

City of Port Angeles
Community & Economic Development
Building Division
321 E. 5th St.
Port Angeles, WA 98362
360-417-4815 Permit Technician
360-417-4711 Fax



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Why are permits needed?

Permits help safeguard the health, safety, and welfare of the community and ensure energy efficiency. Permits pay for inspection services to ensure compliance with various development codes required by local and state laws. There are legal and financial liabilities for working without a permit. Additionally, serious complications may result when trying to sell a home, or when filing an insurance claim for non-permitted structures.

What is the maximum size structure I can build and not need a building permit?

One-story detached accessory structures used as tool and storage sheds, playhouses, and similar uses with a floor area of 120 square feet or less do not need a building permit. Even non-permitted structures need to **comply with the specific zoning setbacks** of the property.

Does a fence need a building permit?

Fences up to six feet tall do not require a building permit. Build the fence on your own property, not on any easements or on anyone else's property, and comply with the Vision Clearance Safety Triangle requirements. **Fences taller than six feet require a building permit** and must comply with specific zoning setbacks of the property.

Does a retaining wall need a building permit?

Yes, if it is over 48-inches high.

Does a deck need a building permit?

If the deck is uncovered, and the walking surface is 30-inches or less above the ground (natural grade of the land), then it doesn't need a permit. If the deck is covered or the walking surface is higher than 30-inches off the ground, a permit is required.

Do I need a demolition permit to demolish a structure?

Yes, if an entire structure will be removed. Submit the City of Port Angeles' Building / Plumbing / Mechanical Permit Application – Short Form. Also contact the Olympic Region Clean Air Agency (ORCAA) at 360-417-1466 or www.orca.org to discuss their demolition permit requirements.

Do I need a building permit to replace a window?

No permit is needed if you replace an old window with a new window of the same size. If you change the framing to add a new window or enlarge the window size, a permit is needed.

Do I need a swimming pool permit for a temporary pool?

A swimming pool that is 24 or more inches deep needs a permit. Submit the Building / Plumbing / Mechanical Permit Application – Short Form. The swimming pool also needs to be surrounded by an approved fence or barrier at least 48 inches tall.

What types of activities require a building permit?

A building permit is required for most construction including re-roofing, re-siding, repair or replacement of a foundation (termite damage, etc.), most repair, alteration, enlargement, or conversion of a structure.

What types of activities require a plumbing permit?

A plumbing permit is required to install, relocate, or replace a water heater, water line, or lawn sprinkler system backflow protection device, and adding or relocating a sink, toilet, shower, tub, washing machine, etc.

What types of activities require a mechanical permit?

A mechanical permit is required to install, relocate, or replace a heating or cooling system, wood-burning stove, pellet stove, fireplace or fireplace insert, ventilation fan, propane tank, gas line, dryer ventilation, etc.

Who may obtain a permit?

The property owner, a licensed contractor, or an authorized agent of the property owner.

Will I need any other permits besides what is listed above?

Your project may require a **Public Works** permit if it includes a new or re-located sewer or water service, excavation, clearing, grading, filling of more than one acre or import/export of more than 100 cubic yards of material, work in a City right-of-way, new driveway openings, site drainage, parking lots, downspouts, etc. Contact the Public Works Department at 360-417-4812 or 417-4806.

Your project may require an **Electrical** permit if any wiring changes will be made or if you will be installing a spa or hot tub, etc. Contact the Electrical Inspector at 360-417-4735.

Your project may require **Land Use** permits if it is a conditional use, special use, needs a zoning lot covenant, boundary line adjustment, or if work is to be done in an environmentally sensitive area, work regarding a wetland, shoreline, etc. Contact the Community and Economic Development Department, Planning Division at 360-417-4750.

TIMEFRAMES FOR OBTAINING PERMITS

The following permits are usually issued **over-the-counter**, without the need for plan review: re-roofing, re-siding, above-ground swimming pools / spas, and small repairs / plumbing / mechanical projects.

If the project is a remodel (no additional square footage), the permit usually is issued **within a week**.

A permit for a fire sprinkler system or a fire alarm permit usually takes only a **few business days**. The Fire Marshal does the plan review for these permits.

Permits for new structures (homes, garages, additions, or any other increase in lot coverage) usually take **10 - 14 business days**.

INSPECTIONS

It is the contractor's or owner/builder's responsibility to call and schedule inspections, including the final building inspection. If you have questions about what inspections are needed for your project, contact the Building Division at 360-417-4815 or use the Building Division e-mail at permits@cityofpa.us. (The phone numbers to call for inspections are listed on the various permits.)

Building permits are good for six months. After receiving each inspection, the permit is good for another six months. If needed, a letter requesting a six-month permit extension may be submitted for review & approval by the Building Inspector or Planning Manager. If no inspection is done within 180 days, and no permit extension request letter is submitted, the permit will expire. It is important to obtain final inspections on all permits.