



Building Services
808 West Spokane Falls Blvd
Spokane WA 99201-3343
(509) 625-6300

GEN-15 Issuing Permits – Who Can Purchase a Permit?

Residential Property Owners may be issued permits for their own property provided:

1. The up to 4-unit building will be their *principal* residence for 24 months after the modifications or the new building is completed; *and*
2. They are doing all of the work themselves or they hire Licensed and Bonded Contractors eligible to perform the work. (*Homeowners cannot pay anyone other than a licensed and bonded contractor to do the work.*); *and*
3. The work is not being performed for the “*purpose of selling, demolishing, or leasing the property*” [within 24 months of completion] per the Revised Code of Washington (RCW)18.27.090(12); **Exceptions:**
 - A. The owner of an *existing* residential building, of combustible-type construction, not exceeding 12 dwelling units or three stories in height, may be issued Building, Electrical, and Plumbing Permits. The issuance of Mechanical Permits is specifically exempted by Spokane Municipal Code (SMC) Section 17G.010.070(B)(3); *and*
 - B. Owners of said properties may be issued permits to make improvements for the purpose of selling the residential structure (*but not to convert it to condominiums*) provided the building has been owned by the applicant for more than 12 months.

Commercial Property Owners may act as their own General Contractor to obtain permits in most instances provided the work is not being performed for the “purpose of selling, demolishing, or leasing the property” [within 24 months of completion] (RCW 18.27.090(12)). **Exceptions:**

1. Mechanical Permits are specifically exempted by (SMC) 17G.010.070(B)(3); *and*
2. Electrical Permits cannot be obtained for new buildings or for additions. They can only be issued for alterations or extensions of existing wiring and only on condition that all work be done by the owner or by “*regularly employed employees working on the premises of their employer*” per (RCW) 19.28.261(5)(a).

Construction Contractors: A Washington State-Licensed Contractor may be issued any permit relating to their specific specialty. General Contractors may be issued any permits except Electrical Permits. If a General Contractor is issued a Plumbing Permit, the plumbing work must be done by an individual with the appropriate Washington State Journeyman or Specialty Certificate (RCW 18.106.020). If a General Contractor is issued a Mechanical Permit, any gas fitting or oil burner/installation work must be done by an individual with the appropriate City of Spokane Heating Mechanic or Oil Burner/Installer license (SMC 10.29.030).

Electrical Contractors: A Washington State-Licensed Electrical Contractor may be issued Electrical Permits related to their specialty. (*All Electrical Contractors must obtain their own permits; they cannot perform any work approved on a permit they did not apply for.*)