

# Building Permits

Professionals who are knowledgeable in building and local codes staff your local Building Department. Their focus is the promotion, awareness, and enforcement of building, fire and life safety codes. These professionals can be an invaluable source of information to assist you through a building project, provide technical information and resources, and can answer zoning related questions.

Code Enforcement Officials are tasked with the enforcement of the New York State Uniform Fire Prevention and Building Code as well as the Code of your local municipality. By assisting contractors, designers and homeowners they ensure that the structures built are SAFE when newly built and for years to come.

Contact your local building department before you start a construction project.

Below you will find answers too many frequently asked questions concerning building permits.

## What service does the Building Department provide?

The Building Department professionals review all plans for building permits to ensure compliance with zoning laws and building code requirements. Additionally, they perform periodic inspections during construction to ensure that the work complies with the approved plans and the building code. The staff is available to answer any questions that you may have. They may also have standard practice handouts to assist you with your building project.

## What is a building permit?

A building permit gives you legal permission to start construction of a building project in accordance with approved drawings and specifications.

## Why do you need a building permit?

The best way to find out if you need a building permit is to call or visit your local building department. Discuss your plans with the Code Official before beginning construction to determine whether you need a permit. Even if a permit is not needed, the Code Official will answer construction related questions and may provide valuable advice.

## When do I need a building permit?

A building permit is required for any new buildings, any additions to an existing building, and any alterations to an existing building which effects: the structural design of the building, mechanical, electrical, plumbing systems, and the use of buildings or parts thereof. Below you will find a list of **typical** residential projects that require a building permit.

- . All decks, porches and three season rooms
- . Additions, interior structural alterations, finishing a basement or a portion thereof
- . Fireplace, wood-burning stoves, chimneys and gas inserts
- . Attached or detached garages, sheds (shed smaller than 12' x 12' or 144 sq feet need no permit)
- . Structural alterations to windows or doors
- . All pools that are capable of holding more than 24 inches of water including storable pools, and hot tubs

- . Automatic fire alarms
- . Extensions to the plumbing, heating and electrical systems
- . Generators
- . Re-roofing (the whole roof, not small repairs due to weather, etc.)

Some projects that may not require a building permit are:

- . Flooring and cabinet installation
- . Replacement of windows and doors (provided the opening is not altered)
- . Driveways, Siding, Fences
- . In brief, any work that does not involve changes to the structures or systems

## **Be sure to check with your building department to determine if your project requires a building permit:**

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 Town of Newark Valley CEO  
 109 Whig Street  
 Newark Valley, NY 13811  
 Office – 607 642 3617      Tom’s Cell – 972 4161      Email – nvcode@stny.rr.com

### **What paperwork do you need to get a building permit?**

The specific requirements depend on the type of work you are planning. For simple interior projects, a scale floor plan will often be adequate. For larger projects involving additions, decks or major structural renovations, a full set of working drawings and a site survey map may be required. The building department can tell you exactly what you will need. **Any residential work costing \$20,000.00 or more or when any single family residential building becomes greater than 1500 square feet they will require stamped plans by a NYS licensed architect or engineer. Any commercial construction project will usually require engineer or architect stamped plans.**

### **When is a permit complete?**

A final inspection is required when all work has been completed. When it has been determined that the project meets the applicable codes and standards, a Certificate of Compliance or a Certificate of Occupancy will be issued. **You can not use or occupy the space until either certificate has been issued.**

### **Do I need a contractor?**

This depends on the scope of the project and your skill level. You can do the work yourself or hire a contractor as long as you follow the New York State Uniform Fire Prevention and Building Codes. If you decide to hire a contractor, you will need to provide their name when the application is made. The building department will then verify that the contractor has all of the appropriate insurance coverage.

### **Who should get the permit – the homeowner or the contractor?**

As the homeowner, you are legally responsible to ensure that a building permit is obtained when required. Your contractor or designer may apply for the permit, but the homeowner should insure that a permit has been issued prior to any work commencing.

## Some things to consider when choosing a contractor.

- . Check for the contractor's experience in the type of construction you are proposing
- . Interview the contractor and check his references
- . Check the reliability of your chosen contractor with the Better Contractors Bureau and the Better Business Bureau
- . Arrange a contract and ensure the contract covers all the work including who prepares drawings and who arranges of the required inspections
- . Before signing the contract, check the drawings to ensure they comply with your desires and needs. Also check specifications and materials proposed
- . Confirm the type of warranty that is being given, and, on a large contract, you may wish to obtain legal counsel before signing and get it in writing
- . Confirm whether the contractor is obtaining the building permit or if you are expected to handle the building permit. When the contractor is applying for the permit, make sure you see the permit card before allowing work to start.
- . **It is recommended that you make final payment only after a final inspection has been completed by the building department and a Certificate of Compliance or a Certificate of Occupancy has been issued.**