

Building Division Information Bulletin R-1

Permits Required

Permits Required (per California Building Code Section A105.1)

Except as specified under "Work Exempt from Permit," any owner or authorized agent who intends 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 installation of which is regulated by this code, or to cause any such work to be done, shall first make application to the building official and obtain the required permit. Unless specifically exempted, examples of work that requires a permit include, but are not limited to the following (**note: the following is only a partial list of items which typically require a permit; other construction-related items that are not listed may require a permit. We recommend checking with the Novato Building Division (415-899-8989) if unsure**):

Building

- accessory buildings – barns, work shops
- additions
- antennas or satellite dishes larger than 18" diameter
- bathroom remodel
- breezeway
- carport and garage conversions
- decks or balcony
- demolition (interior or exterior)
- door replacements (exterior or if size is increased)
- fences over 7 feet tall & all fences located in a Flood Zone
- fireplaces, wood stoves, pellet stoves, and inserts
- garage and garage conversions
- gazebo, cabana
- insulation
- kitchen remodel
- partition walls, non-bearing walls, wing walls
- patio covers, trellises
- patio enclosures
- porch and sunrooms
- pools, spas, hot tubs, saunas
- remodels
- reroofs
- retaining walls
- roof slope changes
- shower wall/valve repair/replace
- skylights
- stairs and handrails
- storage loft/platforms
- storage sheds
- sliding glass door installations
- termite/dry rot repair
- windows (new or replacements)
- siding replacements

Mechanical

- air conditioning systems
- central vacuum systems
- duct installations/repairs
- exhaust fans
- furnace/heating units
- kitchen hoods
- ventilation systems

Plumbing

- bathtubs, bidets, laundry trays, showers, sinks
- garbage disposals, dishwashers
- gas piping
- irrigation sprinklers, anti-siphon valves
- sewer ejectors
- sewer line replacements up to 2' outside building
- solar water heating
- sump pumps
- water heaters
- water piping
- water softeners

Electrical

- cook top/oven/ranges
- garage door openers with new outlet or wiring
- lighting
- low voltage wiring for landscaping and irrigation
- pool/spa/hot tub-related electrical
- service panels or subpanels (new, replacement, relocated or upgraded)
- Solar/Photovoltaic Systems
- wiring and wiring devices for appliances such as air conditioners, space heaters, dishwashers, washing machines, water heaters, clothes dryers, garbage disposals or branch circuits

Work Exempt from Permit (per California Building Code Section A105.2)

Exemptions from permit requirements of this code shall not be deemed to grant authorization for any work to be done in any manner in violation of the provisions of the code or any other laws or ordinances of this jurisdiction. Permits shall not be required for the following:

Building

- One story detached accessory structures used as tool and storage sheds, playhouses, and similar uses, provided that the floor area does not exceed 120 square feet. It is permissible that these structures still be regulated by section 710A, despite exemption from permit
- Fences not over 7 feet high.
- Oil Derricks.
- Retaining walls that are not over 4 feet in height measured from the bottom of the footing to the top of the wall, unless supporting a surcharge or impounding class I, II or IIA Liquids.
- Water tanks supported directly on grade if the capacity is not greater than 5,000 gallons and the ratio of height to diameter or width is not greater than 2: 1.
- Sidewalks and driveways not more than 30 inches above adjacent grade, and not over any basement or story below and are not part of an accessible route.
- Painting, papering, tiling, carpeting, cabinets, counter tops and similar finish work.
- Temporary motion picture, television and theater stage sets and scenery.
- Prefabricated swimming pools accessory to a Group R-3 occupancy that are less than 24 inches deep, are not greater than 5,000 gallons and are installed entirely above ground.
- Shade cloth structures constructed for nursery or agricultural purposes, not including service systems.
- Swings and other playground equipment accessory to detached one- and two-family dwellings.
- Window awnings in Group R-3 and U occupancies, supported by an exterior wall that do not project more than 54 inches from the exterior wall and do not require additional support.
- Non-fixed and movable fixtures, cases, racks, counters, and partitions not over 5 feet 9 inches in height.

Gas

- Portable heating appliance.

- Replacement of any minor part that does not alter approval of equipment or make such equipment unsafe.

Electrical

- Repairs and maintenance: Minor repair work, including the replacement of lamps or the connection of approved portable electrical equipment to approved permanently installed receptacles.
- Radio and television transmitting stations: The provisions of this code shall not apply to electrical equipment used for radio and television transmissions but do apply to equipment and wiring for a power supply and the installations of towers and antennas.
- Temporary testing or servicing of electrical equipment or apparatus.

Mechanical

- Portable heating appliance.
- Portable ventilation equipment.
- Portable cooling unit.
- Steam, hot or chilled water piping within any heating or cooling equipment regulated by this code.
- Replacement of any part that does not alter its approval or make it unsafe.
- Portable evaporative cooler.
- Self-contained refrigeration system containing 10 pounds or less of refrigerant & actuated by motors of 1 horsepower or less.

Plumbing

- The stopping of leaks in drains, water, soil, waste, or vent pipe.
- 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 of valves, pipes or fixtures.

Emergency Repair

- Where equipment replacements and repairs must be performed in an emergency situation, the permit application shall be submitted within the next working business day to the building official.