



County of San Diego, Planning & Development Services
HORSE STABLE – CUSTOMER FAQs
ZONING DIVISION

On September 11, 2013 the Board of Supervisors approved amendments to the Zoning Ordinance related to commercial Horse Stable.

Q. What are the changes?

A. Previously, the Zoning Ordinance required a Major Use Permit for a Horse Stable regardless of the size of the stable, the size of the property or the number of horses in many areas of the County. The ordinance has been revised with a system of tiers for permitting of Horse Stables in certain areas. The current equine use types for private or commercial horse uses are:

- **Horsekeeping:** The private use of horses by the owners or occupants of property is known as horsekeeping. The private horsekeeping use type is allowed on most of the properties in the county without the need for a permit. The ordinance did not change the allowance of the horsekeeping use type.
- **Horse Stable:** The public use of horses is considered a horse stable use type when the public either uses their own horses on a property other than their property or the public uses other people’s horses. A horse stable is a commercial use that is considered a service, it does not require that money change hands for it to be considered a service or a commercial use.

A commercial horse stable is currently allowed under two situations, either the ordinance requires a Major Use Permit or no land use permit is required pursuant to zoning. The focus of the changes pertain to streamlining and simplifying the permitting process for horse stables in the area where a Major Use Permit was required. A tiered permitting system has been adopted that allows different levels of permit requirements based on the intensity of the equine operations in that area. Compliance with existing regulations and standards is proposed for the areas where no land use permit is currently required.

The ordinance proposes the following four tiers in the project area:

- Tier 1: Allowed on all properties: Up to 3 horses (boarding or riding lessons only) not owned by property owner
- Tier 2: Zoning Verification Permit: up to 10 horses per acre of usable area, up to a max of 50 horses total
- Tier 3: Administrative Permit: up to 10 horses per acre of usable area, for more than 50 horses and up to a maximum of 100 horses total
- Tier 4: Major Use Permit: more than 100 horses or more than 10 horses per acre of usable area

Summary Table:

Tiers	Permit Required	# Horses per acre	Max # Horses	Acres Required
Tier 1	N/A	N/A	3 (boarding)	N/A
Tier 2	Zoning Verification Permit	up to 10	50	0-5 usable area
Tier 3	Administrative Permit	up to 10	100	5-10 usable area
Tier 4	Major Use Permit	no limit (up to 10 or more)	no limit (up to 100 or more)	no limit (may be more or less than 10 acres)



County of San Diego, PDS, Zoning Division Horse Stable – Customer FAQs

Continued

Q. How do I apply for a Horse Stable under Tier 2?

- A. Installation of a Horse Stable under Tier 2 may require approval of a Building Permit to ensure that structures proposed as part of the stable meet current Uniform Building Code. It may require approval of a grading permit under the provisions of the grading ordinance for any landform modifications. And, a Horse Stable under Tier 2 requires the approval of a Zoning Verification Permit that ensures the Horse Stable complies with County Zoning regulations. Separate permits may be submitted and processed concurrently. Applicants should contact PDS Building at (858) 595-5920 or toll free at (888) 336-7553 for building code or grading standards and requirements. Questions regarding Zoning requirements may be directed to PDS Zoning at (858) 565-5981. The permit process to obtain building permits and/or a Zoning Verification Permit are similar, depending on the complexity of the project, some may take a few weeks to process; some could take a few months to process.

Q. How do I apply for a Horse Stable under Tier 3 or Tier 4?

- A. Horse Stables under Tier 3 or Tier 4 require the approval of an Administrative Permit or a Major Use Permit. Either permit may require a pre-application conference. Additional information concerning Administrative or Major use permits can be obtained at the following link <http://www.sdcounty.ca.gov/pds/zoning/ZoningPermits.html> You are encouraged to contact PDS Zoning at (858) 565-5981 or to discuss the proposed project in person with PDS Zoning staff and/or to schedule a pre-application conference for the project. Typical Administrative or Major Use Permits may take a substantial amount of time to complete from start to finish.

Q. Where can I obtain a copy of the Zoning Ordinance requirements related to Horse Stables?

- A. You may view a copy of the zoning regulations related to stables at the following link: <http://www.sdcounty.ca.gov/pds/advance/Equine.html>

Related Links

Building Permit Application: <http://www.sdcounty.ca.gov/pds/bldgforms/apps.html#291>

Zoning Verification Permit Application: <http://www.sdcounty.ca.gov/pds/zoning/formfields/PDS-378-FF.pdf>

Minimum Plot Plan Information: <http://www.sdcounty.ca.gov/pds/docs/pds090.pdf>

Administrative Permit - Horse Stable: http://www.sdcounty.ca.gov/pds/zoning/formfields/ESUB_AD_Horse_Stable.pdf

Major Use Permit Guidelines: <http://www.sdcounty.ca.gov/pds/zoning/formfields/PDS-565.pdf>

Equine Ordinance: <http://www.sdcounty.ca.gov/pds/advance/Equine.html>