

Permits: Do I Need One?

Inspection Requirements – The following inspections will be required for residential projects. The number and type of inspections may vary based on the type and complexity of the project. Footer (before pouring), Foundation (before backfilling and after waterproofing has been applied or concrete walls before pouring), Mechanical, Electrical, Plumbing, Insulation, Framing, and Final Use & Occupancy approval.

If you have any questions or doubts regarding permits for your project, call ABI toll-free at 866-733-1654.

Permit and Inspections Process for Residential Buildings

§ 403.61. Residential buildings.

This subchapter and §§ 403.62--403.66 apply to municipalities electing to enforce the Uniform Construction Code under § 403.102 (relating to municipalities electing to enforce the Uniform Construction Code) and third-party agencies.

§ 403.62. Permit requirements and exemptions.

1. (a) An owner or authorized agent who intends to construct, enlarge, alter, repair, move, demolish or change the occupancy of a residential building or erect, install, enlarge, alter, repair, remove, convert or replace an electrical, gas, mechanical or plumbing system regulated by the Uniform Construction Code shall first apply to the building code official and obtain the required permit under § 403.62a (relating to permit application).
2. (b) An emergency repair or replacement of equipment may be made without first applying for a permit if a permit application is submitted to the building code official within 3 business days of the repair or replacement.
3. (c) A permit is not required for the exceptions listed in § 403.1(b) (relating to scope) and the following construction if the work does not violate a law or ordinance:
 1. (1) The following building construction, replacement or repairs:
 1. (i) Fences that are no more than 6 feet high.
 2. (ii) Retaining walls that are not over 4 feet in height measured from the lowest level of grade to the top of the wall unless the wall supports a surcharge.
 3. (iii) 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.
 4. (iv) Sidewalks and driveways that are 30 inches or less above adjacent grade and not placed over a basement or story below it.
 5. (v) Exterior or interior painting, papering, tiling, carpeting, flooring, cabinets, counter tops and similar finishing work.
 6. (vi) Prefabricated swimming pools that are less than 24 inches deep.
 7. (vii) Swings and other playground equipment accessory to a one- or two-family dwelling.

8. (viii) 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.
 9. (ix) Replacement of glass in any window or door. The replacement glass shall comply with the minimum requirements of the International Residential Code.
 10. (x) Installation and replacement of a window, door, garage door, storm window and storm door in the same opening if the dimensions or framing of the original opening are not altered. The installation of means of egress and emergency escape windows may be made in the same opening, without altering the dimensions or framing of the original opening if the required height, width or net clear opening of the previous window or door assembly is not reduced.
 11. (xi) Replacement of existing roof material that does not exceed 25% of the total roof area performed within any 12-month period.
 12. (xiii) Replacement of existing siding.
 13. (xiv) Repair or replacement of any part of a porch or stoop which does not structurally support a roof located above the porch or stoop.
 14. (xv) Installation of additional roll or batt insulation.
 15. (xvi) Replacement of exterior rain water gutters and leaders.
 16. (xvii) Installation of an uncovered deck where the floor of the deck is no more than 30 inches above grade.
2. (2) Minor electrical work for the following:
 1. (i) Replacement of lamps or the connection of approved portable electrical equipment to approved permanently installed receptacles
 2. (ii) Replacement of a receptacle, switch or lighting fixture rated at 20 amps or less and operating at less than 150 volts to ground with a like or similar item. This does not include replacement of receptacles in locations where ground-fault circuit interrupter protection is required.
 3. (iii) Replacement of installed electrically operated equipment such as doorbells, communication systems and any motor operated device.
 4. (iv) Installation, alteration or rearrangement of communications wiring.
 5. (v) Replacement of dishwashers.
 6. (vi) Replacement of kitchen range hoods.
 7. (vii) Installation of battery-powered smoke detectors.
 3. (3) The following gas work:
 1. (i) Portable heating, cooking or clothes drying appliances.
 2. (ii) Replacement of a minor part that does not alter approval of equipment or make this equipment unsafe.
 3. (iii) A portable fuel cell appliance that is not connected to a fixed piping system and is not interconnected to a power grid.
 4. (4) The following mechanical work or equipment:
 1. (i) A portable heating appliance.
 2. (ii) Portable ventilation appliances.
 3. (iii) A portable cooling unit.

4. (iv) Steam, hot or chilled water piping within any heating or cooling equipment governed under the Uniform Construction Code.
 5. (v) Replacement of any minor part that does not alter approval of equipment or make the equipment unsafe.
 6. (vi) Self-contained refrigeration systems containing 10 pounds or less of refrigerant or that are put into action by motors 1 horsepower.
 7. (vii) Portable evaporative cooler.
 8. (viii) A portable fuel cell appliance that is not connected to a fixed piping system and is not interconnected to a power grid.
5. (5) The following plumbing work:
 1. (i) Replacement of bib valves if the replacement hose bib valves are provided with an approved atmospheric vacuum breaker.
 2. (ii) Refinishing of existing fixtures.
 3. (iii) Replacement of ball cocks.
 4. (iv) Repair of leaks.
 5. (v) Clearance of stoppages.
 6. (vi) Replacement of faucets or working parts of faucets.
 7. (vii) Replacement of valves other than shower or combination shower/bath valves.
 8. (viii) Replacement of traps.
 9. (ix) Replacement of a water closet, lavatory or kitchen sink.
 10. (x) Replacement of domestic clothes washers and dishwashers.
 6. (6) The following heating, ventilation and air conditioning work:
 1. (i) Replacement of motors, pumps and fans of the same capacity.
 2. (ii) Repair and replacement of heating, supply and return piping and radiation elements which do not require rearrangement of the piping system.
 3. (iii) Repair and replacement of duct work.
 4. (iv) Repair and replacement of air conditioning equipment and systems.
 5. (v) Repair and replacement of control devices for heating and air conditioning equipment.
 6. (vi) Replacement of kitchen range hoods.
 7. (vii) Replacement of clothes dryers if there is no change in fuel type, location or electrical requirements.
 8. (viii) Replacement of stoves and ovens if there is no change in fuel type, location or electrical characteristics.
4. (d) An ordinary repair does not require a permit. The following are not ordinary repairs:
 1. (1) Cutting away a wall, partition or portion of a wall.
 2. (2) The removal or cutting of any structural beam or load-bearing support.
 3. (3) The removal or change of any required means of egress, or rearrangement of parts of a structure affecting the egress requirements.
 4. (4) The addition to, alteration of, replacement or relocation of any standpipe, water supply, sewer, drainage, drain leader, gas, soil, waste, vent or similar piping, electric wiring or mechanical.
 5. (e) A permit is not required for the installation, alteration or repair of generation, transmission, distribution, metering or other related equipment that is, by established

right, under the ownership and control of a public utility as the term "public utility" is defined in 66 Pa.C.S. § 102 (relating to the definitions).