A Buyer's Guide for Cloudpermit:

A Cloud-Based E-permitting Software

Cloudpermit

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What is Cloudpermit?

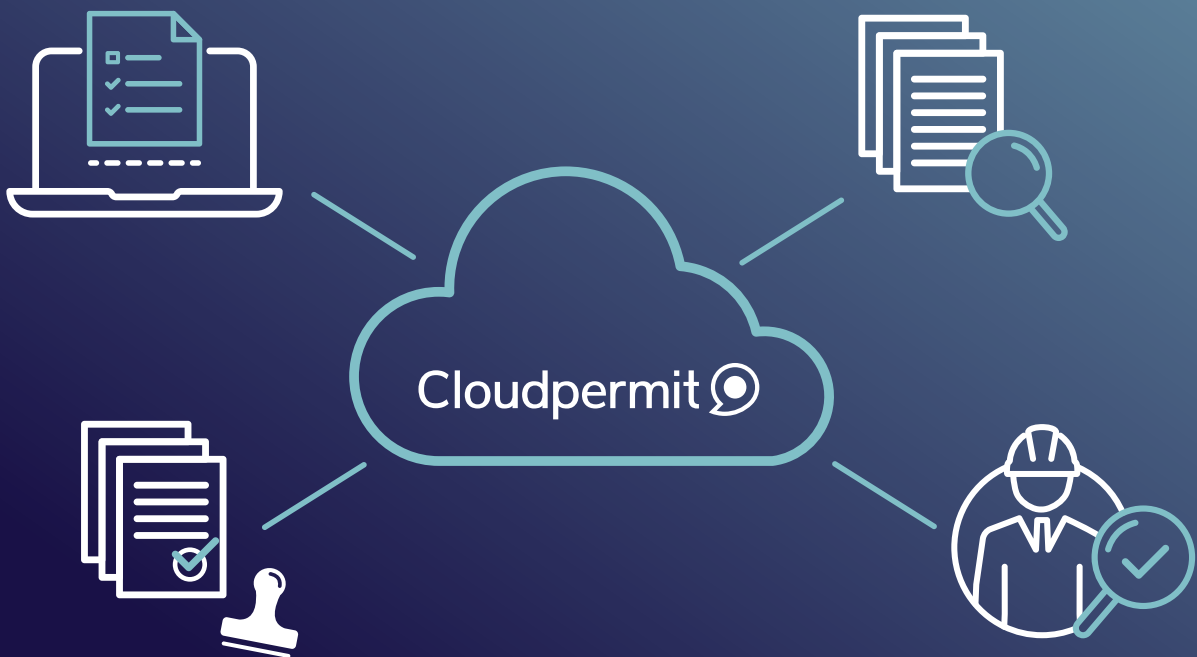Cloudpermit is the world's leading e-permitting software for municipal building departments. It digitalizes the entire building permit process for municipalities of any size.

Cloudpermit

The software is all-in-one and cloud-based (automatically saves and updates, hosted in the cloud, and is managed by Cloudpermit).

Cloudpermit enables municipal building departments to work digitally, remotely, and collaboratively – this helps future-proof processes and create opportunities for municipalities to thrive.

Cloudpermit was built for North American municipal building departments with North American municipal building departments. It is an out-of-the-box solution with a local (state/province) pre-configuration that can be easily configured to meet municipal needs.

A few key benefits:

- ✓ **Conduct mobile inspections – all inspection data is part of the permit file**

- ✓ **Issue permits at least 50% faster than paper-based systems**

- ✓ **Enable the public to apply for building permits online**

- ✓ **Implementation takes weeks, not months**

Why e-permitting?

E-permitting benefits municipal building departments and all involved parties in the building permit process (applicants, builders, contractors, designers, inspectors, etc.). Faster permit issuance is a key benefit of storing all permit data in one space.

A more efficient building permit process speeds up development, which has a direct and immediate impact on a municipality's economy.

E-permitting also improves customer service by enabling applicants to apply for permits online. Applicants can submit or amend permit applications anytime from anywhere rather than needing to travel to the municipal office during office hours.

Digital applications help municipal building departments spend more time reviewing and issuing permits and spend less time on front counter visits.

By going digital, municipal building departments do not need to keep track of paper, filing cabinets, on-premises systems, email, or front counter visits because everything is online in one space.

E-permitting creates a faster building permit process than paper-based systems since applications are online (paperless), and communication is improved. It also costs less by saving money on printing, operational, and travel costs, and optimizes customer experience by eliminating travel, printing costs, and hard-to-follow communication.

With shutdowns, physical distancing, increased permit applications, limited paper exchange, and remote work, the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has pushed municipalities toward digital transformation. E-permitting enables municipal building departments and its communities to work effectively and remotely during the pandemic.

Overall, e-permitting has countless advantages over paper-based and legacy systems.

A Buyer's Checklist for the Ideal E-permitting Solution

E-permitting solutions for municipal building departments are revolutionizing the building permit process. It's important for municipal building departments to consider municipal needs when looking at switching from paper-based or legacy systems to e-permitting.

This part of the Buyer's Guide outlines key criteria to keep in mind when making a purchasing decision.

The checklist consists of six categories:

1. The importance of a cloud-based solution

2. Online capabilities for improved service and remote work

3. Efficient management of daily work

4. Support for mobile inspections

5. Using the data: integrations and reporting

6. Easy implementation and best in-class support

1 The importance of a cloud-based solution

What does cloud-based mean? Cloud-based means data is stored on the Internet, instead of personal computers or on-premises systems. This means data is accessible anywhere and secure.

Cloudpermit is cloud-based – permits are accessible and secure in the cloud.

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Automatic updates and no installations: Cloud-based systems have automatic updates and no installations. For example, Netflix is cloud-based, accessible on any device, and users always have the latest version.

Like Netflix, Cloudpermit is cloud-based, accessible on any device, and users always have the latest version without any manual updates or installations.

Cloudpermit is an all-in-one cloud-based SaaS (software-as-a-service) system that allows the entire building permit process to exist in one digital space.

Easy access regardless of location: Choosing an e-permitting platform that works outside the municipal office and its business hours is important for convenient work and applications.

Cloudpermit is accessible from anywhere with an Internet connection (users' homes, on-site, municipal office, etc.). Municipal building department staff, applicants, and building professionals do not need to travel to the municipal office to submit permit applications or to do their jobs.

Cloudpermit users can check permit application statuses online which improves transparency and reduces calls to the municipal office.

Scalable option: Cloud-based systems are more scalable than on-premises solutions and have more flexible subscription models than the traditional license-based software.

Cloudpermit allows municipalities to grow and scale as unlimited users can be added without needing to increase costs while your departments grow. Its technical scalability means municipal building departments do not need to worry about its performance. As the usage or data amount increases, the service capacity automatically increases.

2 Online capabilities for improved service and remote work

When choosing an e-permitting solution, consider the impacts on service and remote work – look out for these features when deciding what to buy.

Easy-to-use end-to-end system: Ease of use, for both front-end and back-end processes, is important to ensure optimal functionality for internal and external needs.

Cloudpermit is an easy-to-use end-to-end software where all users have access to essentially the same simple layout. It is user-friendly for public-facing and internal needs because it has superior front-end and back-end functionality.

Exceptional application intake: Exceptional application intake improves efficiency, reduces back-and-forth communication with applicants, and speeds up permit issuance. Municipal building departments always receive complete permit applications because Cloudpermit forces applicants to finish their permit application before they can apply.

Since municipal building departments only receive complete permit applications with Cloudpermit, municipal building departments issue permits at least 50% faster than paper-based systems.

Automatically save applications and continue later: E-permitting solutions that automatically save applications and allow users to access applications more than once help avoid unnecessary worry.

Cloudpermit users do not need to worry about a computer crash or losing network connectivity as applications automatically save.

Users can also access applications as many times as needed – they do not need to finish an application in one session.

Ability to work remotely and go paperless: E-permitting provides an opportunity for municipal building departments to work remotely and go paperless.

Cloudpermit saves municipal building departments money on printing costs, enables flexible workflows, and helps maintain physical distancing during the ongoing pandemic by enabling remote and paperless work.

Applicants do not need to print permit applications to submit or make changes to their application – they can submit and amend permit applications online from the comfort of their home.

Accessible and user-friendly software: It's imperative to choose an accessible and user-friendly software that follows accessibility requirements that all public online services must follow. Providing a service that is not compliant with accessibility requirements can lead to sanctions and can limit who is able to use the software.
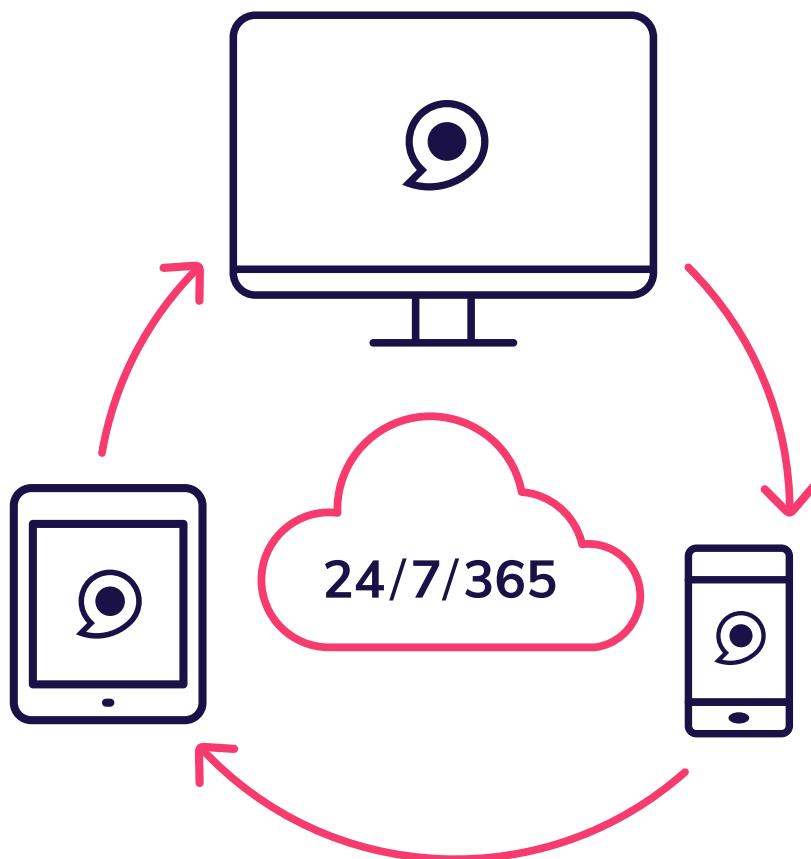
Cloudpermit follows international accessibility standards and local accessibility legislation.

3 Efficient management of daily work

Consider an e-permitting solution that creates efficient management of daily work to improve daily workflows.

Easily assign reviews and tasks to different people: Efficient task assignment creates efficient workflows and reduces back-and-forth communication for municipal building departments and building professionals.

It's easier to manage workflows with Cloudpermit because reviewers, inspectors, contractors, finance teams, etc., are notified when they are assigned a new task.

24/7/365

Easily keep track of building permits and projects of all sizes:
An e-permitting solution that caters to different permit types that
can extend years and vary greatly in size helps municipal building
departments adapt to changing needs.

Cloudpermit enables municipal building departments to easily manage
different permit types, time frames, and sizes because all permit data
is in one digital space (instead of needing to compile data from paper,
phone calls, emails, front counter visits, etc.).

Easily collaborate with all parties involved: E-permitting makes it
easier to manage and communicate about permits since permit data is
stored online.

Cloudpermit users can communicate and collaborate with each other
– add a file, ask a question, reschedule an inspection, assign a task,
etc. – within the software. This helps ensure accountability since all
communication is easy to reference in one place.

4 Support for mobile inspections

E-permitting solutions offer different digitalization levels, so consider one that supports mobile inspections.

Conduct on-site mobile inspections: Most inspections are conducted on-site with a notebook or tablet, and then inspectors travel to the municipal office to input their notes onto an on-premises system. With e-permitting, this is not the only way to collect inspection data.
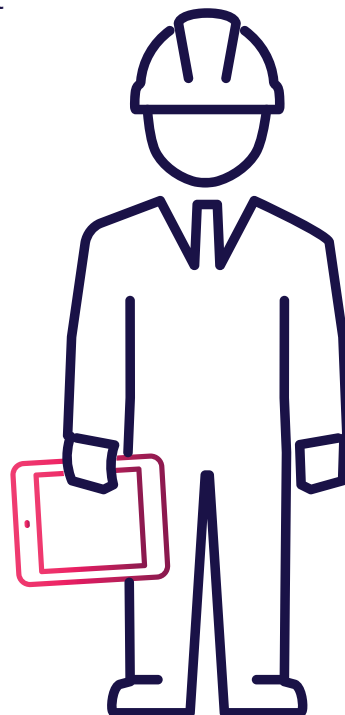
With Cloudpermit, inspectors can conduct on-site mobile inspections and input inspection data (notes, photos, deficiencies, results, etc.) on their mobile device.

Inspection results, including occupancy certificates, are automatically sent to builders and applications when inspections are complete.

Permit description, previous inspection information, drawings, etc., are accessible in the inspection tool, and Cloudpermit enables simple management of inspection data because it exists in one digital space.

Schedule inspections online: Inspections are traditionally scheduled over the phone, via email, or with front counter visits which takes time and can create opportunities for information to get lost – e-permitting can help.

Users can request inspections within Cloudpermit. Applicants can see available dates and times to book inspections, and inspectors are given more control over their daily schedule to plan better routes and make their days more efficient.

5 Using the data: integration and reporting

E-permitting can use existing data to improve application quality and reporting. It can help applicants fill out required permit information, such as location and property information accessible from local GIS integration. Consider an e-permitting solution that improves integration and reporting.

Seamless integration with GIS: Integration with GIS improves accuracy and streamlines the building permit process.

Cloudpermit offers seamless integration with GIS to improve accuracy and streamline the building permit process for municipal building departments and its communities. With GIS integration, users can select the project location from a list of municipal addresses and see locations on a map with property borders.

Cloudpermit can also read and display property information from GIS, such as roll numbers, property owners, and zoning information. Integration is real-time which means the data is always up to date.

Easily manage reporting: Managing and overseeing reporting can be difficult with paper-based or non-integrated systems as files are not always accessible in one space.

With Cloudpermit, all permit and inspections-related data is stored in one service which enables new, valuable municipal data insights to be made effectively.

Reporting tools are available for municipalities in Cloudpermit and for reporting to external parties.

Secure and safe storage for permit data: EE-permitting is a safe and secure data storage option. Traditionally, permit data is stored in filing cabinets or in on-premises systems – this makes data susceptible to vulnerabilities such as forgeries, theft, and physical disasters like fires and floods.

Cloudpermit, as a cloud-based system, securely and safely stores its data in three separate zones in Google Cloud, all located within Canadian borders and managed by Cloudpermit. Each user's account is password protected and the administrative accounts are secured with a 2-factor authentication.

6 Easy implementation and best-in-class support

Be sure to consider specific municipal needs, implementation time after signing a contract, and support during and after onboarding when making an e-permitting purchasing decision.

Configured out-of-the-box software: Different e-permitting platforms offer various configuration levels which can impact implementation time and price.

Cloudpermit can be easily configured to meet local requirements (application types, permit templates, municipality logos, authority users and roles, attachment types, etc.). Since it is out-of-the-box, it can be quickly and easily configured for each municipality.

Receive Cloudpermit support whenever needed: Finding friendly, accessible, and fast support is relevant for ease of use, happy staff, and ensuring the e-permitting software meets municipal needs.

Cloudpermit staff is always available for support over the phone or email. Comprehensive instructions are available in our support portal – our Service Level Agreement (Freshdesk) defines the response and resolutions times when municipal users are facing problems.

Fast, easy implementation and training for staff: Implementation time and training provided to municipal building departments can vary greatly between e-permitting solutions.

Municipal building departments receive hands-on training on how to use Cloudpermit and, on average, implementation takes one month.

Summary and Key Takeaways

A shift toward digital transformation is changing the building industry. As municipal building departments move away from paper-based and legacy systems, e-permitting is on the rise. It helps streamline the building permit process and helps municipalities thrive.

Cloudpermit helps municipal building departments:

- **Become more efficient**

- **Become paperless**

- **Use superior functionality and accessibility**

- **Reduce costs**

- **Optimize customer service**

- **Easily communicate**

- **Work remotely**

Cloudpermit is an excellent option for e-permitting software as it is all-in-one, cloud-based, end-to-end, and configurable.

So, what now? Let's schedule a demo to provide a more detailed look at Cloudpermit and answer any e-permitting purchasing decision questions.

Book a demo

Additional Resources

cloudpermit.com/software

cloudpermit.com/post/on-the-go-inspection-tool-speeds-up-and-increases-reliability-of-the-inspection-process

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