



Do I Need a Permit for My Project?



This brochure provides general information about the types of work that require a permit, and those that do not for a one or two family dwelling. As the owner of a one or two family dwelling, you can hire a licensed contractor to get the proper permits and complete the work, or in many cases, you can obtain permits and do the work yourself.

Why do I need permits?

- Permits protect you, your family and your investment. (They are designed to help ensure that licensed contractors do the work when required)
- Inspections ensure that work is done safely and meets the minimum code requirements.
- Minor problems that could lead to costly repairs, liability and life/safety issues can be detected during permit inspections and brought to your attention before the situation worsens.
- When selling a property, the buyer, realtor and/or lender may require that unpermitted work be corrected, properly permitted and inspected before closing.
- It's the law. State Building Code requires that permits be obtained for certain types of work.

Where can I get a permit?

Permits are issued in the Development Services Division which is located on the Garden Level of City Hall, 501 SW Madison Avenue, Corvallis, OR 97333.

The Development Services Division is open weekdays from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm. You may reach us at 541-766-6929 or www.CorvallisPermits.com

Permits are required for many types of work that you may need or desire to have done on your property. Listed in this handout is work requiring and not requiring permits. This information is not all inclusive, so when in doubt about a permitting need, please check with the building department staff in the Development Services Division.

Work requiring a *building* permit

- Build a one or two family dwelling
- Build, demolish or add a room, garage, shed, carport or other attached structure
- Build, demolish or move any detached garage or shed that is more than 200 feet in area or more than 10 feet high from the floor to the average height of the roof
- Finish an attic, garage or basement to create living space
- Cut new window or door opening, or widen the size of existing openings
- Move, remove or add interior walls
- Apply roofing when the old roofing and sheathing are removed and new sheathing is installed
- Build or replace an exterior stairway more than 30 inches high
- Pour concrete sidewalks, slabs and driveways more than 30 inches above an adjacent grade or over any story or basement
- Build a retaining wall that exceeds four feet high measured from the bottom of the footing to the top of the wall or any retaining wall affected by the weight of an adjacent slope, or nearby driveway or structure
- Build a deck more than 30 inches high
- Construct a fence more than six feet tall
- Enclose a patio cover, porch or carport
- Add or enlarge a porch cover, patio cover or other attached roofed structure with a cumulative area greater than 200 square feet
- Install a barrier around a swimming pool
- Remove, replace or repair a public sidewalk or driveway approach

Work requiring a *mechanical* permit

- Install or change any part of a heating or cooling system which has duct work or must be vented into any kind of chimney or vent
- Install a wood stove or fireplace insert
- Install, alter or repair gas piping between the meter and an appliance (indoors and outdoors)
- Install or replace an air conditioner, furnace, or heat pump (site plan may be required)
- Install or remove a fuel oil tank

Work requiring an *electrical* permit

You must be both the owner and occupant of the dwelling in order to do electrical work yourself. If the dwelling is intended for sale, lease, rent or exchange in the near future, work must be done by a licensed electrical contractor. A permit is required to:

- Install, change or repair any hardwired electrical system
- Run any additional wiring, put in an additional electrical outlet or light fixture, or change your fuse box to circuit breakers
- Install or alter low-voltage systems such as security alarms, central vacuum systems, low-voltage lighting or phone systems

Work requiring a *plumbing* permit

- Repair, replace, relocate or add to the piping system within your home
- Install new plumbing fixtures such as toilets, sinks, showers, tubs, dishwashers, etc.
- Replace a water heater
- Replace existing plumbing fixtures if the replacement involves concealed plumbing connections
- Install rain drains, dry wells, sewer lines, water lines, backflow prevention assemblies for lawn irrigation systems, or cap a sewer.

Note: Adding a bathroom not only requires a plumbing permit, but may also require a building, electrical and/or mechanical permit. Systems Development Charges (SDC's) may also be charged for additional fixtures.

Work requiring *zoning* review & approval

- Build or install a garage or carport less than or equal to 200 square feet in area and less than 10 feet in height from the floor to the average height of the roof to confirm the location on the site complies with zoning code requirements
- Create a new or enlarged parking area or driveway, or pave a previously graveled parking area
- Make any improvements required as a condition of your land use review approval which does not require a building permit
- Make any exterior alterations including site work such as, constructing a patio or deck, clearing trees, or installing landscaping in any zone with restrictions on development
- Cut trees that are listed as natural features

Work requiring a *grading/erosion* permit

- Disturb 2,000 square feet or more of ground surface
- Move more than 50 cubic yards of soil
- Excavate greater than 2-feet in depth or fill more than 1-foot in depth

Work requiring a *historic* permit

- Any exterior alteration or improvement in a historic district or on a historic home (e.g. re-roof, siding, painting, new windows, deck, patio, fence, equipment install, AC/furnace, woodstove pipe, driveways, sidewalks - Requires a Historic Preservation Permit)

Work NOT requiring a *building* permit

Some minor repairs and maintenance on one or two family dwellings do not require a building permit

- Paint buildings that are not historic landmarks or do not have specific zoning restrictions
- Install insulation in existing homes
- Install window awnings, not more than 54 inches deep and are supported by an exterior wall and do not project beyond the property line*
- Replace interior wall, floor or ceiling covering (such as wallboard or sheet vinyl)
- Construct new interior non-bearing walls that do not create habitable rooms
- Install shelving and cabinets
- Install gutters and downspouts (a plumbing permit may still be required for stormwater disposal)
- Replace or repair siding
- Replace or repair roofing, if the existing sheathing is not removed (a maximum of three layers of roofing is allowed)
- Replace doors or windows if the existing openings are not widened unless in a historic district*
- Install swings and other play structures*
- Build a fence up to six feet high*
- Pave a walkway on private property*
- Build a patio or deck that is not more than 30 inches above grade and is 5 feet or more from a property line*
- Build a shed or detached non habitable accessory building less than or equal to 200 square feet in area and less than 10 feet in height from the floor to average height of the roof*
- Repave driveways where no expansion has occurred
- Remove and reinstall a toilet when installing new floor covering
- Replace *accessible* plumbing fixtures. Make emergency plumbing repairs, or replace freeze-damaged or leaking concealed plumbing pipes that are no more than five feet in length
- Build a patio or porch cover not over 200 square feet and supported by an exterior building wall*

* Please note:

Regardless of whether a building permit is required, the project must meet all adopted construction codes and Corvallis Land Development Code requirements. Call 541-766-6929 for more information or e-mail: development.services@ci.corvallis.or.us