



**Boulder County
Land Use Department
Publications**

When Do I Need A Building Permit?

Land Use Department
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Office Hours:

8 a.m.-4:30 p.m. Mon., Wed., Thurs., Fri.
10 a.m.-4:30 p.m. Tuesday

Building Permits can be applied for
and issued until 4 p.m.

When Do I Need A Building Permit?

Per the 2015 IBC, 2015 IRC, and Boulder County Amendments.

Building Permits are Required When

No person shall erect, construct, reconstruct, alter, demolish, deconstruct, or change the use of any building or other structure without first obtaining a building permit.

Work Exempt from a Building Permit

Exemptions from permit requirements of this code shall not be deemed to grant authorization for any work to be done in any manner in violation of the provisions of this code or any other laws or ordinances of this jurisdiction. Permits shall not be required for the following:

Building:

1. One-story detached accessory structures used as a storage shed, playhouse for private use, greenhouse, chicken coop, agricultural loafing shed, or similar uses, provided:
 - a. the floor area of any structure does not exceed 120 square feet (11 m²), except agricultural loafing sheds, which may not exceed 200 square feet.
 - b. the structure height does not exceed 12 feet,
 - c. the structure does not have any utilities, and,
 - d. the structure does not violate the conditions of any existing land use approval or conservation easement.
 - e. The number of allowed detached accessory structures which may be constructed without a building permit shall be determined by the size of the subject parcel
 - i. One detached accessory structure may be constructed without a building permit on parcels 0.5 acres or less in size.
 - ii. Two detached accessory structures may be constructed without a building permit on parcels greater than 0.5 acre and less than ten acres.
 - iii. Three detached accessory structures may be constructed without a building permit on parcels 10 acres and larger.
2. Fences not over 6 feet (2134 mm) high.
3. Retaining walls that are not over 4 feet (1219 mm) in height measured from the bottom of the footing to the top of the wall, unless supporting a surcharge or impounding Class I, II or IIIA liquids.
4. Water tanks supported directly on grade if the capacity is not greater than 5,000 gallons (18 925 L) and the ratio of height to diameter or width is not greater than 2:1.
5. Sidewalks and driveways not more than 30 inches (762 mm) above adjacent grade, and not over any basement or story below and are not part of an accessible route and not subject to a grading permit.
6. Painting, papering, tiling, carpeting, cabinets, counter tops and similar finish work.
7. Temporary motion picture, television and theater stage sets and scenery.

*The above exceptions to the building permit requirements do not exempt structures from meeting the other applicable provisions of this Code, including but not limited to the applicable zoning district setback, height requirements, site plan review, and the provisions of the Floodplain Overlay District.

8. Prefabricated swimming pools where the pool walls are entirely above the adjacent grade and the capacity does not exceed 5,000 gallons accessory to a Group R-3 occupancy that are less than 24 inches (610 mm) deep, are not greater than 5,000 gallons (18 925 L) and are installed entirely above ground.
9. Shade cloth structures constructed for nursery or agricultural purposes, not including service systems.
10. Swings and other playground equipment accessory to detached one- and two-family dwellings.
11. Window awnings in Group R-3 and U occupancies, supported by an exterior wall that which do not project more than 54 inches (1372 mm) from the exterior wall and do not require additional support.
12. Nonfixed and movable fixtures, cases, racks, counters and partitions not over 5 feet 9 inches (1753 mm) in height.
13. Antennas and/or their supporting structures other than buildings, accessory to residential use less than ten feet in height and lower than the structure height limit in the zoning district in which located, or which were constructed or erected prior to July 1, 1988.
14. Temporary emergency noncommercial telecommunication-sites operated by a governmental agency, or by a volunteer public safety agency officially sanctioned by a governmental agency for that purpose, for public safety communication uses, for a period not to exceed six months.
15. Decks not exceeding 200 square feet (18.58 m²) in area, that are not more than 30 inches (762 mm) above grade at any point, are not attached to a dwelling do not serve the exit door required by Section R311.4.

Electrical:

Repairs and maintenance: Minor repair work, including the replacement of lamps or the connection of approved portable electrical equipment to approved permanently installed receptacles.

Radio and television transmitting stations: The provisions of this code shall not apply to electrical equipment used for radio and television transmissions, but do apply to equipment and wiring for a power supply and the installations of towers and antennas.

Temporary testing systems: A permit shall not be required for the installation of any temporary system required for the testing or servicing of electrical equipment or apparatus.

Gas:

1. Portable heating appliances.
2. Replacement of any minor part that does not alter approval of equipment or make such equipment unsafe.

Mechanical:

1. Portable heating appliances.
2. Portable ventilation appliances and equipment.
3. Portable cooling units.
4. Steam, hot or chilled water piping within any heating or cooling equipment regulated by this code.
5. Replacement of any part that does not alter approval of equipment or make such equipment unsafe.
6. Portable evaporative cooler.
7. Self-contained refrigeration system containing 10 pounds (4.54 kg) or less of refrigerant or that are actuated by motors of 1 horsepower (746 W) or less.
8. Portable-fuel-cell appliances that are not connected to a fixed piping system and are not interconnected to a power grid.

Plumbing:

1. The stopping of leaks in drains, water, soil, waste or vent pipe, provided, however, that if any concealed trap, drain pipe, water, soil, waste or vent pipe becomes defective and it becomes necessary to remove and replace the same with new material, such work shall be considered as new work and a permit shall be obtained and inspection made as provided in this code.
2. The clearing of stoppages or the repairing of leaks in pipes, valves or fixtures and the removal and reinstallation of water closets, provided such repairs do not involve or require the replacement or rearrangement of valves, pipes or fixtures.

105.2.1 Emergency repairs. Where equipment replacements and repairs must be performed in an emergency situation, the permit application shall be submitted within the next working business day to the building official.

105.2.2 Repairs. Application or notice to the Building Official is not required for ordinary repairs to structures, replacement of lamps or the connection of approved portable electrical equipment to approved permanently installed receptacles. Such repairs shall not include the cutting away of any wall, partition or portion thereof, the removal or cutting of any structural beam or load-bearing support, or the removal or change of any required means of egress, or rearrangement of parts of a structure affecting the egress requirements; nor shall ordinary repairs include addition to, alteration of, replacement or relocation of any standpipe, water supply, sewer, drainage, drain leader, gas, soil, waste, vent or similar piping, electric wiring or mechanical or other work affecting public health or general safety.