



Contact Us

Community Development
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Find additional information, visit the
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When is a building permit required?

Per Section 108.1 of the Virginia Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC), a building permit is required in the following instances:

- Changing the use of a structure, either within the same use group or to a different use group, when the new use requires greater degrees of structural strength, fire protection, exit facilities, ventilation or sanitary provisions
- Removing or disturbing any asbestos or lead-containing materials during demolition, alteration, renovation of or additions to structures
- Moving a lot line that affects an existing structure's continued compliance with the building regulations under which it was built

- Construction or demolition of a building or structure. Installations or alterations involving:
 - (i) the removal or addition of any wall, partition or portion thereof,
 - (ii) any structural component,
 - (iii) the repair or replacement of any required component of a fire or smoke related assembly,
 - (iv) the alteration of any required means of egress system,
 - (v) water supply distribution system,
 - (vi) electric wiring,
 - (vii) fire protection system, mechanical systems, or fuel supply systems, or
 - (viii) any equipment regulated by the USBC

What should be included in my building plans?

- A drawing that shows the plan for each floor level
- A foundation or footing plan that shows the footing sizes and the pier locations and the size of beams along the pier line
- A wall section indicating the framing members to be used for floors, walls and roofs
- Elevations showing how the building will look from the outside (may not be required for residential alterations)
- Some commercial plans will require prepared drawings from an architect and engineer

Are there projects that are exempt from applying for a permit?

- Yes, Section 108.2 of the USBC does allow exemptions from applying for a permit. However, the homeowner or contractor completing the project shall still comply with the requirements of the code. Please contact the Building Services Division about what projects may be exempt from permits