



### When is a Permit Required?

The International Building Code (IBC) identifies that permits are required to “construct, enlarge, alter, repair, move, demolish or change the occupancy of a building or structure; or to erect, install, enlarge, alter, repair, remove, convert or replace any electrical, gas, mechanical, or plumbing system.”

The code applies to all homeowners, business owners, contractors, and volunteer/non-profit organizations.

### Examples of Home Improvements Requiring a Permit:

- Decks and Porches
- Fences
- Finishing a Basement
- Replacing a Water Heater, Furnace, or A/C
- Remodeling a Bathroom
- Roofing, Siding, and Window Replacements
- Adding/Relocating Outlets or Light Fixtures
- Drywall and Insulation

### Work Exempt from Permits

Though permits are not generally required for the following types of projects, all building codes, zoning ordinances, and other regulations still apply:

- **Single-Story Accessory Structures (i.e. ~ storage sheds and playhouses) with floor areas that do not exceed 200 square feet;**
- Retaining Walls that are not over 4 feet in height as measured from the bottom of the footing to the top of the wall; *unless supporting a surcharge or impounding Class I, II, or IIIA liquids or if built within the City right-of-way;*
- **Painting, Papering, Tiling, Carpeting, Cabinets, Counter Tops, and similar Finish Work;**
- Nonfixed and movable fixtures, cases, racks, counters and partitions not over 5 feet 9 inches in height;
- **Swings and other playground equipment accessory to a single-family residence;**
- Prefabricated swimming pools that are less than 24 inches deep;
- **Portable Appliances such as those that could be used for heating, cooling, ventilation, refrigeration, or lighting; and**
- The clearing of stoppages or the repairing of leaks in pipes, valves or fixtures and the removal and reinstallation of water closets, provided such repairs do not involve or require the replacement or rearrangement/relocation/extension of valves, pipes or fixtures.

**For more information, please contact:**

**City of Spokane Department of Building Services**

3rd Floor, City Hall, 808 W. Spokane Falls Blvd.

Spokane, Washington 99201

(509) 625-6300

[www.buildingspokane.org](http://www.buildingspokane.org)

## WHY DO I NEED A PERMIT?



Permits are a way for the City of Spokane to regulate construction. They provide the first measure of assurance that buildings in the City are safe and sustainable; and that work is being completed by licensed & bonded contractors or eligible property owners.

Upon approval of final inspection, permits and the Certificate of Occupancy become a record for documenting that all minimum code requirements were met.

In relation to this, some property insurance policies *may not* cover losses when work was done without a permit or that did not pass inspection.

Permits and the adherence to construction codes provide for lower utility bills, higher resale values, and reduced risk of damage or injury.