



Waterloo Building Department
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DO IT YOURSELF

Residential Home Owner

This handout is to help inform you of your responsibilities as a homeowner involved in a do-it-yourself construction, remodeling or repair project.

In general, permits are required for everything except flooring, painting and counter tops. All other home maintenance and remodeling projects will require a building permit. This includes, but is not limited to fences over 4' in height, roofing, decks, siding, window and entry door replacement, additions and remodels.



Homeowners can take out permits and perform all of the work on their *primary residence* including building, maintenance, electrical, plumbing and HVAC work. Owners of homes that are not their primary residence can only take out and perform work on building permits for that property. Homeowners should only take out permits for the work they are performing. If a contractor is being hired, then that contractor is required to take out their respective permit.

HOW DO I GET A PERMIT



The City website has printable permit applications under Building Inspections/Applications. Applications are also available at City Hall at the Building Department. Your project may need 1, 2, 3 or 4 different types of permits depending on the project. Any type of remodeling, addition, deck, repairs, garage, shed or fencing will require a building permit. In addition to a building permit, if any electrical, plumbing or heating, cooling or ventilation work is to be done, then separate permits for each of those improvements will also be needed.

Permits are required to be taken out and the inspection card posted at the jobsite before any work begins. Permits are valid for a time frame of six months. Homeowners are not allowed to obtain permits for contractors. Contractors working in the City of Waterloo are required to be licensed and insured for your protection. If you are hiring a contractor and would like to confirm that they are a lawfully registered contractor with the City, you can call the building department with the contractors name for verification.

For building projects that place a new structure on a property, such as a fence, deck, addition, garage, or shed, the project requires a site plan showing location on the property with distances and dimensions. Building projects also require detailed construction drawings showing footing, foundation and wall construction. Code information is available on handouts on the City website and in the office. The Permit Writer/Residential Plans Examiner is in the office M-F, 7:30-4:30 to answer your questions, review your plans and issue your permits.

This brochure is intended to explain some of the requirements for Do-It-Yourself. If you have further questions, please contact the Waterloo Building Department.

HEATING, PLUMBING AND ELECTRICAL

Permits and inspections are required for running any new wires, installing new lighting fixtures, installing or replacing vents, replacing or adding new sinks, toilets, baths or showers, among other fixtures. These are required for new construction and remodeling.

When the homeowner is hiring multiple contractors to do different parts of the project, the homeowner may act as the general contractor and obtain the building permit, while the mechanical contractors take out their respective permits. Homeowners cannot take out permits for their contractors.

Homeowners may obtain these types of mechanical permits when all of the following conditions are met:

1. It is a residential property
2. The applicant is the owner of the property
3. The applicant is the occupant of the property
4. The applicant is going to perform the work.

HOW DO I GET MY WORK INSPECTED

Your inspection card will serve as a guide as to when you need inspections. All potential required inspections are listed on the card. The Department has multiple inspectors that perform varyingly different inspections. Your inspector will be noted for you at the time that your permit is issued. Most remodeling projects will be handled with what is called Combination Inspection. All of the required permits will be taken out for the project, but the holder of the Building Permit will be the only person to call in and schedule the inspections. This is instead of each mechanical contractor calling in for their individual inspections. One inspector will come to do a full inspection in one visit. In general, inspections are required before anything gets covered up. A Final Inspection will then be needed to close the project and complete your permits.



Inspectors are in the office from 7:30-8:30 M-F to take your inspection requests. You can contact them by calling 319-291-4319. Inspection requests can sometimes be performed same day if you speak with them during that morning office time. You may want to schedule your inspection at least a day in advance to allow the inspector time to better serve your schedule. You can leave a voicemail for your inspector at any time and phone messages are checked throughout the work day.

BASIC INSPECTION INFORMATION

Footing Inspection. Performed prior to pouring any concrete. The depth and diameter or width of the footing is measure to make sure it matches the approved plan and properly support your project.

Foundation Inspection. Performed just prior to backfill to check the foundation and waterproofing.

Framing and Rough-In. All framing, electrical, plumbing, and ventilation is installed, just before covering. A drywall inspection is not required before you mud, tape and finish your project.

Final Inspection. A final inspection is given for the work on all permits to close the project.

- If any of your inspections do not pass, make your corrections in a timely manner and call again for a re-inspection before covering.