

Guide - Building Permits and Inspections

A guide to obtaining a building permit and the associated inspection process.

Building Permits and Inspections Guide

Why do I need a permit?

Construction in this Municipality, and, indeed in the entire Province of Ontario, is governed by the **Building Code Act**. This is Provincial legislation, and states:

8.-(1) Building Permits.

No person shall construct or demolish a building or cause a building to be constructed or demolished unless a permit has been issued therefor by the chief building official. 1992, c.23, s.8(1); 1997, c.30, Sched. B, s.7(1)

The Building Code Act also requires that construction conforms to the Building Code and is also in accordance with "the plans, specifications, documents and any other information on the basis of which the permit was issued."

Changes to plans after the permit is issued are permitted, but must be authorized by the Chief Building Official.

The permit and inspection process helps to ensure that all work is done according to the submitted plans and meets minimum health and safety standards, and that construction will not pose a danger to the property owner or anyone else.

What sort of projects do I need a permit for?

Permits are required for all construction, demolition and change of use of buildings in Ontario.

Some defined terms:

building

- a. a structure occupying an area greater than ten square metres (108 sq.ft.) consisting of a wall, roof and floor or any of them or a structural system serving the function thereof including all plumbing, works, fixtures and service systems appurtenant thereto,
- b. a structure occupying an area of ten square metres or less that contains plumbing, including the plumbing appurtenant thereto,
- c. plumbing not located in a structure,
 1. a sewage system; or
- d. structures designated in the building code;

construct

to do anything in the erection, installation, extension or material alteration or repair of a building

and includes the installation of a building unit fabricated or moved from elsewhere and "construction" has a corresponding meaning;

demolish

to do anything in the removal of a building or any material part thereof and "demolition" has a corresponding meaning.

change of use

changes in the use of a building which are deemed to constitute an increase in hazard (as defined in the Building Code,) require a "Change of Use" permit. If a regular construction permit has been issued for other work required for this change, a further Change of Use permit is not needed.

In addition to the municipal building permit process, certain types of structure close to the waterfront may need additional permits or input from the Conservation Authority. Construction of docks, float plane hangars, boathouses, boat launches and access roads and stairways to the shoreline would fall into this category.

Construction adjacent to Provincial Highways may also need permission from the M.T.O.

What can I do without a permit?

2.4.1.1. Requirement for Permits

- 1. A person is exempt from the requirement to obtain a permit under Section 8 of the Act*
 - a. for the demolition of a building located on a farm,*
 - b. subject to Sentence (1.1), for the construction or demolition of a building in territory without municipal organization, or*
 - c. for the construction of a Class 1 sewage system. (Outhouse or composting toilet etc.)*

Certain types of tent or groups of tents may also be exempt from the need to obtain a permit.

In addition, certain common maintenance tasks can be done without a permit. Examples include:

- Replacing shingles
- Installing replacement windows (same size) and doors
- Minor replacement of drywall
- Installation of eavestroughs
- Repainting
- Structures less than ten square metres (108 sq.ft.) in total floor area
- Replacement of kitchen cabinets and appliances

For information about specific projects, contact the Building Department at (613) 279-2935 Ext 226.

Who can apply for a permit?

An application for a permit must be made by the owner of the property or the authorized agent of the owner.

"Owner" in this case includes the registered owner, a lessee and a mortgagee in possession.

An “authorized agent” of the owner must produce a signed letter of authorization before the permit can be issued.

How do I get a permit?

Present a complete application to the Building Department in the [Township Office](#) at 1084 Elizabeth Street, Sharbot Lake during office hours.

What is a “Complete Application?”

A complete application for a new house or cottage may include:

- Application form, all sections filled in and signed
- Complete plans and specifications for the building
- Site plan
- Other permits and approvals (septic permit, Conservation Authority approval etc)
- Entrance permit
- Civic address application
- Tarion declaration (Ontario New Home Warranty Program)
- Confirmation of zoning compliance or any Minor Variance needed.

How long will it take?

A permit for a detached or semi-detached house, or row house where no dwelling unit is located above another dwelling unit or a detached accessory building not exceeding 50 m² in building area, must be issued or refused within ten (10) days of receipt of the complete application.

For other "Part 9" buildings and farm buildings under 600m² the time period is extended to 15 days.

Most applications can be processed well within this time period.

OK, I’ve got the permit, what next?

After the permit is issued, construction can begin. Certain stages in the construction process must be inspected and approved before moving on to the next stage. To arrange for an inspection, contact the office at 279-2935 ext 226 and leave a message with your name, permit number, civic address and the stage of construction to be inspected.

Who is responsible for calling for inspections?

The Building Code Act reads:

“The person to whom a permit is issued shall notify the chief building official...” In other words, the person whose name is on the permit.

Which stages of construction have to be inspected?

Again, a quote from the Building Code:

1. *This Article sets out the notices that are required under Section 10.2 of the Act.*
2. The person to whom a permit under Section 8 of the Act is issued shall notify the chief building official of:

- a. readiness to construct footings,
- b. substantial completion of footings and foundations prior to commencement of backfilling,
- c. substantial completion of structural framing and ductwork and piping for heating and air-conditioning systems, if the building is within the scope of Part 9,
- d. not applicable
- e. substantial completion of insulation, vapour barriers and air barriers,
- f. not applicable
- g. not applicable
- h. readiness for inspection and testing of:
 - i. building sewers and building drains,
 - ii. water service pipes,
 - iii. not applicable
 - iv. drainage systems and venting systems,
 - v. the water distribution system, and
 - vi. plumbing fixtures and plumbing appliances,
- i. not applicable
- j. not applicable
- k. readiness to construct the sewage system,
- l. substantial completion of the installation of the sewage system before the commencement of backfilling,
- m. substantial completion of installation of plumbing not located in a structure, before the commencement of backfilling. and
- n. completion of construction and installation of components required to permit the issue of an occupancy permit under Sentence 2.4.3.1.(2) (Non-residential occupancy) or to permit occupancy under Sentence 2.4.3.2.(1), (Residential occupancy) if the building or part of the building to be occupied is not fully completed.

NOTE: Sentences relating to construction of building types other than small residential buildings (OBC Part 9) have been removed.

The house is not quite finished; when can I move in?

Another quote from the Building Code:

Occupancy of an Unfinished Building.

2.4.3.2. Conditions for Residential Occupancy

1. *A person may occupy or permit to be occupied a building intended for residential occupancy that has not been fully completed at the date of occupation provided that:*
 - a. *the building*
 - i. *is not more than 3 storeys in building height and 600 m² (6460 ft²) in building area,*
 - ii. *has not more than 1 dwelling unit above another dwelling unit,*
 - iii. *has not more than 2 dwelling units sharing a common means of egress, and*
 - iv. *has no accommodation for tourists,*
 - b. *the following building components and systems are complete, operational and inspected:*
 - i. *required exits, handrails and guards, fire alarm and detection systems, and fire*

- separations,*
- ii. required exhaust fume barriers and self-closing devices on doors between an attached or built-in garage and a dwelling unit, and*
- iii. water supply, sewage disposal, lighting and heating systems,*
- c. the following building components and systems are complete, operational, inspected and tested:*
 - i. water systems,*
 - ii. building drains and building sewers, and*
 - iii. drainage systems and venting systems, and*
- d. where applicable, the building conforms to Article 2.1.1.8. (Protection against presence of Radon gas – not applicable in this area.)*

All the above conditions must be met; this is confirmed during the Occupancy inspection.

If an unfinished building is permitted to be occupied, the occupant must notify the Chief Building Official when the building is completed.