



Steel Plate Permit & Fees

Updated Fees Effective October 1, 2011

Frequently Asked Questions:

Q: What is the purpose of the steel plate fee?

Having steel plates on the roadway poses a significant safety hazard to motorists, bicyclists and pedestrians. The intent of the fee is to encourage the immediate back-fill of excavations and trenches and increase the safe and efficient movement of people and goods within the District.

Q: What is the steel plate fee?

The new fee applies to the steel plates used to temporarily cover excavations and trenches in the roadway. The steel plate fee will be computed based on the total number of plates, the length of time they are in the roadway and the time of year. The updated steel plate fee will be implemented on October 1, 2011.

Q: What changes were made when the fee was updated?

1. Introduced a “no fee” grace period for the first five (5) days of each steel plate deployment.
2. Eliminated the fee escalation based on the number of plates deployed.

Q: How and when will I be charged the fee?

The steel plate fee will be assessed upon approval of your steel plate permit application in the online TOPS permitting system. If you know how many plates you will need, you may apply for a steel plate permit(s) prior to excavation. Alternatively, you may wait to apply, after excavation work begins, when you are certain about the number of steel plates—and days—needed. TOPS will auto-approve your application upon submission of a valid excavation permit number for your project.

The steel plate fee will not apply to utility work pursuant to Section 225.6 of Title 24 DCMR.

Q: How will the new steel plate fee be calculated and what will be the cost?

The steel plate fee is based on the total number of plates, the length of time they are in the roadway and the time of year. The use of steel plates during the winter months of November through March is discouraged and thus will cost more. Below is a chart showing the steel plate fees:

| Winter: November through March | First 5 Days | Next 5 Days | Each Subsequent 5 Days |
|--------------------------------|--------------|-------------|------------------------|
| Steel Plate Fee (each) | \$0.00 | \$600.00 | \$900.00 |
| Summer: April through October | First 5 Days | Next 5 Days | Each Subsequent 5 Days |
| Steel Plate Fee (each) | \$0.00 | \$300.00 | \$450.00 |

Q: What can I do to reduce the cost of my steel plate permit?

- Adjust your work plan to minimize your use of steel plates.
- Set your start/end dates to match the times when plates are actually deployed.

- Make use of temporary restorations instead of deploying plates for prolonged periods when no work is taking place. For example, you may choose to excavate, deploy steel plates for a brief period, and then backfill and temporarily restore the location. At a later date, you may excavate and deploy plates again [e.g., to allow for an inspection], prior to completing final restoration.
- If doing long lengths of trenching, make use of the following Rotating Plate Pilot program:
 - Identify a limited number of plates that can be moved along the work zone at regular intervals [days].
 - At the end of the stated interval [the Rotation Period], move the plates to a new location.
 - As long as your work, and the plates, continue to progress in the agreed manner, you will only be charged for plate deployment on the initial Rotation Period.
 - In the example below, the applicant pays for only 5 days of steel plate deployment; [10 days minus the 5 day grace period]

| | | | | | | |
|--------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------|----------|
| Day 1 through 10: | Rotating Steel Plate | No Plate | No Plate | No Plate | No Plate | No Plate |
| Day 11 through 20: | No Plate | Rotating Steel Plate | No Plate | No Plate | No Plate | No Plate |
| Day 21 through 30: | No Plate | No Plate | Rotating Steel Plate | No Plate | No Plate | No Plate |
| Day 31 through 40: | No Plate | No Plate | No Plate | Rotating Steel Plate | No Plate | No Plate |

- Please follow the following steps in applying for the Steel Plate Pilot:
 1. Apply for the Rotating Plate Pilot on a separate permit for one rotation period. In the example above, this would be ten (10) days.
 2. In TOPS, use the Description of Work field to indicate “Rotating Plates” and clearly state your Rotation Period [days].
 3. Following auto-approval by TOPS, pay for this permit and immediately apply for a permit renewal for the remainder of the time needed. In the example above, the renewal would be for 30 days = three (3) Rotation Periods.
 4. There will be no fee for the Rotating Plate renewal period. Please contact the Public Space Permit Office at (202) 442-4670 for assistance.

Q: What if my trenching is on schedule with the Rolling Plate Pilot, but a section needs to stay covered by steel plates?

- Please keep your original set of steel plates moving on schedule.
- Apply, and pay for, a separate steel plate permit for the plate(s) to cover the non-rotating excavation.