

WHEN IS A BUILDING PERMIT REQUIRED?

According to the 2012 International Residential Code and 2012 International Building Code, a permit is required when “Any owner or authorized agent who intends to construct, enlarge, alter, repair, move, demolish or change the occupancy of a building or structure, or to erect, install, enlarge, alter, repair, remove, convert or replace any electrical, gas, mechanical or plumbing system, the installation of which is regulated by this code, or to cause any such work to be done, shall first make application to the building official and obtain the required permit.”

- In general, anything that effects foundations or roof support structures, or adding to an existing structure would require a building permit.
- In general, adding to, or running a new circuit, circuits, or service on any voltage over 50 would require an electrical permit.
- In general, adding to, or running new drains, vents or potable hot and cold-water piping would require a plumbing permit.

EXAMPLE OF WORK NOT REQUIRING A PERMIT

1. One-story detached Accessory structures used as tool and storage sheds, playhouses and similar uses, providing the floor area does not exceed 200 sq. ft. (18.58 m²) .
2. Fences not over 7 feet (2134 mm) high.
3. Retaining walls not over 4 feet (1219 mm) in height measured from bottom of the footing to the top of the wall, unless supporting a surcharge..
4. Water tanks supported directly upon grade if the capacity does not exceed 5,000 gallons and the ratio of height to diameter or width does not exceed 2 to 1.
5. Swings and other playground equipment.
6. Sidewalks and driveways.
7. Replacing existing doors and windows (provided same width and nothing structural has to change).
8. Painting, papering, tiling, carpeting, cabinets, countertops and similar finish work.
9. All inside finish carpentry work.
10. Decks not exceeding 200 sq. ft. in area, that are not more than 30 inches above grade at any point, are not attached to the dwelling and do not serve the exit door required by IRC.
11. Installing additional fill on an existing driveway (new driveways require a permit).
12. Partitions not over 5' high.
13. Patching leaky roofs
14. Walkways not over 30" above grade.

EXAMPLES OF ELECTRICAL WORK NOT REQUIRING A PERMIT

1. Minor repair work, including the replacement of lamps or the connection of approved portable electric equipment to approved permanently installed receptacles.
2. Trouble shooting.
3. Disconnecting switches, plugs, or circuits or other equipment.
4. Replacing existing electrical equipment (providing additional wiring is not needed).

EXAMPLES OF PLUMBING WORK NOT REQUIRING A PERMIT

1. Replacing existing fixtures. (Water Heaters not included)

2. Repairing leaks.
3. Cleaning drains.
4. Cleaning heating systems.
5. Installing heat pipes or radiation (does not include oil furnaces or wood stoves).

R105.3 APPLICATION FOR PERMIT

To obtain a [permit](#), the applicant shall first file an application therefor in writing on a form furnished by the department of building safety for that purpose. Such application shall:

1. Identify and describe the work to be covered by the [permit](#) for which application is made.
2. Describe the land on which the proposed work is to be done by legal description, street address or similar description that will readily identify and definitely locate the proposed building or work.
3. Indicate the use and occupancy for which the proposed work is intended.
4. Be accompanied by [construction documents](#) and other information as required in [Section R106.1](#).
5. State the valuation of the proposed work.
6. Be signed by the applicant or the applicant's authorized agent.
7. Give such other data and information as required by the [building official](#).

R108.6 Work Commencing Before Permit Issuance

Any person who commences work requiring a [permit](#) on a building, structure, electrical, gas, mechanical or [plumbing](#) system before obtaining the necessary [permits](#) shall be subject to a fee established by the applicable governing authority that shall be in addition to the required [permit](#) fees.

PMC 17.04.050 PENALTY FOR BUILDING WITHOUT A PERMIT

Where work for which a permit is required starts or proceeds without obtaining a building permit, the penalty shall be two hundred fifty dollars or four times the fee specified in Schedule A, whichever is the greater, but the payment of such penalty shall not relieve any person from fully complying with the requirements of this title in the execution of work, or from any other penalties described in this code.