

County sees increase in building permits

By Preston McConkie

The Duchesne County Building Department issued 438 building permits in Myton and the unincorporated areas of the county, a 22 percent increase over 2006, when 359 permits were issued. The rise marked a 54 increase over the number of permits issued in 2003.

Of the 438 permits, 173 were for new homes, while the cities of Roosevelt and Duchesne added 37 and 14 homes respectively. For Duchesne this was a decline from last year's 23 new homes. Roosevelt's 2006 numbers were not available at press time.

Numbers for Myton and the county are combined because, until the middle of 2007, county building officials handled permits and inspections for that city. Myton now contracts with a private inspector and handles permits through its own office.

Growth alone has forced the county building office to hire more inspectors, but the workload has also increased because of new standards mandated by state and federal agencies that have office workers tracking more details, according to Duchesne County Building Official Karl Mott.

Mott said his budget for 2007 was \$294,000. According to the clerk-auditor's office, Mott's

department collected permit fees totaling \$283,000. This year Mott's tentative budget was set at \$337,200, and fees would have to rise to cover expenses.

Because permit fees are based on the estimated construction cost of homes, commercial buildings and additions, Mott presented county commissioners with a modified formula that would boost fees to 70 percent of their maximum rate.

"Last year's construction value was \$44 million," Mott said. "If we set the percentage factor right it comes out to cover our budget, and we figure this year 70 percent should cover it. Last year was 65 percent, and that came real close to covering expenditures."

Mott said in 2007 a typical home with 1,975 square feet of interior, porch and garage space would have an estimated construction cost of \$130,856, creating a permit fee of \$693.54. This year, he said, the same house would be valued at \$136,018 with a fee of \$804.07, an increase of 13.5 percent.

Mott said he also set the plan-review fee at a minimum flat rate of \$200, with higher charges possible for large plans or those requiring longer than normal reviews. Formerly all plan-reviews were charged according to actual time at \$55 an hour.