



Building and Inspection Department

A GUIDE FOR OBTAINING A BUILDING PERMIT

To be used as a guide only and not as a substitute for any Bylaw

WHAT KIND OF WORK REQUIRES A BUILDING PERMIT?

A building permit is required prior to commencing:

1. The construction of a building or a structure, including accessory buildings.
2. An alteration or addition to a building or structure.
3. The finishing of an unfinished area of a building.
4. A structural repair or change to a building or structure.
5. The demolition of a building or structure or part thereof.
6. The construction of a swimming pool.
7. The installation of heating appliances; such as woodstoves, inserts, heat pumps or similar appliances.
8. The moving of a building.
9. The erection of a fence or wall.
10. The installation of a plumbing system.

A BUILDING PERMIT IS NOT REQUIRED FOR:

1. Painting or re-painting.
2. Cosmetic work or interior decorating.
3. Landscape plantings.
4. Replace of plumbing fixtures.
5. Structure under 100 sq. ft.

WHEN SHOULD A BUILDING PERMIT BE OBTAINED?

You must have a building permit before beginning any work for which a permit is required. You must not start any stage of the project, including excavation or demolition before you obtain the building permit.

CAN MY CONTRACTOR OBTAIN THE BUILDING PERMIT?

Yes. But we strongly recommend that the owner take out the building permit. The responsibility for carrying out the *work in accordance with Codes, liability for workmen, insurance and other matters* should be *borne by the contractor*.

WHAT DOCUMENTATION AND INFORMATION IS REQUIRED?

1. The building permit application form must be signed by the owner and if applicable, the agent of the owner.
2. Proof of ownership: Certificate of Title required.
3. Two (2) copies of all plans and details are required.
4. Home Owner Protection form. (1-800-407-7757; email hno@hpo.bc.ca; website www.hpo.bc.ca)
5. Vancouver Island Health Region (CHR) - septic field approval – (204-2780 Millstream Road -250- 478-0523)

Drawings being submitted for a Permit should include:

1. All existing buildings on site and proposed construction.
2. A site plan (sample Illustration A) with all dimensions of the property and the dimensioned relationship of all buildings and structures to each other and to the property lines.
3. The height of all buildings.
4. The elevations of *all sides of the buildings that need to* be considered (sample Illustration B).
5. *At least one cross section of the building construction, referencing the regulated heights and the calculation of the elevation of average grade* (sample Illustration C).
6. A floor plan indicating the USE of each room and part of the building (sample Illustration D).
7. In most cases, the calculations of lot coverage and floor ratios.

For renovation work not involving structural changes, your application should include a floor plan of the area to be renovated showing the extend of the work and statements indicating no structural changes are intended.

DO I NEED A SURVEY?

Yes a survey must be submitted prior to the framing stage of construction. A registered British Columbia Land Surveyor must sign the survey.

WHAT DOES A BUILDING PERMIT COST?

Building permit fees are based on the total cost of the project. Building cost statistics are utilized when necessary. Self-help labour costs form part of the values.

WHAT IS THE USUAL WAITING PERIOD FOR A BUILDING PERMIT?

Usually permits can be processed within two weeks of receipt, providing all the information is presented. Plans that are rejected and resubmitted may have to be dealt with in order.

WHEN MAY I START WORK?

You may begin when the permit has been issued. The Bylaws of the District of Highlands require a doubling of the permit fees when work is commenced prior to possessing a permit.

WHAT HAPPENS IF MY APPLICATION IS REJECTED?

A rejection of an application will be accompanied by reasons for the rejection. You may ask the inspector for further explanation, if necessary, but Municipal staff are not permitted to assist in the design of a building.

Applications may be "red penciled" to indicate non-conformance with the Codes. Minor amounts of "red penciling" may not require the re-design of the building plans.

Applications may be declined because of zoning problems. Compliance with zoning regulations is mandatory.

Staff acknowledges some residents may not be experts on Code matters. Staff appreciate the recognition that they are only carrying out their duties in administering the Bylaws in force.

WHAT OTHER PERMITS WILL I REQUIRE?

You will require the issuing of a plumbing permit if new plumbing or alterations are contemplated. Also a permit will be required for a fireplace if a solid flue burning unit is installed.

Driveway access, tree cutting, blasting and soil deposit or removal permit could be required if applicable.

ARE INSPECTIONS REQUIRED DURING CONSTRUCTION?

Yes. The Bylaw sets the inspections necessary.

The portions of the work to be inspected will be noted on the application form. All work must be uncovered at the time of inspection.

Twenty-four (24) hours prior notice is necessary. Faulty work and failure to follow the plans may require a re-inspection of the work and a re-inspection fee,

ENGINEERED DESIGNS

When conditions arise that require a professional engineer's services or the design requires professional approval; i.e. Wood trusses, beams, masonry, etc., the owner must agree to employ an engineer to review the manufacture, design, erection or construction of the engineered portions of the buildings. Letter of Assurance from the owner and the professional may be required.

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