



CITY OF LINCOLN
Community Development Department
600 Sixth Street
Lincoln, CA 95648
(916) 434-2470 - office
(916) 645-3552 - fax

Frequently Asked Questions for Building Permits

When Do I Need a Permit?

With few exceptions, building permits are required whenever a structure is erected, constructed, enlarged, altered, repaired, moved, improved, removed, converted or demolished. **The following list is some of the projects you will need a permit for:** New Home Construction, Room Additions, Alterations/Remodeling, Covered Patios, Furnace, Air Conditioner or Water Heater Installations, Swimming Pools & Spas, All Plumbing Work, All Electrical Work, Re-roof, Sewer, Detached Structures more than 120 sq. ft., Fences more than 6 feet in height, Demolition of existing buildings or portions of, Siding, Solar Units, Termite Repair/Dry Rot, Permanently Affixed or Free Standing Signs, Decks over 30 inches high, Retaining Walls over 4 feet high from bottom of footing to top of wall.

When Don't I Need A Permit?

Be sure to check with the Lincoln, Building and Safety Division prior to beginning your project if you are not sure about permit requirements and exemptions: The following are some of the projects that may be performed without a permit: Retaining Walls that do not support a surcharge or liquid that are four feet (4') or less in height from the bottom of the footing to the top of the wall; Above-Ground pools less than eighteen (24") inches in depth that do not exceed five-thousand (5000) gallons. Window Coverings; detached/portable sheds, playhouses or similar structures that do not exceed one-hundred and twenty (120) square feet in size (must comply with zoning requirements for setbacks and height. The exemption does not include patio covers); Painting/Wallpapering interior spaces (Painting of Exterior Surfaces may require planning approval); Floor Coverings; Cabinet Replacement; Movable Cases, Counters and Partitions under five feet (5') in height provided they are not part of an accessible counter; Concrete Walkways and Patios that are not part of an accessible route. ***The above permit exceptions do not exempt a person performing construction activity from Homeowners Association Requirements, City Zoning and/or Grading Requirements or other ordinances or regulations of the jurisdiction.***

Why Do I Need a Permit?

The purpose of the various permits is to protect health and general welfare, as well as to protect your investment in your property and to help obtain financing from lending agencies. Permits are required by State law to control the codes, laws and ordinances adopted by the City of Lincoln. These regulations have been enacted by the State of California and your City Council after careful consideration. Fire and liability insurance damages may not be paid in some cases where permits were not obtained and improvements do not meet regulations.

How Much Do Permits Cost?

There is no single fee for the various permits. Fees are based on the valuation of the project and the number of plumbing, mechanical and electrical systems. The building and planning plan check fee will be collected at the time the plans and documents for the structure are submitted for plan check. The permit fees will be collected at the time the permits are issued.

Who Can Obtain a Permit?

A permit will be issued to the property owner, licensed contractor or a certified agent of the property owner.

How Long Does it Take to Get a Permit?

Small projects can sometimes be handled and a permit issued over the counter (water heaters, re-roofs, etc.). Larger projects need to have plans submitted for plan check, some of these may be complete within two weeks, and more complex projects will take longer.

What is Plan Checking?

Plan checking is required in order to determine the compliance of the drawings and specifications prior to the issuance of a construction permit. It assures you that to the best of our ability your plans meet the codes and ordinances. Major projects and projects that require engineered calculations must be submitted to the City for review. Very minor projects may be reviewed over the counter if time permits.

Can I Do the Work Myself?

Property owners may do the work on their own residence, with few exceptions.

What if I Use a Contractor?

- The contractor must possess a current City of Lincoln business license.
- The contractor must have current workman's compensation.
- The contractor must be bonded.
- All the contractors/subcontractors must have City of Lincoln business licenses and be bonded.

How Do I Verify a Contractor is licensed?

You can verify a contractor's license by calling the Contractors State License Board at 1-800-321-2752 or go to the Contractors State Licensing Board's Website: www.cslb.ca.gov

What Are Zoning & Setback Requirements?

The City has different zone areas, so please consult the Planning Department for the lot setbacks required in your area (**916-434-2470**).

How Do I Get An Inspection?

It is the duty of the person doing the work to call for inspections. Inspections are required prior to placing concrete, or grout in masonry, before electrical, mechanical or plumbing is covered, before interior walls or floor framing are covered, before taping of drywall, before stucco is applied, prior to the connecting of gas lines, electrical service, or water and sewer services. Other inspections may be required depending on the complexity of your project.

What Happens If I Build Without a Permit?

If you begin construction without the required permits, a “Stop Work Order” will immediately be issued by an Inspector. You will then be required to apply for the permits and pay additional fees. If approved, a permit will be issued and you may be required to uncover any work that has not been inspected. In some case, regulations and codes may not permit the type of construction that has been done. In this case, you may be required to replace or restore the area to its original condition prior to construction.

What If I Have a Permit But Never Called for Inspections?

Your permit will expire after one year. Before the year is up you may apply for 180 day extension, stating your reasons for the extension. If your permit expires with no extension, and there has been no final inspection you are in violation of the code and additional fees will be assessed to restore your permit.

What Are the Design Criteria for this Area?

- Seismic Design Category “D”
- Exposure “B”
- Soils capacity of 1,500 psf
- no frost line or snow load
- 85 MPH Basic Wind Speed
- 2.5” per hour max. rain fall
- Climate Zone 11
- roof live load of 20 psf

What Rooms Can I Convert or Use as Bedrooms?

The California Residential Building Code states that each habitable room must have an area of not less than 70 sf. and there shall be no habitable room with dimensions of less than 7'0" in any dimension other than kitchens.

The conversion of a garage into living space is strictly prohibited. Any of the following alterations constitute a garage conversion:

- installation of carpeting
- placement of beds or couches
- electrical and/or plumbing additions
- structural changes such as a false garage door or wall

Not only is a garage conversion a violation of the Lincoln Municipal Code, it is a violation of the California Residential Code, Fire Department Regulations.

The same holds true for any type of rear yard shed that has been converted to a habitable room. In some cases the shed itself may be illegal.

Still Have Questions?

You are welcomed and encouraged to contact the Development Services Department staff at **(916) 434-2470**, Monday-Friday, between 8 AM and 5 PM.

Please keep in mind that these codes change occasionally. Check with the City for the most current information. Currently 2019 California Code of Regulations Title 24.

EXCAVATORS & HOMEOWNERS:

CALL U.S.A. BEFORE YOU DIG

(800) 227-2600

Underground Service Alert
