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Code Compliance and Permitting of Pre-Fabricated Patio Covers for Single Family Residences (Gazebos, Pergolas, Sun Shades)

This is a clarification of the code requirements and inherent risks and responsibilities related to installation of Pre-Fabricated Patio Covers such as Gazebos, Pergolas, Sun Shades and similar structures at private residences

Per Section R301 of the International Residential Code as adopted by the Village of Orland Park, all structures must be designed and constructed to safely support all loads, including dead loads, live loads, roof loads, snow loads, wind loads, and seismic loads as prescribed by the code.

Typical patio covers and similar structures constructed with dimensional lumber and timber are often built following the prescriptive requirements of the code, and as such do not require evidence of engineered design. However, Pre-Fabricated Patio covers are assembled from custom steel, aluminum, and composite wood materials, and fall outside of the prescriptive design allowed by code, and as such per Section R301.1.3, Pre-Fabricated structures shall be designed in accordance with accepted engineering practice by a licensed professional.

Due to the proliferation of Pre-Fabricated Patio Covers widely available for retail sale at home improvement stores, the Development Services Department has been receiving large number of building permit applications for installation of these structures at private residences. Most of these pre-fabricated structures lack any documentation which would demonstrate compliance with the code requirement for an engineered design, making it impossible for the code official to verify whether the structure is designed to support all required loads.

Due to the inability to verify the code conformance of the Pre-Fabricated Patio covers, all permits for installation of these structures will be issued on the following conditions:

1. Upon permit submittal, Development Services Department review and inspections will be limited to verification of the proposed structure with the zoning ordinance and building foundation requirements only.
2. It is strongly recommended that residents wanting to install Pre-Fabricated Patio Covers or similar structures, choose products that come with documentation demonstrating compliance with applicable building codes.
3. Letter from licensed architect or structural engineer indicating he/she has reviewed design and connections is strongly recommended.
4. The owner assumes all risk and responsibility regarding the ability of the structure to support loads as required by code and for installation of the structure.

Signature of Owner/Agent _____ Date _____