

# Grandpa Dealt With The Wilderness When Building His Homestead - Today's Wilderness Is The Permit System

In the days when our country was first being explored and settled, the adventurous pioneers had concerns of death by disease, snakes, animals and wild savages. However, they continued on in their pursuit of a life in new frontiers, and a chance to build their own home from the wilderness that surrounded them. The only thing that stood in their way were the elements, wild animals and their own fears of starting a brand new country.

Today, many have the same hopes and dreams that our forefathers had of making an enjoyable home for their families in the woods and in the Tennessee countryside just like yesteryear. I recently saw some of those people at a log home show in Nashville and they were looking at building their own home as an adventure just like their forefathers did when this state was part of the move westward.

The good part of doing this is we no longer have to face savages and disease, but if you ever try to do new construction, you will face something much more dangerous and a lot more discouraging. In fact, by the time you move into your house you will develop an attitude that resembles someone once attacked by wild savages. What could be so frightening you ask? The answer is the process of applying for and building with all of the deadly permit applications.

You will find as a builder that there is a permit for everything you do these days. There are septic tank permits, building permits, electrical permits, plumbing permits, impact permits, burning permits, breathing permits (not really, I just threw that one in there for fun), and even a permit to get a permit. Besides all of the hassle you have to go through to get one, it usually costs you a minimum of one hundred dollars every time you turn in a form.

A few years back we built a timber frame house on the farm and I found out real quick that the actual building of the house was the easy part. If you owned your own property a few

years ago, you had accomplished the major hurdle of building. Not today. Just because you own some land, does not mean you can build on it. Without a septic permit you can't

fathers had been required to have permits to settle the West. I have no doubt that we would still be eating cod fish over on the East coast. There would have been no way they could have ever passed a safety test on those covered wagons and by the time they had met all of the environmental regulations required today most of our pioneers would have given up and come home.

While trying to get the proper permits, I found out that where I thought was the most logical place to go and get one was usually not the place to go. Why do they do that? And why do they make it impossible to look them up in the telephone book? You would have to

be born in one of those offices to know what to look for as the correct listing.

Today, offices have politically correct names. You would think you would go to a department with the word health in its title to get a septic tank permit. Not exactly. You go to offices with the word environment also located in their door signage. You have to go to the Environmental Health Department to make that application. Environment comes first and secondly the health and sanity of the people is then considered. You also have to get a soil scientist involved in the final selection spot. The pioneers would have been dead ducks with their outhouses.

Next comes a building permit, but only if you have a septic permit. From here the list goes on and on, plus you have to have them in the correct sequence or you have to start all over again.

The game Monopoly prepares you for getting permits. Just always remember to pass go and you will be alright.

To those planning on building their dream log house and starting on this new adventure, I suggest they develop the same raw courage as their great-great-granddaddy did when he moved to these parts. However, I also suggest they use another tactic that he was not forced to use or would have stooped to when facing hostiles and dangerous wildlife. I call the new frontier tactic "negotiating" - or in other words - begging for mercy.

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