navigate around the map at the current zoom resolution. To use the Pan command:

1. Click the Pan button.
2. Using the left mouse button, click on the map (and hold down the button) at any location.
3. While continuing to press the left mouse button, drag the mouse around the map, and the current map extents will change to display a new portion of the map. Release the mouse buttononce the desired location is displayed.

Zoom In Button - Map Toolbar



The Zoom In buttonallows you to zoom in on a portion of the map. To use the Zoom In command:

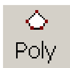
1. Click the In button.
2. Using the left mouse button, click on the map on the desired center of your new display. The new map display will be magnified by a factor of 50% and will be centered on your selected point.

Zoom Out Button - Map Toolbar

The Zoom Out button allows you to zoom out on a portion of the map. To use the Zoom Out command:

1. Click the Out button.
2. Using the left mouse button, click on the map on the desired center of your new display. Thenew map display will be zoomed out by a factor of 50% and will be centered on your selected point.

Poly Select Button - Map Toolbar

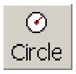


The Poly button allows you to select all parcels located within a user-defined polygon. To use the Poly command:

1. Click the Poly button.
2. Using the left mouse button, identify the vertices of your selection polygon. As you identify vertices, you will notice a rubber banding polygon indicating the size of your polygon.
3. When you have created the desired selection polygon, double click on the map to identify the final vertex of your selection polygon. Avitar Assessing will query the database and create a record set containing all of the parcels identified on the map (shown in the corresponding selection color). Once you have selected parcels from the map, you can move throughout the selection set using the Previous and Next toolbar buttons, as well as click on the other display tabs to show land or building information for the current parcel of your record set.

Note: By holding down the Shift button, you can add additional map parcels to your selection set by repeating the steps outlined above.

Circle Select Button - Map Toolbar



The Circle button allows you to select all parcels located within a user-defined circle. To use the Circle command:

1. Click the Circle button.
2. Using the left mouse button, click on the map (and hold down the button) to identify the centerpoint of your selection circle. After locating the center point, you can drag the mouse outwardly fromthe center point to indicate your selection circle's radius. You will notice a rubber banding circle indicating the size of your selection circle.
3. Once you have identified the desired radius of your selection circle, release the left mouse button.You will be prompted with an input box showing you the radius of the current circle and allowing youto enter a known radius if you prefer. Press "OK" when you have entered the desired radius.
4. Avitar Assessing will query the database and create a record set containing all of the parcels identified on the map (shown in the corresponding selection color). Once you have selected parcels from the map, you can move throughout the selection set using the "Previous" and "Next" toolbar buttons, as well as click on the other display tabs to show land or building information for the current parcel of your record set.

Note: By holding down the Shift button, you can add additional map parcels to your selection set byrepeating the steps outlined above.

Clear Select Button – Map Toolbar

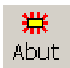
The Clear button clears any currently selected map parcels. (NOTE: The corresponding parcels will still be contained in your database record set).

ID Button - Map Toolbar

The ID button allows you to find out information about a map parcel by clicking on it. To use the ID command:

1. Click the ID button.
2. Using the left mouse button, click on the desired map parcel. The parcel will become yourcurrently selected database record. Once it is selected you can click on the other display tabs to showland or building information about the parcel.

Abut Button - Map Toolbar



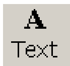
The Abut button allows you to identify parcel abutters by selecting a parcel and entering a desired abutting distance. To use the Abut command:

1. Click the Abut button.
2. Using the left mouse button, click on the map parcel around which you want to locate abutters.
3. You will be prompted with an input box to enter the desired radius to be used in locating abutters. Enter the desired offset and press OK.
4. Avitar Assessing will use the map data to create a record set of parcels that are within the specified distance of the boundaries of your selected parcel. The abutter parcels will be displayed on the map in the corresponding selection color and will be contained in your current database record set. You can move throughout the selection set using the Previous and Next toolbar buttons, as well as click on the other display tabs to show land or building information about the any of the parcels in your abutter's record set.

Print Button - Map Toolbar

The Print buttonallows you to print the currently displayed map image.

Text Button - Map Toolbar

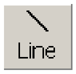


The Text button allows you to add temporary text labels to the map. To use the Text command:

1. Click the Text button.
2. Using the left mouse button, click on the map where you would like the text label to begin (i.e. thelower left corner of the label).
3. You will be prompted to enter your label in the input box. Type your label text and press the OKbutton. Your label will be drawn on the map.

Note: Use the Clear button to erase all temporary text labels from the map.

Line Button - Map Toolbar

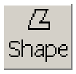


The Line button allows you to add temporary lines to the map. To use the Line command:

1. Click the Line button.
2. Using the left mouse button, click on the map to identify the vertices of your line. As you add vertices, the line will be shown with a temporary rubber banding line on themap. Double click on the map to indicate the final vertex of your line. The line you created will be displayed in the maps corresponding selection color.

Note: Use the Clear button to erase all temporary lines from the map.

Shape Button - Map Toolbar

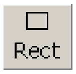


The Shape buttonallows you to add temporary polygon shapes to the map. To use the Shape command:

1. Click the Shape button.
2. Using the left mouse button, click on the map to identify the vertices of your polygon. As youadd vertices, the polygon will be shown with a temporary rubber banding line on the map. Double click on the map to indicate the final vertex of your polygon. The polygon shape youcreated will be displayed in the maps corresponding selection color.

Note: Use the Clear button to erase all temporary shape polygons from the map.

Rect Button - Map Toolbar



The Rect buttonallows you to add temporary rectangles to the map. To use the Rect command:

1. Click the Rect button.
2. Using the left mouse button, click on the map (and hold down the button) at one corner of thedesired rectangle.
3. While continuing to press the left mouse button, drag the mouse to the opposite corner of thedesired rectangle, releasing the mouse button when the desired rectangle is displayed by thetemporary rubber banding rectangle.

Note: Use the Clear button to erase all temporary rectangles from the map.

Dist Button - Map Toolbar

The Dist buttonallows you to measure distances (such as frontages) on the map. To use the Dist command:

1. Click the Dist button.
2. Using the left mouse button, click on the map to identify the vertices along the distance youwish to measure. As you add vertices to the distance, the distance path will be shown with atemporary rubber banding line on the map. Double click on the map to indicate the final vertex of your distance path.
3. The measured distance is displayed beneath the map.

Note: The distance measured is approximate. It assumes a level of precision that may or may not be appropriate based on the precision with which the underlying maps were created.

Map Pop-up Menu

The Map Pop-up menu can be accessed by right clicking on the map. It allows access to many of the same commands available on the Map toolbar, but allows easier access to several frequently used commands. The only command on the Pop-up menu which is not available on the Map toolbar is Selection Color. This command is outlined below. For all other items on the Pop-up menu, the identical toolbar functions are listed below. Refer to the corresponding command listed above for more information about each individual command:

Selection Color: Allows you to modify the color with which selected parcels are displayed on the map.

1. Select Selection Color from the Pop-up menu.

2. A color selection dialog box will be displayed. Choose the color with which selected parcels should be displayed and press OK.

Map Legend

You can display the legend by clicking on the Map Legend tab. The legend displays all of the "layers" (also commonly referred to as "themes") included on your current map. A layer refers to a single level of geographic data. For instance, your map may consist of a parcels layer, a water layer, and a roads layer. Each of these layers would have its own entry on the map legend, showing the layer's name and the color with which it is displayed on the map. If there are numerous layers on your map, some of the layers may not be visible in the map legend and you can click on the little arrows in the upper right or lower right corners of the legend to scroll up or down within the legend.

Turning Layers On/Off

A layer can be turned on or off by clicking on the check box to the left of the layer's name within the map legend. Turning a layer off will not delete it from the map permanently -- it only removes it from the current map display.

Changing the Order of a Layer

If you have more than a single layer in your map, these layers will be added to your map in a certain layer. The layers added first will be beneath the subsequent layers, both in the map legend and on the map. Since layers on top will cover up the layers beneath them, in some instances you may want to reorder the layers to improve the appearance of your map. For instance, if you have a parcels layer and a roads layer, the parcels layer might cover up the roads layer, if the parcels layer is on top. Or perhaps a sewer line layer needs to be on top of the roads layer, in order for the sewer lines layer to be visible to the user.

The hierarchy of the layers in the map legend indicates the order in which layers are drawn on the map -- layers at the top of the legend will overlay layers at the bottom of the legend on the map. To change the order of a layer:

1. Using the left mouse button, click on the layer name in the map legend and continue pressing the mouse button. The layer name will be highlighted by a 3-D box within the legend indicating it has been selected.
2. While continuing to press the left mouse button, drag the 3-D layer box up or down in the list of layers within the map legend. Release the mouse button when you have located the layer in the appropriate place in the order of layers. The map will automatically refresh to display the new order of layers.

Modifying a Layer's Display Properties

The display properties of a particular layer can be modified in several different ways, from simply assigning it a different color, to generating a thematic map based on values in your appraisal data. To modify a layer's display properties, simply double click on the layer name in the map legend to display the Symbol Properties dialog box. In some instances, when you double click on your parcels layer, you will be questioned about refreshing the data, prior to opening the Symbol Properties dialog box. For layers other than the parcels layer or in situations when your parcel layer is already bound to the parcel data, you will not be prompted to refresh the data and will simply go directly into the Symbol Properties dialog box.

Refresh Parcel Map Data

Building Permit can bind the parcels map layer to your data, enabling you to create thematic maps based on your data. However, to improve the speed with which thematic maps are generated and to eliminate any conflicts with other users accessing the appraisal data, the maps are bound to a copy of your appraisal data. Therefore, when you open the Symbol Properties dialog box by double clicking on the parcels layer, you may be prompted whether you wish to refresh the copy of the appraisal data your maps will be bound to. The prompt will inform you when the last copy was made and whether you wish to refresh it. If the last copy was made recently or no significant changes affecting the display of the maps have been made since the last time it was refreshed, you can just answer No. Otherwise, you can answer Yes and Building Permit will proceed to create a new copy of the appraisal data for generating thematic maps.

Symbol Properties Dialog Box

The Symbol Properties dialog box allows you to modify a layer's display properties in five basic ways. These display methods correspond with each of the tabs within the Symbol Properties dialog:

Single Tab:

The Single tab properties are used to modify the layers display properties when the layer is being displayed in a single, uniform manner. This is the default method for all layers (e.g. all parcels are green, with black outlines).

Fill Color:

Fill color allows you to select the color with which objects on the layer will be colored. To modify the Fill Color, click on the color box and select a new color from the Color dialog box.

Outline Color:

Outline Color allows you to select the color of the layer's outlines. The default is black, but you can select a different color by clicking on the color box and selecting a new color from the Color dialog box.

Style:

You can select a new fill pattern for the layer's symbol using the Style dropdown box. The default style is a solid fill, but the numerous other patterns can be helpful when printing in just black and white.

Outline Width:

Indicates the relative width of the layer's outlines. Higher numbers will create thicker outlines.

Draw Outlines:

Indicates whether or not the layer's entities should have outlines. Depending upon the layer, its entities may be indistinguishable without outlines (e.g. parcel layers).

Apply:

Applies any pending changes made without closing the Symbol Properties dialog box.

Cancel:

Closes the Symbol Properties dialog box without applying any pending changes.

OK:

Applies any pending changes made and closes the Symbol Properties dialog box.
The functionality of the Apply, Cancel, and OK buttons remain the same through all of the different tabs.

Unique Tab:
The Unique tab properties enable you to create thematic maps based on discrete data values. In the case of the parcels theme, the available data comes from your appraisal Database. With other layers, the data comes from the shapefile itself. (Depending on your shapefiles, this data may or may not be very useful). You can select the field on which you wish to base your map from the Field dropdown list.

Unique value maps are best when based on fields that have several (less than a few dozen) discrete values. For instance, a Unique value map based on the Zone or Neighborhood value for each parcel would create an informative map, whereas a map based on the Owner or Residence Value field would be of little use. In the latter case, the map would have a distinct color for almost every parcel (parcels owned by the same owner or having the same building value would be the same color) and the legend would have hundreds of entries. Therefore, Building Permit will warn you if the number of unique values exceeds one hundred.

Field:
Allows you to select the field on which you want to base your Unique value map. (Note: Not all of the possible fields will necessarily produce informative unique value maps).

Reset Legend:
Creates the Unique values map based on the field currently selected in the Field dropdown box.

Draw Outlines:
Indicates whether or not the layer objects within Unique value areas should have outlines (e.g. should all of the individual parcels within an area identified as Zone 1 have outlines).

Legend Preview:
Enables you to see the Unique values and associated colors that will be used to create the Unique values map. By double clicking on any of the individual color boxes within the legend preview, you can change the color associated with a value prior to creating the map by selecting a new color from the Color dialog box.

Classes Tab:
The Classes tab properties enables you to create thematic maps based on numeric ranges of data values. In the case of the parcels theme, the available data comes from your Assessing Database. With other layers, the data comes from the shapefile itself. (Depending on your shapefiles, this data may or may not be very useful). You can select the field on which you wish to base your map from the Numeric Field dropdown list.
Class range maps are used to create categories for ranges of values, rather than create a single category for each value.

For example, it would be of little use to create a unique values map based on building value -- a parcel with a $100,000 building value would appear differently from a parcel with a $100,100 building value. However, a class range map will group entities with similar values into a series of ranges, enabling you to move beyond the particulars and display trends.

Numeric Field:
Allows you to select the field on which you want to base your class range map.

Number of Classes:
Enables you to select the number of ranges (from 2 to 12) that Building Permit should create for your class range map.

Color Ramp:
Enables you to set the color scheme Building Permit should use in creating your class range map. The Start color box indicates the color for all objects falling into the lowest range category. To set the color, double click on the Start color box and select the color from the Color dialog box. The End color box indicates the color for all objects falling into the highest range category.

Again, to set the color, double click on the color box. Based on the Start and End colors you select, Building Permit will use color shades for the intervening range categories based on the number of classes you choose.

Draw Outlines:

Indicates whether or not the layer objects within class range areas should have outlines.

Reset Legend:

Creates the class range map based on the values you have selected.

Standard Labels:

The Standard Labels tab enables you to label layer features with a few simple settings.

Text Field:

Allows you to select the field with which the layer's objects will be labeled.

Horizontal Alignment:

Indicates how the labels should be horizontally justified with respect to the object. For example, with polygon shapes, labels will be placed on the centroid of the object. The Horizontal Alignment indicates which side of the label (left, right or center) should be aligned with the centroid.

Vertical Alignment:

Indicates how the labels should be vertically justified with respect to the object. For example, with polygon shapes, labels will be placed on the centroid of the object. The Vertical Alignment indicates which side of the label (top, bottom or center) should be aligned with the centroid.

Font:

Enables you to select the font with which the layer's objects will be labeled.

Draw Features:

Indicates whether or not the layer's objects themselves should be drawn or just the objects' labels.

Allow Duplicates:

Indicates whether or not duplicate labels should be drawn. If not selected, Building Permit will only label one object with a particular label. Otherwise, all objects will be labeled.

Splined Text:

For layers with line objects (as opposed to polygons or points), labels will be placed along the length of the object. Splining the text will allow the text to follow the twists and turns of the object.

Rotation:

Enables you to rotate the labels by a given angle.