

BUILDING PERMITS

If you are thinking of building, remodeling, replacing, converting, or installing; this packet should help you answer some general questions on what you need a permit for and how to apply for one. The State of New York requires all municipalities in the State to adopt the New York State Uniform Fire Prevention Building Code. This is the requirement to obtain a permit and be in compliance with NYS and your municipality's Local Laws. To keep this simple, here is a list of the most common things a home owner would need to know about permits. Please remember, if you are unsure always check with your code enforcement person before you build.

1. Decks, porches, entry ways: all need building permits. Even when completely tearing down and old one to replace with a new one.
2. Swimming pools: both in ground and above ground need a building permit. Also, fencing may be required along with the proper electrical inspection.
3. Fencing: always check with your local inspector. A permit and/or zoning requirements may apply.
4. Garages and pole style buildings: attached or unattached need building permits. Some may require fire walls and fire rated doors. Check with your insurance company, attached vs detached.
5. Sheds: small, medium, or large. Most need a minimum of a zoning permit, check with your local inspector. Some municipalities have size stipulations.
6. New homes and modulars; need a building permit.
7. Commercial buildings: all need a building permit.
8. Additions: to almost any existing building or structure will require a permit. This includes: garages, decks, houses, sheds, and commercial structures.
9. Structural changes: all need a building permit. This would include replacement of all or sections of a foundation; re-pitch of a roof, new roof trusses or rafters. Load bearing walls, headers, columns, piers, floor joists and any reconstruction whether existing or not.
10. Roofs: is a tricky area. New trusses, rafters, porch roofs, carports, etc., need a building permit. Check with your local inspector about overlays, tear offs, repairs, plywood replacement, etc.
11. Siding: use of vinyl siding, wooden clapboard, T-111, normally do not require a building permit. However, check with your local inspector to be sure.
12. Windows and doors: replacement windows and doors of the same size do not require a building permit. New windows, doors in a position that they were not in before, larger or smaller replacement windows and doors all need a building permit.

13. Plumbing, heating, electrical: all need a permit or some type of inspection. This is a very tricky area, in order to be sure it is done right the first time, please contact your local inspector. All wood stoves, furnaces, and chimneys for solid fuel devices shall have a building permit. Check with your local inspector. All electrical work shall be inspected, this is for your benefit 100%. New York Board of Fire Underwriters is among the most recommended firms that can do this for you. See your local inspector for the phone numbers.

PLUMBING NOTE**: NYS Code does not allow the use of PVC pipe for water supply inside your home. Only L copper may be used, not M copper which is used for heat runs only. PVC schedule 40 may be used for waste above ground, not under concrete. Commercial buildings may only use copper or cast iron for waste and again, L copper for water supply.

14. Change of use: if a building is being used for one type of use but will now be used for another (ie. single family home to a two family or professional office to mercantile store) this is a change of use and will require a building permit.
15. Alterations (non structural): this would be upgrading with no structural changes such as replacing plaster and lathe with sheetrock. Check with the building inspector prior to starting.
16. Mobile homes (double or single wide): all need building permits. Most communities have age and size requirements. You need the permit before you bring the mobile onto your property, not after. Always check with the building inspector prior to purchasing a mobile home. All mobiles require: skirting, proper steps and handrails, tie-downs, and approved foundations. This also includes replacement mobiles on existing lots and existing trailer park lots. All replacement of mobiles require a building permit.
17. Handicapped accessibility: applies to all new commercial construction and is a federal requirement as well as state and will require a permit.

This list of items is to try and help clear up some general questions. Please use enough common sense to understand that this list will not be applicable in all cases and ALWAYS when in doubt or not quite sure ASK YOUR BUILDING INSPECTOR. It would always be more cost effective to ask first than to do it wrong and have to change it again.