

DO I NEED A BUILDING PERMIT?

Permits are required to construct, enlarge, alter, repair, move, demolish, or change the occupancy of the building or structure, or to erect, install, enlarge, alter, repair, removed, convert, or replace any gas, mechanical, electrical, plumbing system, or other equipment. Source: 2020 Minnesota Rules, 1300.0120

IS ANY WORK EXEMPTED FROM NEEDING A PERMIT?

Yes, certain exemptions exist within the building code; common exemptions include the following: garden sheds and playhouses not exceeding 200 square feet, fences not over 7 feet, retaining walls not over 4 feet, decks not more than 30 inches above grade without frost footings and are not attached to a structure, and playground equipment. Source: 2020 Minnesota Administrative Rules 1300.0120, Subp.4.

Please note that although building permits may not be required, the City requires zoning review and you should always check with the City prior to beginning any construction activity.

WHY DO I NEED A PERMIT?

Building codes, permits and inspections provide basic and uniform performance standards, establish reasonable safeguards for health, safety, welfare, comfort, and security of the residents of this state and provide for the use of modern methods, devices, materials, and techniques which will in part tend to lower construction costs. Source: 2015 Minnesota Statutes 326B.101

CAN I DO THE WORK MYSELF?

In Minnesota, a homeowner is allowed to work on their own home, as long as it is not being worked on with the intention to *speculate* on real estate. According to MN Statute, speculation is evaluated using the following language: A residential building contractor or residential remodeler will be presumed to be building or improving for purposes of speculation if the contractor or remodeler constructs or improves more than one property within any 24-month period. *The City requires a waiver form in this situation.* Source: 2015 Minnesota Statute 326B.805, Subp. 6

City of Fergus Falls Ordinance No. 83, CH 10.24 Building Permit Required.

- A person must not do, or cause to be done, the work listed in the definitions in section 10.20 without first obtaining a permit from the city and paying the fee specified by the city council.
- A permit application must be accompanied by a complete set of plans and specifications for the work to be done. The building official may waive this requirement if the building official believes that the nature of the work is such that construction documents are not necessary to obtain compliance with this code. If plans are submitted and a permit is issued, the work must be completed in accordance with the approved plans.
- A permit must be obtained before the work begins. A person, firm or corporation that begins work specified in paragraph (A) without obtaining the necessary permit is required to pay double the permit fee and is subject to the penalty provisions of this code. The building official may waive this provision if the building official believes the work was required by an emergency.
- Permits for work in new structures will only be issued to contractors licensed by the State. Permits for work in existing structures will only be issued to contractors licensed by the State or to resident owners who homestead the property where the work is to be done.
- Every permit issued will become invalid unless the work authorized by the permit is started within 180 days after its issuance, or the work authorized by the permit is suspended or abandoned for a period of 180 days after the work is started. The building official is authorized to grant one or more written time extensions for periods not more than 180 days each. An extension must be requested in writing and justifiable cause demonstrated. Renewal of an invalid permit will require payment of the full permit fee.