

WHEN IS A PERMIT NOT REQUIRED?

The 2012 International Building/Residential Code determines what is exempt from a permit. Even if a building permit is not required, the project must still comply with all applicable construction, zoning, and development regulations (i.e. setbacks, height, lot coverage.) Always feel free to give us a call, 253-564-8901.

A building permit is not required for the following:

Building

- One-story detached accessory structure that do not exceed 200 square feet including tool and storage shed, playhouse and similar uses
- Fences not over six feet high (*see [FAQ](#) for fence regulations*)
- Retaining walls (not supporting a surcharge) that are not over four feet in height measured from the bottom of the footing (*even if buried*) to the top of the wall. (*If the retaining wall is supporting a fence, patio or structure, that is a surcharge and a permit is required.*)
- Water tanks supported directly upon *grade* if the capacity does not exceed 5,000 gallons and the ratio of height to diameter or width does not exceed 2 to 1
- Sidewalks and driveways. If you are constructing stairs, it will require a permit.
- Painting, papering, tiling, carpeting, cabinets, counter tops and similar finish work
- Prefabricated swimming pools that are less than 24 inches (*may require to be fenced*)
- Swings and other playground equipment
- Window awnings supported by an exterior wall which do not project more than 54 inches from the exterior wall and do not require additional support
- Decks not exceeding 200 square feet in area *if* they are not more than 30 inches above *grade* at any point, are not attached to a *dwelling* and do not serve the exit door required by Section R311.4.

Gas

- Portable heating, cooking or clothes drying *appliances*
- Replacement of any minor part that does not alter approval of *equipment* or make such *equipment* unsafe
- Portable-fuel-cell *appliances* that are not connected to a fixed piping system and are not interconnected to a power grid

Mechanical

- Portable heating *appliances*
- Portable ventilation *appliances*
- Portable cooling units
- Steam, hot- or chilled-water piping within any heating or cooling *equipment* regulated by this code
- Replacement of any minor part that does not alter approval of *equipment* or make such *equipment* unsafe
- Portable evaporative coolers
- Self-contained refrigeration systems containing ten pints or less of refrigerant or that are actuated by motors of 1 horsepower or less
- Portable fuel cell *appliances* that are not connected to a fixed piping system and are not interconnected to a power grid

See [Frequently Asked Questions](#) for why and when you need a permit.