



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 **one or two family dwellings**. 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 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

The intent of this handout is to identify various types of work associated with one and two family dwellings that may require a permit. This information is not all inclusive, so please check with Development Services staff to discuss the scope of your project.

Projects that require a building permit

- Build, demolish, or add a dwelling, room, garage, shed, carport or other structure attached to an existing dwelling (porches or patio covers under 200-square feet that are attached may be exempt)
- Build, demolish or move any detached accessory structure that is more than 200 square feet in area or more than 10-feet high, measured from the floor to the average height of the roof
- Finish an existing attic, garage or basement to create living or conditioned space
- Create a new window or door opening, or widen the size of an existing opening
- Move, remove, alter or add interior load bearing wall(s), or wall(s) creating habitable space
- Replace roofing, when the old roofing and sheathing are removed and new sheathing is installed
- Build or replace an exterior stairway that is more than 30-inches above grade (measured from any point within 36-inches horizontally of the stairway)
- Pour a concrete sidewalk, slab, or driveway more than 30-inches above grade (measured from any point 36-inches horizontally), or over any story or basement
- Build a retaining wall that exceeds 4-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, nearby driveway, or nearby structure; when affecting a structure, accessory parking, required accessible routes or egress to a public way.
- Build, demolish, or alter a deck more than 30-inches above grade (measured from any point 36-inches horizontally from the deck)
- Construct a fence more than 7-feet tall (8-feet when open wire)
- Enclose an existing patio cover (when over 200-square feet), porch, or carport
- Add or enlarge an attached unenclosed porch or patio cover 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

Projects that require a mechanical permit

- Install or alter a heating or cooling system
- Install a wood stove or fireplace insert
- Install, alter or repair gas piping between the meter and an appliance (indoors and outdoors)
- Install or remove a fuel oil tank

Projects that require 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

Projects that require 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 or alterations to existing piping
- 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

Projects that require a grading and erosion permit

- Disturb 2,000 square feet or more of ground surface
- Any site grading(excavation and/or fill)

Projects that require zoning and/or site engineering review (Please be advised the following may be required to go through a zoning/site engineering review even if found to not require a building permit).

- Build or install an accessory structure, 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 (e.g. Condition or Planned Development) 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
- Development activity that falls within mapped natural features or hazards (e.g., wetlands, riparian areas, floodplain)
- Erect a fence that encroaches within a front yard area or near a stream or creek.
- Modify the sidewalk or driveway in the public right-of-way
- Limb, remove, or replant trees in the street planter area (A permit from Parks and Recreation may also be required).

Projects that require a historic permit or review

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

Work NOT requiring a building permit

Some minor repairs and maintenance on one or two family dwellings do not require a building permit, however, 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@corvallisoregon.gov

- Install insulation in existing homes (except where knob and tube electrical wiring exists)
 - Install window awnings, not more than 54-inches deep and are supported only by an exterior wall and does not project beyond the property line
 - Replace interior wall, floor or ceiling covering (such as wallboard or sheet vinyl)
 - Install shelving and cabinets
 - Install gutters and downspouts (a plumbing permit is still required for stormwater disposal)
 - Replace or repair siding not required to be fire-resistive
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- Replace or repair roofing, if the existing sheathing is not removed, or installing new roofing over existing roofing(a maximum of three layers of roofing is allowed)
 - Replace doors or windows if the existing openings are not widened (a Historic Preservation Permit is required in a historic district and for individually listed historic properties)
 - Install swings and other play structures
 - Build a fence up to 7-feet high or 8' when open wire (check with Development Services to confirm setback and vision clearance).
 - Pave a walkway on private property
 - Build a patio or deck that is not more than 30-inches above grade (at any point within 36-inches horizontally of the deck) and is 5-feet or more from a property line
 - Build a patio or porch cover not over 200 square feet and supported by an exterior building wall
 - 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
 - Replace plumbing fixtures that are not concealed within a wall or floor. Make emergency plumbing repairs, or replace freeze-damaged or leaking concealed plumbing pipes that are no more than 5-feet in length
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