

What technical information do I need to submit with my plans?

You may be required to submit some or all of the following:

- plot map
- floor plans
- specifications
- elevations
- mechanical, plumbing, and electrical drawings
- foundation plan
- energy documentation
- structural calculations
- required fire-protection equipment

For information, call the building department in your area.

Can a permit be issued before the plan review is approved?

No. All plans must be approved before permits are issued. However, with special permission from the local building department, a partial permit for footing only or foundation and footing only may be issued.

How can I contact a plans examiner or inspector?

Call your local building department.

What's the reason for the surcharge on all building permits?

The State of Oregon collects a surcharge on all building permits to pay the state's costs of administering building codes programs (4 percent), inspections programs (2 percent), training and other educational programs (1 percent), regional services for building departments and their customers (1 percent), and the statewide electronic-permitting project (4 percent).

County offices

Baker County	(541) 523-0535
Benton County	(541) 766-6819
Clackamas County	(503) 353-4739
Clatsop County	(503) 861-7140
Columbia County	(503) 397-1501
Coos County	(541) 396-2148
Crook County	(541) 447-3211
Curry County	(541) 247-7011
Deschutes County	(541) 388-6575
Douglas County	(541) 440-4284
Gilliam County	(541) 298-4461
Grant County	(541) 575-1519
Harney County	(541) 573-6356
Hood River County	(541) 386-1306
Jackson County	(541) 776-6900
Jefferson County	(541) 475-4462
Josephine County	(541) 474-5405
Klamath County	(541) 883-4209
Lake County	(541) 947-6032
Lane County	(541) 682-6796
Lincoln County	(541) 265-4192
Linn County	(541) 967-3816
Malheur County	(541) 889-7422
Marion County	(503) 588-5033
Morrow County	(541) 481-9252
Multnomah County	(503) 988-3674
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Tillamook County	(503) 842-3408
Umatilla County	(541) 276-7814
Union County	(541) 963-1014
Wallowa County	(541) 426-6227
Wasco County	(541) 298-4461
Washington County	(503) 846-3470
Wheeler County	(541) 298-4461
Yamhill County	(503) 434-7516

State of Oregon offices

Salem Building Codes	(800) 442-7457	or (503) 378-4133
Structural Program Chief	(503) 378-4472	
Construction Contractors Board	(503) 378-4621	
Better Business Bureau	(503) 226-3981	
Attorney General's Consumer Hotline:		
Portland	(503) 229-5576	
Salem	(503) 378-4320	
Toll-free	(877) 877-9392	

BCD mission statement

"Working with Oregonians to ensure safe building construction while promoting a positive business climate."

For more information,
visit our Web sites:

www.permitsprotect.info
www.oregonbcd.org



Commonly asked questions about obtaining permits



When am I required to get a permit?

Permits are required for any new construction and alterations and additions to existing buildings, including structural, plumbing, mechanical, electrical, manufactured dwelling, boiler, and elevator work.

However, there are some exceptions to permit requirements. If you aren't sure whether you need a permit, call the building department responsible for your area.

Why do I have to buy a permit to build on my own property?

Oregon law requires you to obtain permits — even on your own property — to ensure that you meet minimum building standards for your own safety and for the safety of future property owners and occupants.

Who is responsible for obtaining permits?

The property owner or contractor is responsible for obtaining structural, mechanical, electrical, plumbing, and manufactured dwelling setup permits. For electrical work, Oregon law requires that if an electrical contractor performs the work, the contractor is responsible for obtaining the permit. Electrical permits are nontransferable.

How do I get a construction permit?

To get a construction permit, you must complete a permit application. Permit applications are available from the local building department in your area.

Take or mail the permit application to your local planning department for required land-use approval and to the local sanitation authority or Department of Environmental Quality for sanitation or septic approval.

When can I start work?

When an actual construction permit is issued to you, work can begin. The permit must be available on the job site and available to the inspector.

If you've submitted plans and specifications, your building department will return one set of plans stamped "Approved" to you. These approved plans, along with the construction permit, must be available on the job site and available to the inspector.

When am I required to obtain local zoning approval?

Before submitting permit applications, you're required to obtain local land use/zoning approval for any new structure and for any work that increases the area or height of a structure or changes the use of a structure.

You may be required to obtain local zoning approval for electrical and plumbing work before a permit will be issued. For more information, contact your local planning and zoning department.

Where do I get permits?

You can get permits by calling or visiting the local building department in the area where you plan to perform work.

Can I get a permit by mail or fax?

It depends on the local building department. Call the building department in your area to find out how it processes requests for permits. When seeking a permit through the mail, be sure to state your name, phone number, mailing address, job location, and the type of permit application you need. Some building departments may also fax the permit application to you, upon request.

Another option is the state's e-permitting program on the Web at www.buildingpermits.oregon.gov. This Web site will help you find out if your jurisdiction is using Quick Permits, the online e-permitting system. Quick Permits helps you discover who to contact for permits in your area and even provides printable permit applications.

How long will it take to get a permit through the mail?

Your local building department will issue your permit when it receives all of the information required on the application. You should check with your local building department for instructions and requirements.

If your project requires a plan review, the permit and plans will be issued and, if your local building department mails permits, mailed to you after your plans are approved. Upon submittal of a complete application, a plan review can take up to two weeks for one- and two-family dwellings (residential construction) and up to four weeks for commercial projects. Review times vary, depending on the complexity of the project and the level of information you submit with your application.

How do I figure permit fees?

Fee schedules and valuation tables are available to help you determine permit fees. Call the building department for your area.

When does my permit expire?

Your permit expires if work isn't started within 180 days from the date of issue. Once you have begun work, your permit expires if work is suspended or abandoned for 180 days or more.

If you can't work within a 180-day period and don't wish to abandon the project, you may submit a written request to extend your permit for an additional 180-day period.

Why do I need a plumbing permit to replace or install a water heater?

Oregon law requires plumbing permits for water heaters because of fire, electric shock, and explosion hazards.

When do I have to hire an architect or engineer to design my project and prepare the plans?

For single-family residential dwellings or accessory buildings, an architect or engineer is usually not required unless the design or methods used in the construction, alteration, or repair of the structure are nonprescriptive. That is, it does not follow the prescribed methods stated in the most current Oregon Residential Specialty Code. Also, an architect or engineer is not required for permit-exempt farm-agricultural buildings and nonfarm agricultural buildings. All permit-exempt buildings must still meet minimum code requirements.

For all commercial construction, alteration, or repair, an architect or engineer is usually not required if the structure has a ground area of 4,000 square feet or less and/or is less than 20 feet in height, does not undergo a change of occupancy, and/or is not considered by the building official as work of a highly technical nature. For all commercial construction, alteration, or repair of buildings more than 4,000 square feet and/or 20 feet or more in height, a registered design professional must prepare the construction documents. Also, the architect or engineer must sign off on any portion of a structure that has been engineered, no matter the size of the building.

When are plans required?

You must submit structural plans or drawings for any new construction or for an addition or alteration to an existing building.

Plans aren't required for nonstructural repairs and work for which a permit isn't required. However, a change in use or occupancy may require plans even if there are no structural alterations.

Check with your local planning or zoning department to determine whether a permit for change in use or occupancy is required.