

PERMITS

WHEN ARE PERMITS REQUIRED FOR RESIDENTIAL CONSTRUCTION WORK?

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BUILDING INSPECTIONS DEPARTMENT
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The Minnesota State Building Code identifies the types of construction work that can be done without a permit. The following information is a summary from MN Rules 1300.0120 & 1300.0215.

A building permit is not required for:

- Private residential prefabricated pool entirely above ground which does not exceed both 5,000 gallons and 24" in depth (see Pool handout for details)
- Painting, papering, tiling, carpeting, cabinets, countertops, and similar finish work
- Freestanding decks do not require a permit if they are not more than 30 inches above adjacent grade and do not provide access to a dwelling (freestanding decks are decks without below grade footings). It is still important to consider zoning ordinances and/or homeowners association requirements prior to constructing a free standing deck. Manufactured homes require a building permit for all decks that will be used for the path of exit/entry in to the dwelling. A park approval letter is required for all permits and shall be submitted with application for permit (includes freestanding decks).
- Installation of roof gutter systems (downspouts shall not be directed to adjacent properties)
- Installation of soffit, fascia, trim, and other accessories
- Installation of battery operated or plug-in type smoke and carbon monoxide detectors or the repair or replacement of existing detectors
- Minor earth work associated with gardens or landscaping planters that do not affect drainage patterns
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The following types of **window and door** related work is exempt from permits:

- Installation of storm windows and storm doors
- Replacement of wood sash for prime windows
- Installation of vinyl jamb liner weather-stripping for existing window sash
- Replacement of glass, screens, wood parts, and other minor repairs
- Window awnings for one or two family dwellings supported by an exterior wall that do not project more than 54 inches from the wall and do not require additional support

The following projects do not require a building permit but may require Zoning or City Engineering permit/approval:

- ★ Retaining walls not over four feet in height (height measured from the bottom of the footing to the top of the wall) unless supporting a surcharge (which may include buildings, pools, parking areas, streets, alleys, sidewalks, or other loads). It is suggested that you have a site plan review even for walls under four feet in height.
- ★ Fences not over seven feet in height (see fence handout for details)
- ★ One-story detached accessory structures not exceeding 200 square feet (see shed handout)
- ★ Patios made of concrete or pavers on grade.
- ★ Sidewalks, walkways, and driveways on private property that are not part of an accessible route.
- ★ Treehouse (with solid walls and or a roof)
- ★ Swings and other playground equipment

Examples of work that require a building permit (but sometimes overlooked):

This list is not intended as a complete list of work that requires a building permit. For more information you may speak with a Building Inspector to determine if the work you are proposing requires a permit.

- ★ Installation of a foundation drainage system
- ★ Basement egress window well
- ★ Retaining walls over four feet in height
- ★ Parking lot resurfacing (this does not apply to single family homes)

A Mechanical Permit is not required for:

- Portable heating, portable cooking, or portable A/C (window unit)
- Replacement of any minor part that does not alter approval of equipment
- Portable fuel cell appliances not connected to a fixed piping system and are not interconnected to a power grid

Examples of mechanical work that require a permit

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- ★ Install a heating appliance such as a furnace, garage heater, or boiler
- ★ Install duct work, radiant heat, or in-floor heat.
- ★ Connect gas appliances, such as stoves, dryers, or fireplaces, to gas piping
- ★ Install clothes dryer and or clothes dryer exhaust ducting
- ★ Install central air-conditioning
- ★ Install radon mitigation systems

A Plumbing Permit is not required for:

Unless the plumbing work poses an unsanitary or hazardous condition...

The reconnection of an existing water supply line to a replacement appliance that does not involve the replacement or alteration of the existing water supply line

- Replacement of the internal working components of existing toilets, faucets, or valves
- Replacement or resetting of toilets when the work does not include alterations to the existing plumbing piping systems
- Minor repair of broken drain, waste, and vent pipes
- Minor repair of leaking fixtures
- Minor repair of leaking water pipes
- Replacement of clothes washing machine
- New or replacement of garbage disposals

Examples of plumbing work that require a permit:

This list is not intended as a complete list of work that requires a plumbing permit. For more information you may speak with a Building Inspector to determine if the work you are proposing requires a permit.

- ★ Replace or install most fixtures (showers, tubs, etc.)
- ★ Replace or install a water heater
- ★ Replace or install a dishwasher
- ★ Replace or install water piping
- ★ Replace or Install a foundation drainage system
- ★ Replace or install a water softener
- ★ Connect gas appliances, such as stoves, dryers, or fireplaces, to gas piping

Emergency Repairs

- ✓ Emergency repairs can be done without first obtaining the necessary permits but the permits must be obtained after the work has been completed within a reasonable timeframe. All work must be inspected prior to covering.

Additional Information

- ✓ The value of work that is exempt from a permit may still be used in determining the total valuation of work that does require a permit.
- ✓ Work that does not require a permit may still require that the contractor performing that work be licensed. For more information about contractor licensing requirements, please call 763-785-6170.
- ✓ Electrical permits are issued by the state of Minnesota. Contact the State Board of Electricity for exempt work (Andrew Nykanen, Electrical Inspector, 763-754-2983).