

# Homeowner's Guide to Residential Building Permits



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## NOTICE

This booklet was prepared to assist homeowners who wish to do their own work. It provides basic information for the filing of building permit applications for minor alterations and improvements.

The information contained in this booklet is of a general nature and not meant to take the place of the building codes, which are comprehensive and often detailed. Nothing herein should be construed as an interpretation of the applicability of codes and procedures to your specific project. If there are any questions about the application of the information herein, please contact one of the code officials listed below.

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**What is a Building Permit?**

A building permit is a legal document required by state law, which must be secured by the homeowner or his agent before starting any work that requires a building permit.

**When is a Building Permit Required?**

A building permit is required for the construction, alteration, renovation, addition to, or repair of any structure. Generally, a permit is not required for maintenance of property such as painting, decorating, or non-structural repairs. Permits are required, however, for such items as new siding, replacement windows and new roofing. Permits are also required for changes to mechanical systems like replacing a water heater or furnace and installing or replacing plumbing and electrical fixtures.

**What Types of Permits are there?**

The Enfield Division of Building Inspection issues these permit types:

Building Permits  
Electrical Permits  
Plumbing Permits  
Heating Permits  
Certificates of Occupancy

The following is a partial list of the kinds of work requiring permits:

Accessory buildings	New homes
Additions	Plumbing
Barns	Porches
Change of occupancy	Remodeling
Change of use	Renovations
Decks	Re-roofing
Dormers	Re-siding
Electrical work	Signs
Family rooms	Solar heating systems
Fences over 6 feet high	Sheds
Foundations	Swimming pools
Garages	Windmills
Heating systems	Wood-burning stoves

### **How do I Apply for a Building Permit?**

It's as easy as A, B, C (and a fee).

**A**pplication - Submit a completed permit application for the type of work you want to do. An application is always required before the building official may issue a permit.

**B**uilding plans - Plans are always required when structural work is being done. Floor plans are required so egress, room size, lighting, and ventilation issues can be examined. Minor work and roofing, siding, and window replacement usually do not require plans; however, the building official may require material specifications and installation instructions.

**C**ertified plot plan - The plot plan is required for additions or new construction where the building footprint will change.

**The Fee** - The fee is based upon the cost of the project. Effective 2 July 2008 the fee is fifteen dollars per thousand dollars of construction cost or part thereof with a minimum fee of thirty dollars for all permits. Except for emergencies, all fees are doubled if the work is started before the permit is issued. Fees must be paid at the time of application for the permit.

### **What Information Must I Provide at the Time of Application?**

All of the relevant spaces on the application must be completely filled out. The property owner's name, address, and telephone number must be included. If there is a proposed change to the footprint of the building, a *site plan* must be drawn to scale on the second page of the application. Do not attach a separate sheet to the application for the site plan for additions or accessory structures. *Structural drawings* and a floor plan of the building must also accompany the permit application.

The town engineer and the wetlands agent must examine an application where there is a change in lot coverage (like an addition) before the building official may issue a permit.

When you submit the application to the building official, he will determine if any other department must review it before a permit may be issued. For example, the health district may review the application if the home is served by a well or a private waste disposal system. The zoning enforcement officer must also review and endorse the application before a permit may be issued. Check with the planning department for any additional fees related to zoning approval for your project.

### **When May I Start My Project?**

The work may begin as soon as the building official issues the permit, but not before.

Permits for work that require building construction plans or site plans are issued after all pertinent departments examine the plans. Plan review usually takes about two weeks for most residential projects, although the law allows up to 30 days. If the application is incomplete or there are corrections required to any plans, it may take longer than two weeks to complete the permitting process or the application may be rejected.

Permits are valid for six months after issuance. If the work does not commence within those six months, or if six months passes since the last progress inspection, the permit becomes void and you must reapply for a new permit.

### **What Inspections are Required?**

The following schedule of required inspections is compiled in accordance with the provisions of the state building code and is the minimum required for construction work:

1. Soils and footings for a foundation before any concrete is placed.
2. Waterproofing, damp-proofing, and drain tile systems before backfilling.
3. Rough framing, plumbing, electrical, and heating systems before installing insulation or drywall. All roofing, siding, windows and doors must be installed. Design sheets signed and sealed by a Connecticut registered engineer are required before requesting inspection of framing that includes trusses, composite beams, or composite joists.
4. Insulation before covering the framing with drywall
5. Final inspection before use or occupancy.

The foregoing outlines the minimum required inspections. Please contact the building inspection division to determine if more, or specialized, inspections are required for your project.

The permit holder or his agent must provide not less than 24 hours advance notice to the building inspection division for inspection of each phase of the project.

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