



**TOWN OF WASHINGTON
BUILDING AND ZONING DEPARTMENT**

Building Permit Frequently Asked Questions

What is a Building Permit?

- A Building Permit is a formal document the commencement of some action or work subject to regulations.

Why are Building Permits issued?

- Permits are issued to fulfill legal mandates, to protect the health and safety of the general public, and to ensure compliance with construction drawings, specifications, and adopted building and fire codes.

What is the purpose of the Building & Fire Codes?

- The purpose of the Building Code is to provide minimum standards to safeguard life or limb, health, property and public welfare by regulating and controlling the design, construction, quality of materials, use and occupancy, location, and maintenance of all buildings and structures. A free on-line variation of the [New York State \(NYS\) Codes is available online](#).

Who has Permit authority?

- The Building Department issues building, plumbing, heating, and electrical permits for all private development in the Town of Washington. In addition to the Building Department, the Zoning Department issues sign, home occupation, and yard sale permits for all private development in the Town of Washington.

When is a Permit required?

In the Town of Washington, both State and Local codes require that no person or organization shall begin to:

- Alter

- Construct
- Convert or Change the Nature of the Occupancy
- Demolish
- Enlarge
- Erect
- Excavate
- Improve
- Install Any Mechanical Equipment or Systems Such as:
 - Detection System Without First Having Applied for and Obtained a Permit
 - Electrical
 - Fire Suppression
 - Heating
 - Plumbing
- Remove
- Repair

Also, features such as swimming pools, sheds, signs, accessory apartments, or home occupations require permits.

What work can be done without a Permit?

- Interior and exterior painting or decorating that does not require replacing of structural members or necessary repairs that do not involve material alteration of structural features. Examples of items not needing a permit would include replacement of broken window glass, repair of a frozen water pipe and changing of an electrical fuse, or the replacement of a broken or missing electrical receptacle. When in doubt about the need for a permit, please contact the Building Department at 845-677-3419, Ext. 112

How much do Permits cost?

- Permits are subject to fees adopted by the Washington Town Board and posted in the Building Department.

When are stamped plans and construction specifications required?

New York State Education Law requires stamped plans and specifications from a New York State licensed architect or Professional Engineer for the construction of any commercial work; alterations exceeding \$20,000 & for the construction of new residential dwellings exceeding 1500 square feet in an area not including:

- Carports
- Cellars
- Garages
- Porches
- Uninhabitable Basements or Attics

In instances where stamped plans are not required, some type of detailed plans or specifications is required. For more information regarding this, please contact the Building Department at 845-677-3419, Ext. 112

How many copies of plans & specifications are required when applying for a Building Permit?

- At least two copies of plans and specifications are required when applying for a building permit (large projects may require more). One copy is kept in a master file within the Building Department and one copy is returned to the applicant and must be kept available at the job site. In addition to construction plans, two copies of a plot plan must be submitted. If a well or septic system is being installed, the Department of Health approval is required prior to issuance of a permit.

How long do I have to obtain a Permit?

- Some permits (such as minor construction) may take 5 to 10 business days. However, a plan review of a new residential dwelling may take 2 to 4 weeks. Commercial permits may take from 2 to 6 weeks to complete a review. In all cases, times are commensurate with the size of the project and completeness of the plans and specifications.

Do I need approval from other departments or agencies prior to issuance of my Permit?

- Large-scale construction projects may also require approval from the Planning Board and/or Zoning Board of Appeals, New York State Department of Transportation, New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, and Dutchess County Department of Planning. Smaller-scale projects may require approval from the Zoning Board of Appeals when special variances are sought.

For further information concerning zoning requirements, please contact the Planning or Zoning Departments

What happens if I start work without first obtaining a Permit?

- You will not be able to obtain a Certificate of Occupancy or Certificate of Compliance. The law provides that a Stop Work Order be issued and fines may be imposed. Additionally, any work found to be at variance with applicable codes, rules and regulations will have to be corrected or removed.

What if I have other questions concerning Building Permits or Code Regulations?

- For additional information concerning building permits or code regulations, please call the Town of Washington Building Department located at:

-Town Hall

-10 Reservoir Drive Millbrook, NY 12545

-Mailing address

-P.O. Box 667 Millbrook, NY 12545

-Phone

-(845) 677-3419, Ext. 112

-Cell Phone

-(845) 219-9724

-Fax

-(845) 677-1195

-Email

- Buildinginspector@washingtonny.gov