

Do I have to hire an architect or engineer to design my project and prepare the plans?

Not usually. You only have to hire an architect or engineer when the design or methods used in the construction, alteration, or repair of the structure does not follow the process stated in the most current state adopted International Residential Code.

When are plans required?

Plans are required when:

- Your project is a new structure.
- Your project increases the area or height of a structure.
- When interior living spaces are altered or created.
- When your project changes the use of a structure to other than a residence.

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NORTHWEST CODE PROFESSIONALS

Our company was formed in 1973 to service smaller cities and counties that needed inspections and plan review services. It was initially called The Building Department LLC. Since then, we have renamed the company Northwest Code Professionals and currently serve over 55 jurisdictions in various capacities from plan review to full building programs including Building Official services throughout Oregon, Washington, and Idaho. We provide services to public jurisdictions, multiple tribes, and serve as a code consultant and plan reviewer for multiple architects and developers.

Our Washington staff includes code officials, plans examiners and inspectors. We provide full building department services to 16 Washington cities and provide plan review and inspection services to various other cities and counties.

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Contact Gary Lampella at (541) 554-1688 for further information on our company or email at garyl@nwcodepros.com

*Not all services provided in all states

When do I Need a Permit?

And other questions answered



**Commonly asked questions
about obtaining a residential
building permit**



**NORTHWEST CODE
PROFESSIONALS**

When am I required to get a permit?

Permits are required for any new construction, alterations and additions to existing buildings, and siting factory assembled structures.

This includes:

Factory assembled structures
Structural
Plumbing
Mechanical

Why do I have to obtain a permit to build on my own property?

It is all about safety. Washington law requires you to obtain permits, even on your own property, to ensure that you meet minimum building standards for your own safety and for the safety of future property owners and occupants.

Who is responsible for obtaining permits?

If the property owner is doing the work, he or she is responsible for acquiring all the permits. If you are hiring a contractor to complete the work, you need to confirm that he or she is obtaining the appropriate permits and are appropriately licensed.

"Permits protect the safety and value of your home"

Exemption from permit

These do not require permits:

1. One-story detached accessory structures less than 200 square feet in area
2. Fences not over 7 feet high
3. Retaining walls not over 4 feet in height
4. Water tanks supported directly on grade and not exceeding 5,000 gallons
5. Sidewalks and driveways
6. Painting, papering, tiling, carpeting, cabinets, countertops and similar finish work
7. Prefabricated swimming pools less than 24 inches deep
8. Swings and other playground equipment
9. Self-supported window awnings that do not project more than 54 inches from the exterior wall
10. Decks not more than 200 square feet and not more than 30 inches above adjacent grade at any point and are not attached to a dwelling or serve the exit door required by IRC Section R311.4

Local land use should be consulted prior to starting any of the above projects, such as required setbacks to property lines. Exemption from permit does not grant authority to violate the provisions of the codes.

When does my permit expire?

Your permit expires:

- If work isn't started within 180 days from the date of issue, or
- If work is suspended or abandoned for 180 days or more.

Why do I need a permit to replace a water heater or furnace?

Washington law requires permits for these because of fire, electric shock, and explosion dangers.



Where do I get electrical permits?

Electrical permits can be obtained through the Department of Labor & Industries.

Website: www.lni.wa.gov