



CONCORD

NEW HAMPSHIRE

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Concord, NH 03301
Office: (603) 225-8580

Residential Building Permit Application Guide

For the following:

- New One & Two Family Residences & Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs)
- Additions
- Renovations
- Sheds, Cabanas, Pools
- Garages, Decks, & Solar Arrays



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Who are the building inspectors and how can I contact them?

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Office hours are Monday-Friday 7:30 to 4:00.

Can I view this guide on the City's website?

Yes, this guide and all referenced examples and forms can be found on the City's [Building Safety webpage](#). You can pick up a paper copy of this guide and all referenced examples and forms at the Code Administration offices during normal business hours.

Does the City legally require property owners to get building, plumbing, mechanical, and electrical permits?

Yes, [RSA 674:51](#) has authorized the Code Administrator to enforce the New Hampshire State Building Code, as amended.

When do I need a permit?

Permits are required for:

- Constructing, altering, repairing, moving, demolishing, or changing the occupancy type of any building or part of a building. This includes any structural changes.
- Installing, altering, or repairing any electrical, plumbing, gas, or mechanical systems.
- Creating new habitable living space, even in an existing building.
- Any changes in the means of egress (exits).
- Replacing kitchen cabinets or countertops.
- Above-ground or in-ground pools.
- Decks, porches, sheds, and garages.
- Generators and solar arrays.

Permits are NOT required for:

Accessory structures and sheds no larger than 60 square feet;

Retaining walls not over 4 feet in height;

Painting, papering, tiling, carpeting, and similar finish work;

Swimming pools less than 24 inches deep;

Window awnings supported by exterior wall that do not project more than 54 inches from exterior wall and do not require additional support;

Nonstructural roof coverings and nonstructural exterior building siding;

Replacement windows, siding;
Fences up to 7 feet tall.

If you are not sure if you need a building permit, please call or email the Code Administration Office. There is no charge for consultations.

Should I be concerned about zoning and building site issues?

Yes, you may have some zoning and building site concerns. All proposed work must comply with the City's [Zoning Ordinance Article 28](#), and [State DES](#) (Department of Environmental Services) rules. Before a building permit can be issued, the application must be approved for zoning and site compliance.

Projects that cannot fully comply with the city's Zoning Ordinance due to a hardship, as defined in NH RSA 674:33, may seek relief from the [Zoning Board of Adjustment](#).

Historical District – All exterior work will require Planning approval.

Some projects may require site plan review approval from the [Planning Board](#). Site plan review is required for the development or expansion of non-residential uses, multi-family dwelling units, and some other types of projects. These regulations also apply to any change of use, additions, or alterations that change the outward appearance of a structure used for non-residential or multi-family purposes.

[Accessory buildings and facilities](#), and [solar collection systems](#), including but not limited to pools, sheds, greenhouses, and tennis courts, have their own zoning setbacks and regulations.

Do I Need a Permit for Demolition?

A demolition permit may be required based on [Article 26-9](#). A Demolition Permit may take up to 60 days to process and get approved. A demolition permit is required for any building or part of a building if all the following criteria are met:

- (a) Any application involving the demolition of a building is submitted to the City, and
- (b) The proposed demolition is greater than five hundred (500) square feet of gross floor area; and
- (c) The building was constructed more than fifty (50) years before the date of application for demolition permit.

Will a Building Permit Change my Tax Assessment?

It may. The Building Division does not determine the assessed value of your property; it only notifies the assessing office that a permit has been issued.

Will a Building Permit Change my Current Use Classification?

It may, if you have land in Current Use and you change the classification of all or part of the land, it

may have an impact on your total Current Use classification, and thus your tax assessment. The Code Administration Division does not manage properties in Current Use. Please see the City's [Assessing Division](#) if you have specific questions.

What are the current New Hampshire State building and fire codes?

The [State Building & Fire Codes](#).

What are the local climate & geographic design criteria?

Even though we have a State building code, there are some local criteria. Below are the local building design criteria:

- Ground snow load of 70 pounds per square foot.
- Wind speed of 90 miles per hour.
- Seismic design Class B.
- Weathering is severe.
- Frost line depth is 48 inches.
- Termite probability is slight to moderate.
- Flood hazard is based on the FEMA Flood Insurance Rate Maps.

How do I get a building permit?

Follow these 3 steps:

1. Apply for a building permit using the City's [Citizen Self Service Application Portal](#).

During the application process you can attach all the required documentation from within the portal. Your project may be delayed if the required documents are not available for the reviewers. What documentation do I need? That really depends on what you are doing. Some applications may not need any additional documentation and some may need a lot. 'Appendix A' outlines the items you may need. Please contact the Code Office if you have any questions.

2. Allow time for the application to be reviewed and approved by a Building Inspector and other reviewers.

Simple projects can be reviewed and approved in days. Large projects may take several weeks to process. As the review statuses change you will receive emails that provide a review summary. Once the review is completed, you will receive an email notifying you of the fees for the permit. Please note that if you are creating a new dwelling unit you will be assessed impact fees. These fees must be paid before a certificate of occupancy can be issued.

What if there is something wrong with my application? If there are any problems with the application or if something is missing, you will be contacted to resolve the issue and move the process forward.

3. Pay the fees.

Once the application has been approved you will receive an email asking you to pay the fees. Once payment is received you will receive an email with the building permit attached.

[Fee schedules may be found here.](#)

Once the building permit has been issued, construction can begin. Please be aware that separate trades permits are required for mechanical, electrical, and plumbing work. If you have questions please call.

Now I have my Building Permit, what do I do next?

This is the point where the work is done and the applicant and tradespeople call for inspections. Call (603) 225-8580 to schedule inspections. Please do not schedule inspections online. The number and type of inspections will vary with each project. Licensed tradespeople are required to call for their respective mechanical, electrical, or plumbing inspections.

What if I need to change or modify my project or plans?

Don't worry, this happens on occasion. Contact the Code Office as soon as possible so that any adjustments can be made to the building permit. If the scope of the project expands, most often the work can be added to the current permit. The change may require additional documentation to be submitted or an additional fee may need to be paid.

What if I need to change my contractor, electrician, plumber, or gas fitter?

Please call the Code Office so we may help you with this.

When is the building permit process finished?

A Certificate of Occupancy or Certificate of Completion will be issued when all of the following items have been successfully completed (please note that some items may not apply to your project):

- All permitted work has been completed.
- All required inspections have been approved by the Building Inspector.
- Electrical, Plumbing, and Mechanical inspections have been approved by the assigned inspectors.
- Building or driveway entrance numbered for E911 purposes.
- Proof of potable water for a private well.
- Septic system 'Approval For Operation' by NH DES.

- Blower Door Test has been received.
- Water and sewer connections or alterations inspected by the Engineering and/or General Services Divisions.
- Final inspection of the driveway by Engineering.
- Compliance with any Planning Board or Zoning Board of Adjustment approvals.

Appendix A – Submission Documentation.

This appendix is meant to help you determine what documentation is needed to complete your application.

Submission items:

Please provide the following information when you apply for a building permit. (Some of these items may not be needed for your project.)

- All required ZBA and Planning Board approvals.
- All required State DES permits, such as Alteration of Terrain, Shoreland, and Wetland permits.

Scaled drawings (1/4" = 1 foot) including:

- Floor plans for: basement, each story, and habitable attics, with rooms identified by use, and all door and window locations.
- Foundation plans showing: footings, wall heights and thickness, rebar size and locations, anchor bolt locations. For projects using concrete piers provide pier details and locations.
- Elevations showing: basement, stories, roof, doors, windows, stairs, bulkheads, and decks.
- Framing and structural plans and details showing: floors, walls, ceilings, roofs, beams, headers, and engineered products such as trusses, LVLs, and TJI's.
- All egress doors and sizes, emergency escapes (egress-sized windows), stairs, exterior landings, bulkheads, and pull-down ladders.
- Smoke and carbon monoxide alarm locations.
- If additional bedrooms are being created and the building is on a private septic system, provide the State approved septic system design that is capable of handling the total number of bedrooms.

NEW BUILDINGS AND ADDITIONS:

A plot plan showing:

- The locations of new buildings on the lot, additions to existing buildings, and new accessory buildings, in order to verify zoning building setbacks.
- Distances from buildings and additions to front, side, and rear property lines.
- Driveway location, new driveways will need a Driveway Permit Application.

- All distances from buildings to property lines (setbacks, wetlands, wetland buffers, and shoreland).
- For in-ground pools, please show fence or barrier location.

Construction plan details:

Foundation

- Footing widths, heights, depth below finished grade, and grades.
- Wall thicknesses.
- Rebar sizes and locations. Rebar is needed in some walls, depending on the wall height and whether the backfill is on both sides, or on one side, such as a typical basement.
- Monolithic slabs, up to 600 square feet, can be used for some standalone accessory buildings of light construction. The footing and slab must be poured at the same time, and some rebar is required. Please refer to the Example Monolithic Slab Plan.
- Footing drains, including the size and type of pipe, crushed stone, filter fabric, direction of flow, and where the drains will terminate.
- Damp-proofing methods.
- Pier sizes and heights, or pre-cast piers.
- Anchor bolt locations (spacing) on the top of all slabs, walls, and piers.
- Location of basement bulkheads, door openings, window openings, and emergency escape and rescue openings.

Framing

- Types and sizes of supporting columns.
- Girder and beam sizes, materials, and spacing between supports. Lumber should be continuous from column to column and not break in the middle.
- Floor joist sizes, spacing on center, span distances, and materials. If engineered floor trusses or I-joists are to be used, a Data Sheet from the truss manufacturer or lumber yard must be submitted for each type of product.
- Sub-flooring materials types and thicknesses.
- Exterior wall heights, stud sizes, stud spacing on center, and sheathing materials. Interior structural wall stud sizes and spacing on center.
- Window and door locations with header size details. Distances from finished floors to the bottom of window openings. Sleeping rooms shall have at least one emergency egress/rescue opening directly to the outside with a minimum net clear opening of 5 square feet on the grade level and 5.7 square feet for all other locations. The sill height shall not be more than 44" above the finished floor level.
- Wall bracing methods for wind bracing.

- Stairway width, headroom, riser height, and tread depth.
- Ceiling joist sizes, spacing on center, span distances, and materials.
- Rafter sizes, spacing on center, spans, roof pitches, and materials. Ridge board sizes and materials. Cathedral ceiling ridge beam sizes, spans, and materials. If engineered roof trusses are to be used, a Data Sheet from the truss manufacturer must be submitted for each type of truss.

- Roof sheathing material types and thicknesses.

All engineered wood products, such as LVLs and TJIs shall have a load calculation Data Sheet, which is available from the supplier.

- Please submit the first two pages of the NH Residential Energy Code Application (EC-1 Form).

Other Details

- Stairway riser, tread depth, headroom, guard, and handrail details.
- Locations of all heating systems, furnaces, boilers, electric heaters, geo-thermal equipment, wood or pellet stoves, and ductwork.
- Locations of all chimneys and fireplaces.
- Attic access location with a minimum dimension of 22 x 30 inches, if required.
- Details of attic ventilation.
- Garage and living space fire separation details.
- Dwelling unit separation details, if more than one dwelling or apartment.

Other Helpful Links

[Deck Design Worksheet](#)

[Finished Basements](#)

[Generators](#)

[Manufactured Housing](#)

[Modular Housing](#)

Pools & Spas & Hot Tubs

[Porch Design Worksheet](#)

[Shed Design Worksheet](#)

[Solar Arrays](#)

[Stairs](#)