

# Building Frequently Asked Questions

## How do I know if I need a permit?

### WORK REQUIRING A BUILDING PERMIT:

- Building a dwelling.
- Build, demolish or add a room, garage, shed or other attached structure.
- Build, demolish or move any detached carport, garage or shed that is more than 200 square feet or more than 10 feet high from the floor to the average height of the roof.
- Finish an attic, garage or basement to create living space.
- Cut new window or door openings or widen existing openings.
- Move, remove or add walls.
- Apply roofing when the old roofing and sheathing is removed and new sheathing is installed.
- Build or replace an exterior stairway more than 30 inches high.
- Build a retaining wall that exceeds four feet high measured from the bottom of the footing to the top of the wall or any retaining wall affected by the weight of an adjacent slope, or nearby driveway or structure.
- Build a deck more than 30 inches high.
- Put up a fence more than six feet high.
- Enclose a porch or carport.

- Add or enclose a porch cover, patio cover or other attached roofed structure with a cumulative area greater than 200 square feet.
- Pour concrete sidewalks, slabs, or driveways more than 30 inches above adjacent grade and over any story or basement.
- Install a barrier around a swimming pool.

#### **WORK REQUIRING AN ELECTRICAL PERMIT:**

- Install, change or repair any hard-wired electrical system.
- Run any additional wiring, put in an additional electrical outlet or light fixture, or change your fuse box to circuit breakers.
- Install or alter low voltage systems such as security alarms, central vacuum systems, low voltage lighting or phone systems.

NOTE: Electrical permits are issued by Yamhill County only. Please contact Yamhill County 503-434-7516 for specific information.

#### **WORK REQUIRING A MECHANICAL PERMIT:**

- Install or change any part of a heating or cooling system which has ductwork or must be vented into any kind of chimney or vent.
- Install a wood stove or fireplace insert.
- Install, alter or repair gas piping between the meter and an appliance (indoors and outdoors).
- Install a fuel oil tank.

NOTE: Mechanical permits are issued by Yamhill County only. Please contact Yamhill County 503-434-7516 for specific information.

#### **WORK REQUIRING A PLUMBING PERMIT:**

- Repair, replace, relocate or add to the plumbing system within your home.
- Install new plumbing fixtures such as toilets, sinks, showers, tubs, dishwashers, etc.
- Replace a water heater.
- Replace existing plumbing fixtures if the replacement involves concealed plumbing connections.
- Install rain drains, cesspools, septic systems, drywells, sewer lines, water lines, backflow prevention assemblies for lawn sprinkler systems or cap a sewer.

NOTE: Adding a bathroom not only required a plumbing permit, but may also require a building, electrical and/or mechanical permit and are issued by Yamhill County only. Please contact Yamhill County 503-434-7516 for specific information.

**WORK NOT REQUIRING A BUILDING PERMIT:**

- Paint a building that is not a historic landmark or does not have specific zoning restrictions.
- Install insulation in existing homes.
- Install storm windows.
- Install window awnings, not more than 54 inches deep and not in a design zone, that are supported by an exterior wall and do not project beyond the property line.
- Replace interior wall, floor or ceiling covering (such as wallboard or sheet vinyl).
- Install shelving and cabinets.
- Install gutters and downspouts (a plumbing permit may still be required for storm water disposal).
- Replace or repair siding.

- Replace or repair roofing, if there is no replacement of sheathing (a maximum of three layers of roofing is allowed).
- Replace doors or windows if the existing openings are not widened.
- Install swings and other play structures.
- Build a fence up to six feet high. (You should verify clear vision in areas prior to building the fence).
- Pave a walkway.
- Build a patio or deck that is not more than 30 inches above grade.
- Build a shed or detached non-habitable accessory structure less than or equal to 200 square feet in an area and less than 10ft in height from the floor to the average height of the roof.
- Repave driveways where no expansion has occurred.
- Remove and reinstall a toilet when installing new floor covering.
- Replace accessible plumbing fixtures to make emergency plumbing repairs or to replace freeze-damaged or leaking concealed plumbing pipes that are no more than three feet in length.
- Build a patio or porch cover no over 200 square feet and supported by an exterior building wall.

## **WHY DO I NEED A PERMIT?**

It's the law. State Building Code requires that permits be obtained for certain types of work.

Permits protect you, your family and your investment. They are designed to help ensure that licensed contractors do the work when it's required.

Inspections ensure that work is done safely and that it meets the minimum code requirements.

Minor problems that could lead to costly repairs, liability and life/safety issues can be detected during permit inspections and brought to your attention before the situation worsens.

When selling a property, the buyer, realtor and/or lender may require that unpermitted work be corrected, properly permitted and inspected before closing.

Please note: Regardless of whether a building permit is required, the project must meet the City of Amity Development Code requirements for building setbacks and clear vision areas. The City Ordinances and Development Code can be found on the City of Amity website, under Planning or you can contact City Hall at 503-835-3711 for additional information.

## **How do I get a permit?**

If a permit is needed to work on your property, City approval will be needed first. To do this, complete a Building Compliance Application and bring it in to City Hall. This application can be found under the Resources tab and then Forms Directory. A site plan or scope of work narrative will also be needed. A fee of \$100.00 will also be assessed upon delivery to City Hall.

City Hall staff will review the Building Compliance Application and make sure it meets all City Code. Once it is approved, the application is ready to go to Yamhill County Planning and Building Department for permits.

## **Can I build a fence on my property?**

A permit is not needed to build a fence on your property as long as the fence is not over 6 feet and does not obstruct traffic vision. If the fence is over 6 feet, a permit will be needed. Please contact the Planning Clerk at City Hall for details on the process.

## **Do I need a permit to build a shed on my property?**

To build a shed 200 square feet or smaller on your property, you do not need a permit, but there are other requirements you will need in order to meet City Code. In order to begin, you will need to know your properties zoning. Please contact the Planning Clerk at City Hall for more details.