

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
Department of Energy and Environment

TECHNICAL GUIDANCE

FROM: Department of Energy and Environment (DOEE)
Natural Resources Administration
Regulatory Review Division

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SUBJECT: Determining Costs of Improvements and Costs to Repair Building/Structures

This document provides technical guidance on how to comply with the District's Flood Hazard Rules and Construction Codes. DOEE prepared this and other technical guidance documents to make compliance and the application and permitting processes clearer and easier. Ultimately, however, compliance with the Flood Hazard Rules and Construction Codes is the responsibility of the applicant.

Specifically, this guidance provides information on how to create an estimate of the cost of improvements or repairs to existing buildings or structures. This information is required for all development that takes place in a regulated floodplain. An applicant seeking permit approval for such projects must submit the estimate, as described below, to DOEE for review and approval. Please contact flood.risk@dc.gov if you have any questions about this document or have questions about your specific project.

Determining Costs of Improvements and Costs to Repair Building/Structures

DOEE has developed this guidance for proposed construction projects that are required to submit an estimate of the cost of improvements or repairs to existing buildings or structures. An applicant seeking permit approval for such projects must submit the estimate, as described below, to DOEE for review and approval.

Estimates must include the costs of all materials, labor, and other items necessary to perform the proposed work. DOEE accepts the following methods for estimating the cost of a project:

- **Licensed Contractor** - Applicants may submit itemized costs of materials and labor prepared by licensed contractors or professional construction cost estimators. If an applicant selects this option, they must provide the estimate as supporting documentation.

- **Professional Cost-Estimating Services** – Applicants may use building valuation tables published by building code organizations and cost-estimating manuals and tools available from professional building cost-estimating services. When using these sources, applicants must account for local variations in costs and all types and qualities of structures. If an applicant selects this option, they must provide DOEE with *Table 1. Itemized Cost Estimate of Improvements and Repairs*, and *Table 2. Labor Costs for Residential Construction Projects*, that are filled in with values generated from the cost-estimating service or manual. A blank version of these tables is provided on the following pages.

- **Self-Generated** - Applicants may submit cost estimates that they prepare themselves. The estimates must include itemized costs of materials and value of labor, including the value of the owner’s labor and volunteered labor. If an applicant selects this option, they must complete *Table 1. Itemized Cost Estimate of Improvements and Repairs*, and *Table 2. Labor Costs for Residential Construction Projects*. A blank version of these tables is provided on the following pages. To complete these tables, DOEE accepts the use of prevailing wages – sometimes referred to as Davis Bacon wages – to determine labor costs for each labor category that must be included in the total labor cost estimate, as applicable. Prevailing wages are set by the U.S. Department of Labor in accordance with the federal Davis-Bacon Act. The following link can be used to find the Davis Bacon prevailing wages: <https://www.wdol.gov/dba.aspx>. In the field labeled “Select DBA WD by number:” enter DC3, which pertains to residential construction in the District of Columbia.

Table 1. Itemized Cost Estimate of Improvements and Repairs

Itemized Category	Cost	Itemized Category	Cost
Materials and labor, including the estimated value of donated or discounted materials and owner or volunteer labor	\$	Interior finish elements, including:	
		Bathroom tiling and fixtures	\$
Site preparation related to the improvement or repair (e.g., foundation excavation or filling in basements)	\$	Floor finishes (e.g., hardwood, ceramic, vinyl, linoleum, stone, and wall-to-wall carpet over subflooring)	\$
Demolition and construction debris disposal	\$	Interior doors	\$
Labor and other costs associated with demolishing, moving, or altering building components to accommodate improvements, additions, and making repairs	\$	Wall finishes (e.g., drywall, paint, stucco, plaster, paneling, and marble)	\$
		Built-in cabinets (e.g., kitchen, utility, entertainment, storage, and bathroom)	\$
Costs associated with complying with any other regulations or code requirement that is triggered by the work, including costs to comply with the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)	\$	Interior finish carpentry	\$
		Built-in bookcases and furniture	\$
		Hardware	\$
		Insulation	\$
Costs associated with elevating a structure when the proposed elevation is lower than the Base Flood Elevation (BFE)	\$	Utility and service equipment, including:	
		Heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) equipment	\$
Structural elements and exterior finishes, including:		Plumbing fixtures and piping	\$
Foundations (e.g., spread or continuous foundation footings, perimeter walls, chain-walls, pilings, columns, posts, etc.)	\$	Electrical wiring, outlets, and switches	\$
		Light fixtures and ceiling fans	
Monolithic or other types of concrete slabs	\$	Security systems	\$
Bearing walls, tie beams, trusses	\$	Built-in appliances	\$
Joists, beams, subflooring, framing, ceilings	\$	Central vacuum systems	\$
Exterior finishes (e.g., brick, stucco, siding, painting, and trim)	\$	Water filtration, conditioning, and recirculation systems	\$
Interior non-bearing walls	\$	Construction management and supervision	
Windows and exterior doors	\$	Contractor's overhead and profit	
Roofing, gutters, and downspouts	\$	Sales taxes on materials	
Hardware	\$	Total Cost:	\$
Attached decks and porches	\$		

Table 2. Labor Costs for Residential Construction Projects

Labor Type	Hourly Rates	Hours Worked	Total
Asbestos Worker: Hazardous Material Handler	\$		\$
Elevator Mechanic	\$		\$
Plumber	\$		\$
Pipefitter (HVAC Pipe Installation)	\$		\$
Bricklayer	\$		\$
Carpenter, including: Drywall Hanging	\$		\$
Cement Mason/Concrete Finisher	\$		\$
Drywall Finisher/Taper	\$		\$
Electrician	\$		\$
Laborer: Common Or General	\$		\$
Laborer: Mason Tender for pointing, caulking, cleaning of existing masonry, brick, stone and cement structures (restoration work); excludes: pointing, caulking and cleaning of new or replacement masonry, brick, stone and cement	\$		\$
Painter: Brush and Roller	\$		\$
Pointer, Caulker, Cleaner, includes: pointing, caulking, cleaning of existing masonry, brick, stone and cement structures (restoration work); excludes: pointing, caulking, cleaning of new or replacement masonry, brick, stone or cement			
Roofer	\$		\$
Sheet Metal Worker	\$		\$
Other:	\$		\$
Total Labor Cost:			\$