



DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

TO: Development Services Customers

SUBJECT: **INFORMATION BULLETIN 104a**
Temporary on Permanent Set (TOPS)
Release to CPS Requirements (**New Construction**)
(Residential and Commercial)

DATE: January 5, 2006
Revised May 17, 2012/Nov 2015/July 2022/February 8, 2023

CREATED BY: Field Services Division

Purpose:

As a customer service initiative, the Development Services Department (DSD) created this **revised** bulletin to update IB 104a for temporary on permanent set (TOPS) release to CPS (**new construction**) for both residential and commercial. This bulletin has been updated to clarify the requirements for TOPS inspections/permits within the new BuildSA permitting system.

Please review requirements for TOPS for work for Existing buildings [IB104b](#).

Scope:

DSD requires that each building or structure have all permits finalized prior to giving a final approval to the utility company (CPS Energy) authorizing them to energize the electrical service. However, an approval/authorization to CPS Energy for a TOPS Release can be provided prior to a Certificate of Occupancy or a Letter of Completion for a construction project. TOPS inspections are obtained in three distinct ways depending on the type of application and scope of work. Each process has its own requirements to obtain the Release to CPS. In all cases a Texas licensed master electrician registered with the City of San Antonio is required to be associated with a permit.

RESIDENTIAL (New Home)

A TOPS fee and TOPS inspections are part of the combination building permit for the New Residential Building permit. A TOPS is requested on line as part of the application for a building permit for a new home by a homeowner or homebuilder.

During the application, a Texas licensed master electrician registered with the City of San Antonio may be added as a Licensed Professional (LP) onto the record, or after Plan Review, may be added to the residential building permit record by the permit applicant (Homeowner or the Homebuilder). Once the TOPS fee is paid, only the electrical LP may call and schedule the TOPS inspection. Anyone may pay the TOPS fee.

If the New Residential application was submitted without a TOPS request, then the Home Builder or the Master Electrician may request the fee and inspection be added to the building permit by calling the department at 210-207-8286 or e-mail a request to Valerie Gleason (Valerie.Gleason@sanantonio.gov). The Electrical LP must be added to the combination permit to schedule the inspection.

The electrical contractor must not pull a separate TOPS electrical permit on-line. If this is done, the TOPS fee will end up being paid twice and there will be two sets of inspections, as well as cause the automatic approval to CPS Energy for the Release to be hindered.

The Release to CPS for New Residential is automatic. There is a checklist on the DSD website which lists all the requirements that must be met prior to the approval sent automatically to CPS for a release. Please review the residential requirements at <https://docsonline.sanantonio.gov/FileUploads/DSD/BuildSACPSEnergyChecklistResidential.pdf>

COMMERCIAL

A TOPS fee and TOPS inspections are a part of the combination building permit for a Commercial Building permit where there is a new meter for a new building, or an upgraded to an existing building with a remodel permit. A TOPS fee and inspections are requested during the application online for a Commercial Project Building Permit. A commercial application can be used to apply for multiple new buildings such as a multi-building campus or apartment complex. Each issued building permit for a new building may have its own TOPS fee and inspection. The commercial project application would be filled out and submitted with a request for a TOPS requirements for each building.

A Texas licensed master electrician registered with the City of San Antonio must be added as a Licensed Professional (LP) to the Commercial Building permit record (or may be added during the application on the application record) by the applicant for the commercial permit. Once the TOPS fee is paid on the permit, only the electrical LP may call and schedule the TOPS inspections. Anyone may pay the TOPS fee.

If the Commercial application was submitted without a TOPS request, then the applicant or the Master Electrician may request the fee and inspection be added to the building permit by calling the department at 210-207-8286 or e-mail a request to Valerie Gleason (Valerie.Gleason@sanantonio.gov). The Electrical LP must be added to the combination permit to schedule the inspection.

The electrical contractor must not pull a separate TOPS electrical permit on-line. If this is done, the TOPS fee will end up being paid twice and there will be two sets of inspections, as well as cause the approval to CPS Energy for the release to be hindered and delayed.

The Release to CPS for Commercial is a manual process in that DSD staff checks to see that all requirements for a TOPS release is met. If appropriate inspections are passed, the approval is manually sent to CPS Energy for the release. There is a checklist on the DSD website which lists all the commercial requirements that must be met prior to the approval sent to CPS for a release. Please review the commercial requirements that must be met before release at <https://docsonline.sanantonio.gov/FileUploads/DSD/BuildSACPSEnergyChecklistCommercial.pdf>

STANDALONE TOPS (ELECTRICAL) PERMIT

In rare circumstances a second TOPS Release to CPS is required above and beyond the Release to CPS that is a part of the Residential or Commercial building permit. As an example, a second meter might be required for a fire pump for the sprinkler system for a new building and the meter needs to be released for testing by Fire system contractors/Fire inspectors. It is not possible to have two Releases to CPS work processes on the same Accela permit record number, so a standalone TOPS permit application would need to be applied for. The TOPS permit is a subtype of an Electrical Permit when applied for. This application must be applied for online and submitted by the Texas licensed master electrician registered with the City of San Antonio. The TOPs fee and inspections are on the standalone TOPS permit. In this case the standalone TOPS permit belongs to the master electrician and must be linked to the main building permit.

OCCUPANCY

The allowance of the TOPS Release to CPS to energize power must never be used to allow homeowners or business owners to occupy a building or structure. The building or structure must meet all the necessary requirements of all Building and Fire related trades prior to allowing it to be occupied.

Should you have any questions on this process, please contact the Electrical Inspections Supervisor at (210) 207-8286, or by email to Valerie.Gleason@sanantonio.gov.

Summary:

This Information Bulletin is for informational purposes only.

Prepared by: Richard Chamberlin, PE, Development Services Engineer

Reviewed by: Valerie Gleason, Electrical Inspections Supervisor

Authorized by: Michael Shannon, PE, CBO, Director