

# Do I need a building permit?

## Questions to ask before you start your project:

- Do you need a building permit?
- Do you need any other permits?
- Where do you get a permit?
- What else do you need to know?

## When do you need a building permit?

Building permits are required for most major construction projects. These projects include new buildings, additions, renovations, alterations, repairs, relocations, demolitions, or the change of use in an existing building.

**NOTE:** The *Safety Codes Act* requires that all contractors and homeowners in Alberta obtain permits prior to starting any work on buildings covered by the current edition of the Alberta Building Code.

## Responsibility for compliance

The **owner of the building** has full responsibility for carrying out construction, or having construction carried out, in accordance with the requirements of:

- the *Safety Codes Act*;
- regulations related to the *Safety Codes Act*;
- the Alberta Building Code; and
- the permit, including compliance with any special conditions required by the authority having jurisdiction.

**NOTE:** Neither the issuance of a permit, nor inspections made by the local authority, shall in any way relieve the owner from full responsibility.

## Other kinds of permits:

Depending on the nature and scope of your project, you may also require one or more of the following permits:

- Electrical permit
- Plumbing permit
- Gas permit
- Private sewage systems permit
- Heating and ventilation permit

## Where do you get a permit?

Permits are available through municipalities that administer the *Safety Codes Act*, and through agencies who provide inspection services on behalf of municipalities or the province. If you don't know whether your municipality issues permits, contact Alberta Municipal Affairs and Housing through the information on the back of this brochure.

**Development permits** allow a specific type of development to proceed and assure conformance with local zoning and development bylaws. Check with your municipality to see if a development permit is required for your proposed project. If it's required, you should provide a copy of the development permit with your building permit application.

## Are plans required?

- You must submit plans with your building permit application to your local authority before starting any construction.
- All construction plans will be reviewed by a certified safety codes officer.
- Check with your local authority to determine what plans information is required before you apply for a building permit.

## Applying for a building permit:

When applying for a building permit, you must submit the following information to your local authority:

- Describe in detail the project or occupancy to be covered by the permit;
- Describe the land on which the project will be located, with a description that will easily identify and locate the building lot;
- Submit plans, specifications or other documents showing, in detail, the proposed occupancy of all parts of the building;
- State the value of the proposed project; and
- State the names, addresses and phone numbers of the project owner, designer and contractor.

## When do you need a professional?

Structural details not covered by the Alberta Building Code may require the seal and signature of a professional engineer licensed to practice in Alberta.

**NOTE:** Professional involvement is determined based on the building size and complexity, as set out in the Alberta Building Code. The **owner** is responsible to ensure professionals are used where they are required by the code or the local authority.

If the requirement for a professional is not clear, you **must** contact your local authority to clarify.

The **professional** is responsible for making sure his or her work meets the requirements of the *Safety Codes Act*.

## Do you still have questions on whether you need a permit?

Contact your municipality if it is not clear whether a permit is required or whether a permit is already in place for a specific project.

If your municipality does not issue permits, you can call the Municipal Affairs and Housing Communications Inquiry Centre (CIC) at 1-866-421-6929.

Provide your municipality or the CIC with as much information as possible regarding the location, address, and specific details about the project. This will help them determine the types of permits that may be required.

## Benefits of getting a permit

- You have access to the expertise of certified safety codes officers (inspectors), who will help you comply with the Alberta Building Code.
- Your plans will be reviewed by a certified safety codes officer to identify potential problems. This will help you make changes in the planning stage and avoid costly corrections after construction.
- Inspections will be carried out by certified safety codes officers, who will provide you with inspection reports and followup of any outstanding deficiencies related to the Alberta Building Code.

## Alberta's Safety System

Alberta Municipal Affairs and Housing works in partnership with the Safety Codes Council, municipalities, corporations, agencies, and other organizations to deliver effective community-focused public safety programs and services to Albertans.

### Questions or more information:

#### Alberta Municipal Affairs and Housing

Safety Services Branch  
16th Floor, Commerce Place  
10155 - 102 Street  
Edmonton, Alberta T5J 4L4

Phone toll-free: 1-866-421-6929  
Fax: 780-427-8686  
E-mail: [safety.services@gov.ab.ca](mailto:safety.services@gov.ab.ca)  
[www.municipalaffairs.alberta.ca/cp\\_index.cfm](http://www.municipalaffairs.alberta.ca/cp_index.cfm)

#### Safety Codes Council

Suite 800, 10707 - 100 Avenue  
Edmonton, Alberta T5J 3M1

Toll-free within Alberta:  
Phone: 1-888-413-0099  
Fax: 1-888-424-5134  
[www.safetycodes.ab.ca](http://www.safetycodes.ab.ca)

Please place your agency or municipality contact information in the space below.

These brochures may be updated periodically. They have no legal status and cannot be used as an official interpretation of the various bylaws, codes and regulations currently in effect.

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# Safety Tips

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Alberta

