

## Homeowner Permit Frequently Asked Questions

### **When is a license required as a Residential Builder or Maintenance & Alteration Contractor?**

In general, a person who contracts with a property owner to do residential construction or Remodeling on a project whose total value is \$600 or more, including material and labor, is required to be licensed as either a Residential Builder or a Maintenance & Alteration Contractor.

### **What's the difference between a "Residential Builder" license and a "Residential Maintenance & Alteration Contractor" license?**

The Residential Builder may build a new home from the ground up or may do any kind of repairs. The builder may contract for the whole job, but will have to subcontract for plumbing, electrical, and mechanical (heating, ventilation, air conditioning) work.

The Residential Maintenance & Alteration (M&A) Contractor is licensed to perform only specific trades and services and may accept contracts only in the services for which they are licensed (whether or not the building is new construction or remodeling). Each Residential Builder receives a wall license and a pocket card showing that he or she is properly licensed. For the Residential Maintenance & Alteration Contractor, the pocket card contains only a letter code representing the trade or trades in which that contractor is licensed.

The trades, or crafts for a maintenance & alteration contractor are:

- carpentry (A)
- concrete (B)
- excavation (D)
- insulation work(G)
- masonry (I)
- painting and decorating (J)
- siding (K)
- roofing (M)
- screens and storm sash (N)
- gutters (O)
- tile & marble (P)
- house wrecking (R)
- swimming pools (S)
- basement waterproofing (T)

### **Is it cheaper and faster to pull a homeowner permit?**

No, it is not more cost effective and the permit process is the same for anyone pulling a building permit.

### **When is a permit required?**



**ORION Township**  
Oakland County, MI ...est. March 1835

Any owner or owner's authorized agent who intends to construct, enlarge, alter, repair, move, demolish or change the occupancy of a building or structure, or to erect, install, enlarge, alter, repair, remove, convert or replace any electrical, gas, mechanical or plumbing system, the installation of which is regulated by the code, or to cause any such work to be performed, shall first make application to the building department and obtain the required permit.

**Is there an order for inspections?**

All applicable trade permits shall be inspected and approved before a rough building inspection.

Trade permits include: (These inspections can be called in any particular order.)

- Mechanical
- Plumbing
- Electrical

**What if I have a permit but never called for an inspection?**

Generally, permits expire after 180 days if no inspections have been made. In order for the project to be complete it must pass all inspections including final inspection. If a permit expires before final inspection, the project is in violation of building codes. If this is the case, call 248-391-0304 ext. 6000. We will help you to reactivate the permit or apply for another with as little inconvenience as possible. Our interest is in seeing that your project is complete....including final inspection.

**Is a Building Permit required for siding and roofing?**

No, Permits are not required unless you are replacing plywood.

**Is a Building Permit required for replacement windows?**

No, permits are not required if the rough opening for the window is not increased.

**Is a Building Permit required for a shed?**

If a shed is over 200 square feet a permit is needed. Shed's less than 200 square feet it must meet the zoning ordinance setbacks.

**Is a Building Permit required for a fence?**

- No, however, there are guidelines that must be followed. . It is a good idea to check planning and zoning with questions regarding fences.
- Fences and walls used to enclose a lot shall be no higher than four (4) feet in height and can be located on the lot line. (a variance is required if you want a taller fence located on the lot line)
- Fences and walls erected primarily for privacy or decoration shall not be located within any required yard setback area and shall not exceed six (6) feet in height

**Why is a permit required for a deck?**

- For the safety of your family and guests



- To protect future home purchasers who deserve reasonable assurance that the home they will buy will be safe.
- Required by code.

## Protect Yourself

### When contracting work to be done to your home...

- Always, hire a State of Michigan licensed contractor, licensed in the trade in which they are doing work.
- Always, make sure that your contractor shows you the copy of the permit and displays it in a visible location.

### What are some early warning signs that you may be dealing with an unscrupulous contractor?

- A large down payment is requested before work begins.
- Any requests for money during early phases of construction.
- A verbal contract only, as person is not willing to put all terms in writing.
- You are asked to make your check payable to an individual's name or asked to make payment in cash or to make the check payable to "cash."
- The contractor suggests doing the work without permits or asks you, as the homeowner, to obtain the permit.

