



**CEESP Goal 1: WHPA Compliance Online Permitting Working Group
Teleconference Summary Notes
Monday, October 10, 2016
Scheduled for 9:00am – 10:00am PDT**

Call to Order

Committee Co-Chair Mark Meyers (CALBO) called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. PDT. The meeting was recorded for note and reference purposes.

Roll Call

WHPA Staff (Wendy Worrell) conducted roll call based on the current WHPA Online Permitting Working Group roster. As no voting panel has been assigned in favor of consensus voting, members are organized by voting eligibility status. The following 19 participants (or proxies) attended the meeting.

Organization	First Name	Last Name	WHPA Category	Attendance
Voting Eligible				
ACCA (Air Conditioning Contractors of America)	Todd	Washam	Contractor Association	P (first 38 min)
CALBO (California Building Officials)	Mark	Meyers	Codes & Standards Official (Association or Jurisdiction)	P (Co-Chair)
CalCERTS, Inc.	Charlie	Bachand	Certifying Body	A
CalCERTS, Inc. (standing Proxy)	Susan	Davison	Certifying Body	P
CHEERS	Bob	Johnson	Certifying Body	P
CHF-CIRB (California Homebuilding Foundation, Construction Industry Research Board)	Allison	Paul	Research Organization	A (Co-Chair)
DNV GL – Energy	Amber	Watkins	Energy Efficiency Program Consultant	P
Duct Testers	Dave	Hegarty	Other Stakeholder	P
Enalasy	Eric	Taylor	Third Party Quality Assurance Providers	P
Enalasy (standing Proxy)	Michael	Thompson	Third Party Quality Assurance Providers	A
The Energy CA, LLC	Eric	Beriault	Third Party Quality Assurance Providers	P
IHACI (Institute of Heating and Air Conditioning Industries)	Bob	Wiseman	Contractor Association	P
Indio Cooling & Heating Supply	Tim	Mann	Distributor	P
PG&E (Pacific Gas and Electric Company)	Jill	Marver	California IOU	P
SCE (Southern California Edison)	Gary	Shushnar	California IOU	P
Not Voting Eligible				
CEC (California Energy Commission)	Thomas	Trimberger+	Government (Other than CPUC)	A
Conserva Alliance ^(P)	Alex	Trochez ^(P)	Other Stakeholder	P (last 37 min)
EnerGtech Experts**	Brent	Locke+	Other Stakeholder	P
Energy Cloud Inc. ^(P)	John	Carrieri ^(P)	Other Stakeholder	A
iPermit ERaters**	Ian	Jacoby+	Third Party Quality Assurance Providers	A
USERA	Don	Charles+	Third Party Quality Assurance Providers	P (first 45 min)
Guests				
CALBO (California Building Officials)	Bob	Barks	Codes & Standards Official (Association or Jurisdiction)	P (Compliance Chair)
Selby Energy Inc	Brian	Selby	Educator, Trainer	P (guest of Jill Marver)
WHPA Staff				
CLEAResult	Paul	Kyllo	Other Stakeholder	P (first 17 min)
Empowered Solutions	Shea	Dibble	Energy Efficiency Program Consultant	A
InfoPlast	Wendy	Worrell	Other Stakeholder	P (Host/Scribe)
Opinion Dynamics	Ellen	Steiner	Other Stakeholder	A

** Organization is Not a Member of the WHPA; + Individual is NOT Registered with the WHPA; (P) = Member Organization is Pending Approval from the WHPA Executive Committee.

WHPA Staff Note: Alex Trochez with Conserva Alliance and John Carrieri with Energy Cloud Inc. have pending WHPA membership applications. Their meeting attendance as well as of those who have not yet registered either as a WHPA member organization and/or a participant of a WHPA registered member organization (Thomas Trimberger with CEC, Brent Locke with EnerGtech Experts, Ian Jacoby with iPermit ERaters, Don Charles with USERA) was approved with understanding that they are responsible for participation in accordance with the [Western HVAC Performance Alliance Code of Conduct](#).

AGENDA

The following agenda was distributed to the Working Group by WHPA Staff prior to the meeting, along with the meeting slides:



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AGENDA ITEMS

- 1) **Roll Call** – WHPA Staff (Wendy Worrell) – 5 min
- 2) **Prior Notes Approval** – Co-Chair (Mark Meyers, CALBO) – 2 min
- 3) **Progress Updates** - Co-Chair (Mark Meyers, CALBO) – 40 min
 - a) **LEGISLATIVE AND REGULATORY POLICY ISSUES** for minimum requirements that can be streamlined throughout the State of California. (This does not include jurisdictional variables.)
 - i) **Code Requirements Update** – Jill Marver, PG&E
 - b) **SURVEYING** for perspective on how an online permitting system would benefit building departments and contractors, as well as what might induce them to participate in ongoing online permitting.
 - i) **Final Survey Content Review and Approval** - Co-Chair (Mark Meyers, CALBO)
 - (1) Jurisdictional Survey – Amber Watkins, DNV GL Energy
 - (2) Contractor Survey– Brent Locke, EnerGtech Experts
 - ii) **CSLB C-20 Contractor List Order Parameters** – WHPA Staff (Wendy Worrell)
 - c) **Best Practices in Online Permitting** – Co-Chair (Mark Meyers, CALBO) – 8 min
 - i) Third Call for Subgroup Volunteers
 - (1) **TASK:** Follow-up with City of Sunnyvale (based on Greg Mahoney’s Survey results)
 - (2) **TASK:** Review and Present Summary Presentations for Background Research
 - (a) California Solar Permitting Guidebook Overview (Focus: Best Practices to Model)
 - (b) CSE’s HVAC Permitting Best Practices Overview (Focus: Any Available Results/Statistics/Suggestions)
 - (c) Green It Forward (Imperial Valley) Online Permitting Pilot Results Overview (Focus: Results/Statistics/Process Flow)
 - 4) **Meeting Next Steps Overview** – Co-Chair (Mark Meyers, CALBO) - 5 min
 - a) Next Meeting: **Monday, October 24, 2016 from 9:00am – 10:00am PDT**
 - b) Next Agenda
 - i) **CF (1R, 2R, 3R) Forms Side by Side Comparison Overview** – Alex Trochez, Conserva Alliance
 - ii) Other TBD
 - 5) **Adjournment** by 10:00am PDT – Co-Chairs (Mark Meyers, CALBO & Allison Paul, CHF)

PRIOR MEETING NOTES

WHPA Staff emailed the September 30, 2016 draft meeting notes for review prior to the meeting.

ACTION: WHPA Staff to post the final version of the September 30, 2016 meeting notes reflective of any emailed comments received by Friday, October 14, 2016.

PROGRESS UPDATES

Co-Chair Mark Meyers (CALBO) facilitated discussion of the following update categories.

LEGISLATIVE AND REGULATORY POLICY ISSUES

Jill Marver (PG&E) reported on code requirements related to online permitting. Gary Shushnar, her SCE counterpart and Brian Selby with Selby Energy were also on the call to assist in answering code questions. In reply to Jill’s inquiry, the Co-Chair requested that the discussion focus on 2016 code.

Jill Marver (PG&E) reported that there are new facts and trigger sheets on the EnergyCodeAce.com webpage. (Go to <http://energycodeace.com/>, click on “Resources Ace”, click on “Facts Sheets”, click on “2016”, click on “Residential”, click on “what’s changed”. The direct residential document is available at: <file:///C:/Users/Wendy/Downloads/2016%20WhatsChanged-Res%20090816.pdf>).

Brian Selby (Selby Energy) summarized the primary differences as follows:

- HVAC and Domestic Hot Water: new requirements for heat pumps – all from Table 110.2 that falls into State and Federal code and into Title 24 requirements.



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- Tank Water Heater to Tankless.
- Switch in basic design for getting credits for ducts and condition space – had to redefine condition space – now R-4.2 is a major shift in requirement.

Q&A SESSION

Eric Taylor (Enalasy) commented that this is great for building departments and is good for the HVAC industry. He uses EnergyCodeAce “all the time”.

Co-Chair Mark Meyers (CALBO) stressed that specific information was needed about requirements that are needed to obtain permits beyond Title 24 which adds to the complexity of the issue. He clarified that energy coding provides an idea of energy change out requirements, but that there are also permit requirements in the permitting process. Contractors often complain about inconsistency in requirements. He wants to ensure there is a standardized permitting process through a standard statewide online permitting system for all minimum required data collection.

Gary Shushnar (SCE) clarified that for the EnergyCodeAce team and Utilities in general, they are only funded to do the energy efficient focus. “This team” can’t work on demand response, which is of interest to them, but funded elsewhere. He was unsure if as a Utility they would be allowed to do some of the things being requested.

Co-Chair Mark Meyers (CALBO) clarified that the focus is not down into the local jurisdictional level, but rather is focused at the State level.

Jill Marver (PG&E) commented that the local requirements cause an issue for her ability to ensure customers they could get an incentive if the local jurisdictions have differences for permit pulling requirements. She may need to talk with CLSB or CEC further about it.

Susan Davison (CalCERTS) suggested that it is similar to solar permitting for what is required in the State. Jurisdictions can add their layers on top of that foundation.

Jill Marver (PG&E) asked if there is a law that says what people must do for solar that makes it the baseline.

Gary Shushnar (SCE) clarified that there is a law but that it is related to time. Building Departments have a certain number of days to issue a permit and then to inspect a site. The online permitting process is designed to help them meet the time constraints if they are not equipped to do so.

Eric Taylor (Enalasy) confirmed that it is 6 months for HVAC permits. If the work is not done in 6 months, the pulled permit must be closed out and reissued. If a CF1R is pulled, then the third-party quality control program goes. Building Departments may use the CF2R. The CF3R is standard across the state. The forms CEC provides should suffice for the permit to be pulled and a rebate to be paid.

Co-Chair Mark Meyers (CALBO) redirected that the Working Group’s narrative deliverable needs to incorporate information for the Standards that say when you can get a permit, who can get a permit, how long a permit is good for, etcetera. For example, if a contractor is involved, their contact information and license information would be needed, etcetera. The minimum required information needs to be stated.

Bob Barks (CALBO and the WHPA Compliance Committee Chair) agreed with the Co-Chair’s comments. Bob noted that he previously sent some State law content to WHPA Staff.

Co-Chair Mark Meyers (CALBO) clarified that the requirement is not from CSLB. It is information required by law for a permit that then includes going to CSLB for requirements for the contractor. He confirmed that almost no jurisdictions will allow affidavit signing anymore. They must make sure the contractor is appropriately licensed at the state level, if there is proper classification, if correct information was collected for the property owner, etcetera.



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Eric Taylor (Enalaysys) suggested that the market will take care of contractors pulling permits. Calxico requires a building license where other departments don't, but they educate the contractors on that requirement. Enalaysys provides a service to help them get the needed license and remind them that they need to renew, etcetera.

Co-Chair Mark Meyers (CALBO) directed that more information on State Standards is needed.

SURVEYING

Final Survey Content Review and Approval

Co-Chair Mark Meyers (CALBO) reported that the subgroups developing the jurisdictional survey and the contractor survey have made additional progress.

Jurisdictional Survey Content

Amber Watkins (DNV GL) overviewed the revised questionnaire developed for use with jurisdictions. (*See Appendix 1: Jurisdictional Questionnaire Draft*).

Gary Shushnar (SCE) commented that most jurisdictions near them also require the contractor business license. There is little value to an online permitting system that does not allow online business permits.

Bob Johnson (CHEERS) indicated that workers comp insurance would also be required.

Co-Chair Mark Meyers (CALBO) confirmed that State law has changed so that contractor license verification is no longer a business department requirement but rather the responsibility of the CSLB.

Bob Johnson (CHEERS) noted that his local jurisdiction double checked the business license each time. He also commented that it is also easy for HERS raters to integrate.

Co-Chair Mark Meyers (CALBO) confirmed that his prior jurisdiction also has license verification as an automated process.

Eric Taylor (Enalaysys) suggested that it would be good if Utilities could include training on the fact that CSLB is now responsible for business license verification rather than Building Departments.

Co-Chair Mark Meyers (CALBO) confirmed that would be a good educational component, but that it is not a factor for the survey or online permitting system.

Bob Wiseman (IHACI) commented that for Question #6, he did not see anything for where a contractor can request final inspection through the online system.

ACTION: The Jurisdictional Survey to include an option under Question #6 for "requesting final inspection"

ACTION: Bob Johnson (CHEERS) to research and send the list of permit verification software to Amber Watkins (DNV GL). (energy, usels, computronix, citizenserve, open data, etcetera)

ACTION: Amber Watkins (DNV GL) recommended using a drop down of the commonly used software for question #5d with an option for an "other" fill-in.

Contractor Survey Content

Brent Locke (EnerGtech) overviewed the revised questionnaire developed for use with contractors. (*See Appendix 2: Contractor Questionnaire Draft*.) Primary focus was on the comments from Co-Chair Mark Meyers (CALBO) included in the distributed Word document.

ACTION: Contractor Survey Question #1 will have language added to reflect a standardized online permitting system at the state level.



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It was noted that the prior meeting had conversation about the need to have a popup to clarify which departments were found to be easy, difficult, etcetera for Question #5.

Brent Locke (EnerGtech) cautioned that too many layers in the survey may cause some contractors to drop out of the survey.

Co-Chair Mark Meyers (CALBO) clarified that the request to “tell us why it is easy” for question #6 was to understand if it was a feature, process, form, or something else that made the process easy so it could be used for expansion to other departments.

Brent Locke (EnerGtech) suggested that further research could be done on the specific department rather than putting it in the form.

Bob Wiseman (IHACI) felt it depended on the survey tool used.

WHPA Staff clarified that WHPA Staff is using a Survey Monkey gold account that can do if-then situations to pull up appropriate layers.

ACTION: Brent Locke (EnerGtech) and Bob Wiseman (IHACI) to revisit potential question layering on the contractor survey.

Co-Chair Mark Meyers (CALBO) reported that he was not indicating to take out or leave in question #10, but was asking if enforcement should be included with our online permitting focus.

Brent Locke (EnerGtech) noted the need for contractors to be able to try to level the playing field by reporting those that are not reporting. Eric Taylor (Enalasy) agreed.

Bob Wiseman (IHACI) noted that there is cost for the HERS rater as well as the permit so the cost goes to about \$300.

DECISION: There was general agreement to keep Contractor Survey question #10 “as is”.

Regarding question #13, Co-Chair Mark Meyers (CALBO) suggested asking “Do you see any value to permits for HVAC change outs? If not, why not?” He clarified that “if our target audience sees no value in permits, then we clearly have a far greater problem than online permitting.”

ACTION: Brent Locke (EnerGtech) and Mark Meyers (CALBO) to further discuss Contractor Survey question #13 offline.

CSLB C-20 Contractor List Order Parameters

This item was not discussed during the meeting.

BEST PRACTICES IN ONLINE PERMITTING

Don Charles (USERA) asked about the possibility of getting follow-up data on the pilots that took place in the Imperial Valley in terms of the success rate, how contractors used it, etcetera.

ACTION: Eric Taylor (Enalasy) agreed to provide an update on the Green It Forward (Imperial Valley) Pilot results at a future meeting.

ACTION: Don Charles (USERA) to send Eric Taylor (Enalasy) a list of specific content sought for the Imperial Valley Pilot results.

WHPA Staff clarified that the above referenced document was included in the following request for action to get us started on determining best practices.

- a) **TASK:** Follow-up with City of Sunnyvale (based on Greg Mahoney’s Survey results)
- b) **TASK:** Review and Present Summary Presentations for Background Research
 - i) California Solar Permitting Guidebook Overview (Focus: Best Practices to Model)
 - ii) CSE’s HVAC Permitting Best Practices Overview (Focus: Any Available Results/Statistics/Suggestions)



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- iii) Green It Forward (Imperial Valley) Online Permitting Pilot Results Overview
(Focus: Results/Statistics/Process Flow)

WHPA Staff noted that the HVAC6 Study would also be included on the list if Amber Watkins (DNV GL) felt there was something to present that directly related to online permitting.

ACTION: WHPA Staff to work on recruiting volunteers for needed best practices research.

MEETING NEXT STEPS OVERVIEW

The next Online Permitting Working Group meeting is planned for October 24, 2016 from 9:00am – 10:00am PDT. The agenda will be distributed prior to the meeting. Agenda items are expected to include:

- 1. CF Forms Side by Side Comparison Overview – Alex Trochez, Conserva Alliance
- 2. Final Survey Review and Voting

CLOSING COMMENTS/ADJOURNMENT

Co-Chair Mark Meyers (CALBO) adjourned the meeting at 10:10 a.m. PDT.

* * * * *

SUMMARY OF ACTION ITEMS AND KEY DECISIONS (from above)

DECISIONS

- 1. **DECISION:** There was general agreement to keep Contractor Survey question #10 “as is”.

ACTION ITEMS

- 1. **ACTION:** WHPA Staff to post the final version of the September 30, 2016 meeting notes reflective of any emailed comments received by Friday, October 14, 2016.
- 2. **ACTION:** The Jurisdictional Survey to include an option under Question #6 for “requesting final inspection”
- 3. **ACTION:** Bob Johnson (CHEERS) to research and send the list of permit verification software to Amber Watkins (DNV GL). (energov, usels, computronix, citizenserve, open data, etcetera)
- 4. **ACTION:** Amber Watkins (DNV GL) recommended using a drop down of the commonly used software for question #5d with an option for an “other” fill-in.
- 5. **ACTION:** Contractor Survey Question #1 will have language added to reflect a standardized online permitting system at the state level.
- 6. **ACTION:** Brent Locke (EnerGtech) and Bob Wiseman (IHACI) to revisit potential question layering on the contractor survey.
- 7. **ACTION:** Brent Locke (EnerGtech) and Mark Meyers (CALBO) to further discuss Contractor Survey question #13 offline.
- 8. **ACTION:** WHPA Staff to work on recruiting volunteers for needed best practices research.

ACTION ITEMS (continued from prior meetings)

- 1. **ACTION:** Alex Trochez (Conversa Alliance) to provide a side by side view of CF1R, CF2R, and CF3R requirements for comparison. (Pushed to the October 24th Agenda)



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APPENDIX 1: JURISDICTIONAL QUESTIONNAIRE DRAFT

WHPA—HVAC Reporting Questionnaire

- Jurisdiction: _____
- Respondent's title: _____
- Date survey completed: _____

Introduction:

The WHPA (Western HVAC Performance Alliance) is conducting an assessment among California's building departments on the reporting and filing practices for a web-based permitting system. We request the feedback of your enforcement agency in this endeavor.

WHPA's goal is to evaluate the potential of a statewide web-based application designed for building department enforcement personnel and customers for the purposes of filing a permit and for tracking permits issued. This scope of work is specific to the heating ventilation and air conditioning HVAC (mechanical permits) commonly termed "changeouts". The WHPA believes a web-based application will improve the efficiency and accessibility for both building department staff and applicants (i.e. contractors, residential customers) and is expected to enhance code compliance and statistical accuracy of permit reporting.

The WHPA acknowledges your department may already have a system that serves this purpose and that your department may have been surveyed with related questions in the recent past conducted by various independent entities. However, we want to emphasize the importance of this statewide evaluation in helping inform policy on the needs and use of a web-based application. We thank you in advance for your thoughtful and accurate response.

HVAC Changeout Definition:

The assessment is considering two types of HVAC changeouts: (1) alterations that include new/replacement HVAC components and (2) alterations that include entirely new or replacement HVAC systems (that is, all HVAC equipment and ducts are new/replaced).

Questions:

1. In 2016, has your building department issued any residential HVAC changeout permits?
2. Approximately how many would you estimate have been issued?
3. How are residential permit historical records currently stored at your building department?
 - a) Electronic (database)
 - b) Hard copy (paper)
 - c) Microfiche
 - d) Combination (describe)
 - e) Other (describe)
 - f) [Don't know]
4. Which if the following online permit feature does your building department currently offer?
 - a) Search for permits on an existing building
 - b) Apply for permits online
 - c) Check the status of a permit
 - d) Pay permit fees
 - e) Obtain fee schedules
 - f) Obtain permit applications
 - g) None of the above

[If Q4= b then ask otherwise skip]

5. Can mechanical HVAC permits be applied for online? Yes/no



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APPENDIX 1: JURISDICTIONAL QUESTIONNAIRE DRAFT (continued)

- Q5a. [**If Q5 = no**] Why are mechanical HVAC permits not available for an online application? Please describe all reasons:
Q5b. What other kinds of permits can be applied for online? Please describe: _____
Q5c. What year did you start offering online permitting?
Q5d. What software application is used to process the online permitting system?
Q5d. Have permit applicants fees increased to pay for the online permit system?
Q5e. Do you believe the online permit system will encourage permit compliance or will it make no difference? Encourage/No Difference/Don't know
Q5f. How has your staff adjusted to the online permit system?
Very positive response, positive, somewhat positive, not very positive, not at all positive
Q5g. How has your community adjusted to the online permit system?
Very positive response, positive, somewhat positive, not very positive, not at all positive, don't know
Q5h. What challenges or barriers did the building department experience in the development of the online permit system?
Probes:
>Payment process
>Legal issues
>Integration of compliance forms
>Resistance to use
>Costly
>Effectiveness

[If Q4≠ b then ask otherwise skip]

6. Is your building department planning to implement an “apply for permit” system in the near future? Yes/no

[If Q6 = yes then ask otherwise skip] When do you expect to have the system in use (year)?

[If Q6 = no then ask otherwise skip] Why not?

7. If an “apply for permit” system was made available to your BD, do you expect personnel would embrace it?

Q7a. If an “apply for permit” system was made available to your BD, what concerns would you have?

Q8. Who at your building department should we speak with concerning including your building department in an online permit system?



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APPENDIX 2: CONTRACTOR QUESTIONNAIRE DRAFT

WHPA Online HVAC Permitting

1st Draft as of 9/30/16

Contractor Survey Questions:

1. Does the idea of using a common, online HVAC permitting system across all jurisdictions appeal to you?

- A. Yes
- B. No

2. Would an “online only” HVAC permitting system make you more or less likely to pull a permit?

- A. more likely to pull a permit
- B. less likely to pull a permit
- C. It would make no difference

3. What type of permitting system would you more likely use in your day-today business? Rank from 1 to 4 with 1 being most likely to use and 4 being least likely to use.

- A permitting system that was completely online that I could access from my computer and not have to go to the building department
- A permitting system that I could download a form from my computer and return physically to the building department
- A permitting system that works completely from a smart phone app
- A manual processing of permits all done at the building department

4. Have you ever used an online permitting system for an HVAC change out?

- A. Yes the system was completely online
- B. Yes but I had to physically go to the building department to complete the task
- C. Yes, I’ve done both a. and b. above
- D. No, I’ve never used an online system

5. How would you rate your overall experience in using online HVAC permitting systems?

- A. Easy
- B. Easy, depending on the jurisdiction
- C. Difficult
- D. I have not used an online permitting system

6. Please type in the name(s) of the jurisdiction(s) you found easy.

7. Please type in the name(s) of the jurisdiction(s) you found difficult.

8. Do you believe using an HVAC permitting system that is completely online would save you time in your day-to-day operations?

- A. Yes
- B. No

9. If the permitting process could be done completely online, and the online fee was the same as the manual process of pulling a permit, would you be more likely or less likely to use the online permitting system?

- A. more likely to use online
- B. less likely to use online

10. If an online permitting system had a function to report contractors who are not pulling permits, would you find that function useful?

- A. Absolutely
- B. Yes, but only if I really knew that it would be enforced
- C. Not at all useful



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APPENDIX 2: CONTRACTOR QUESTIONNAIRE DRAFT (continued)

- 11. If an online permitting system gave you the ability to report another contractor for not pulling a permit, would you prefer to remain anonymous or would it make no difference if you were anonymous or not?**
- A. I would prefer to remain anonymous
 - B. It would make no difference if I were anonymous or not
- 12. What do you see as the barriers that would prevent you from using an online permitting system? (select all that apply)**
- A. expense
 - B. learning curve to use the system
 - C. security
 - D. other (type in your answer)
- 13. Do you see any benefits for your customers in using an online permitting system?**
- A. Yes, because they want to be compliant
 - B. Yes, if they wanted to check the status of the permit
 - C. Yes, if they were able to request the inspections themselves
 - D. No, I don't believe my customers would be interested