



How to Obtain a Building, Electrical, Plumbing Permit for the Remodeling of Single and Two-Family Dwellings in the City and County of San Francisco



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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this booklet is to provide assistance to you, the homeowner, in obtaining a permit to remodel, alter or add to your home.

The City and County of San Francisco require that one or more permits be obtained from the Department of Building Inspection (DBI) before starting work covered by the San Francisco Building, Housing, Electrical, Mechanical and/or Plumbing Codes. Obtaining a permit will help to protect you from dangerous construction that may result in the loss of life or injury due to improper use of materials or construction procedures. It will help to assure the property is designed to prevent damage that may result from insufficient structural design intended to resist earthquakes and earth movement, illness caused by poor sanitation and ventilation, and provide security and safety within the home.



The Department of Building Inspection is located at 1660 Mission Street, with office hours between 8:00 AM – 5:00 PM, Monday through Friday, except holidays.

Please note that some divisions in the Department have specific service hours such as Inspections, Plan Check, and Permit Issuance. Please call our general number at (415) 558-6088 for the specific service hours.

The information contained in this booklet is general in nature and should not be used as a substitute for specific code requirements. Where possible, a reference to the code section has been made so that you may refer to the specific requirements. Copies of the Building, Housing, Electrical, Mechanical and Plumbing Codes are available at the Public Library, or may be purchased at various bookstores including:

- Stacey's Bookstore, 581 Market St., San Francisco, CA 94105, (415) 421-4687
- The International Conference of Building Officials (ICBO), 5360 South Workman Mill Road, Whittier, CA 90601, 1- (800) 284-4406
- Builders Booksource, 1817 Fourth St., Berkeley, CA 94710, (510) 845-6874
- American Legal Publishing Corporation, 432 Walnut St., Ste. 1200, Cincinnati, OH 45202

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Code books are also available at DBI's Technical Services Division, (415) 558-6205, for reference use. San Francisco has codes unique to our community and may have specific requirements beyond the State Code. If you do your own code research, review the California Building Codes with San Francisco Amendments.



Many permits also require review by the Planning Department. The Planning Department is a separate City department with its own Planning Code and Commission. The Planning Department reviews and approves building permits just as DBI does. The Planning Department reviews the height, size and occupancy type of your project as well as neighborhood concerns. This information in this booklet covers only the

DBI requirements, which are generally set of minimum safety and the security of the occupant. For Planning Department information, you can visit their Planning Information Counter located at 1660 Mission St., or call (415) 558-6377.

The information in this booklet is limited to **remodeling of one or two family residences, or a one family residence together with a small business occupancy.** The procedure for submittal of an application is similar to multi-family dwellings such as an apartment building and for changing a single family building to another type of use such as a small retail shop. The latter has requirements that are generally more restrictive.

This booklet cover four types of permits that are required: Building, Electrical, Mechanical and Plumbing. A separate permit is required for each type of work being done. The requirements for each type of work are covered in separate codes. Construction work is covered in the San Francisco Building, Electrical, Mechanical and Plumbing Code, which is made up of the California Building, Electrical, Mechanical and Plumbing Code with San Francisco amendments.



Remember that in some cases, all permits are necessary to begin or continue work. Adding a bathroom or building an addition are examples where building, electrical, mechanical and plumbing permits are necessary.

I. BUILDING PERMIT PROCESS

The homeowner, the design professional, or the contractor must apply in person for a building permit. By calling (415) 558-6088, permit application forms may be mailed to the applicant. Customers seeking information in person before applying for a permit may come to the DBI Public Information Desk located at 1660 Mission St., 1st Floor.



Building permit applications are reviewed by the Department of Building Inspection and other City departments as necessary. The law required the applicant to provide plans that meet requirements of the code. Plan review staff might catch a “problem,” but it is the applicant’s responsibility to resolve the issue. The permit application depending on the type of nature of the work may be issued over the counter or accepted for staff review. Review time and the number of City departments may vary depending on the complexity of the project. Upon completion of the review and the approval by the DBI Central Permit Bureau, a notification

will be sent to the applicant advising them that the permit is approved and ready for pick up. The applicant may also go to our website at <http://www.sfgov.org/dbi> to track the status of the permit. The payment of any applicable fees must be made prior to permit issuance.

Although any permit can be appealed through the Board of Appeals within 15 days of issuance, with your valid permit, you may choose to start work immediately (with the exemption of demolition permits, which require a wait).

It is required by code to start work within 90 days of permit issuance. It is the permit holder’s responsibility to contact their District Building Inspector when they are ready to start work. If work cannot be started within 90 days, an extension can be filed with a fee. Please call (415) 558-6088 for more information.

Permits to complete work due to code enforcement violations must begin work within 30 days of issuance. Starting work means the District Building Inspector has been to the job site and signed the Building Permit Job Card for inspection.

Permits expire in 4 months to 4 years depending upon the cost of the project. Extensions are can be requested and require a fee.

Upon completion of the inspection process, the homeowner is advised to keep all documents in a safe place. DBI will microfilm/scan records of all projects. For a fee, copies of permits, job cards, and plans are available through the DBI Public Services Division, (415) 558-6088. You may also download the request form off our website at <http://www.sfgov.org/dbi> , under “Forms and Checklist.”

II. BUILDING PERMITS

WHAT IS THE PERMIT APPLICATION PROCESS?

The permit application process can be as simple as submitting the completed application forms, having them reviewed and having the permit issued after paying the fees. The length of the process depends on the nature and complexity of the project.

A building permit reviewed and issued while you wait is called an “Over the Counter Permit.” Typical types of work that can be done in an Over the Counter Permit are:

- Existing bathroom remodel
- Kitchen remodeling
- Repair of existing stucco or siding
- Most types of termite repair work
- Exterior stair repair
- Roof sheathing repair/reproofing
- Replacement of exiting windows



For more complicated projects that require plans, it may take longer for a permit to be issued due to required plan review by various agencies. These agencies include:

- Department of Building Inspection, Plan Review Services (DBI PRS)
- Department of Public Health (DPH)
- Department of Public Works (DPW)
- San Francisco Fire Department (SFFD)
- Planning Department

Each of the permit agencies must review your application if the work proposed is under the jurisdiction those agencies enforce. The Plan Review Services staff will determine which agencies must review your permit application.

WHEN IS A BUILDING PERMIT REQUIRED? (Code Reference Section 106 of Building Code)

Almost all types of home alteration or remodeling require that you obtain a permit from the Department of Building Inspection. Since the type of work requiring permits is so broad, it is easier to list those items that do not require permits.

The following items DO NOT require a permit:

1. One-story detached accessory buildings or structures used as tool and storage sheds, playhouses and similar uses, provided the projected roof area does not exceed 100 square feet.
2. Wood, metal or plastic fences not over 6 feet in height located at the rear and side lot lines of the property, and all fences not over 3 feet in height along the front of the lot.
3. Amusement devices not on fixed foundations.
4. Movable cases, movable counters and movable partitions not over 5 feet, 9 inches high.
5. Retaining walls which are not over 4 feet 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 III-A liquids.
6. Water tanks supported directly upon grade if the capacity does not exceed 5000 gallons and the ratio of height to diameter or width does not exceed two to one.
7. Platforms, walks and driveways, when not a part of an exit, and not more than 30 inches above grade or over any basement or story below. Where more than 200 square feet of ground is paved or covered, a plumbing drain permit is required.
8. Painting, papering and similar finish work.
9. Temporary motion picture, television and theater stage sets and scenery.
10. Minor repairs to existing interior plaster, except when part of a fire-resistive assembly such as any wall along the property line.
11. Prefabricated swimming pools accessory to a Group R, Division 3 Occupancy in which the pool walls are entirely above the adjacent grade if the capacity does not exceed 5000 gallons.
12. Reroofing without the installation, repair or removal of roof sheathing, if the surface area of roof being worked on does not exceed 25% of the entire surface area.

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13. Surface mounting of readily removable materials on interior walls.
14. Installations of replacement of floor coverings in areas other than bathrooms and toilet rooms not requiring the removal of existing required flooring.
15. Repair and replacement of glazing in conformity with the code, and provided wire glass shall be replaced in kind.
16. Replacement of doors, except garage doors, in all occupancies, provided they are not required to be fire-resistive assemblies by the code.
17. A system of six or less automatic fire sprinkler heads. Plumbing permits shall be required when not more than six heads are involved and both a plumbing and building permit shall be required when more than six heads are involved.

If your proposed project is NOT in the above list of exceptions, you must obtain proper permit(s) before starting work. Failure to obtain a permit can result in penalty fees and the additional expense and time delays of having to remove and/or correct work not meeting the code.



HOW DO I APPLY FOR A BUILDING PERMIT?

When you need a building permit, the first step is to fill out a permit application form available at 1660 Mission Street. The building is open from 8:00 AM – 5:00 PM, Monday through Friday, except holidays for service, but each division/section has specific service times. Please call (415) 558-6088 or check our website at <http://www.sfgov.org/dbi> for specific service hours

and more information. For remodeling work needing a permit, the application form “Application for Building Permit Additions, Alterations or Repairs,” Building Form 3/8, would be used. For a new structure not attached to any building, the permit application form “Application for Building Permit,” Form 1/2 would be used. For demolishing an entire structure, the permit application form “Application for Demolition,” Form 6 would be used.

Filing a permit application does not allow you to start work. You can legally start work on your project when a permit is issued to you.

WHEN ARE BUILDING PLANS REQUIRED?

Home maintenance projects such as replacing windows, remodeling of kitchen or bathrooms, and roofing permits can be described on the permit application forms and could be issued without plans over-the-counter. Two sets of plans must be included with your permit application submittal, when required. Examples of work needing plans include:

- Removal or adding of a wall or part of a wall or creating new roof openings for a skylight.
- Converting a garage or storage area to a recreation room, play room or bedroom.
- Any addition to the building or property such as adding a deck in the rear yard. Constructing a new addition or adding a new story. Also, building a new deck or enlarging an existing one.
- Changing the number of dwelling units by adding or removing a unit.



Two sets of plans are required to accompany the permit application. Plans shall be drawn to scale ($1/8'' = 1$ foot or $1/4'' = 1$ foot minimum) and on minimum size 11" x 17" white paper. Plans shall be of such quality that they could be microfilmed. The plans must show the location, nature and extent of the work proposed and show in details that they will conform to the provisions of the applicable codes and all other laws and regulations. Remember that the owner, agent, or design engineer is responsible for submitting code complying plans.

Plans must be wet-stamped and wet-signed by a professional engineer or architect as required by the California Architects and Engineers Practice Act. Plans must include any or all of the following information that would help the work being proposed: (See Sec. 106.3.3 of the San Francisco Building Code for complete details). A complete plan shows the following:

1. Plot plan showing the building location and relationship to the street, sidewalk, property lines and other items on or near the property. It should also show the distance(s) between the house walls and the front, back, and side lot lines.
2. Exterior elevations illustrating the existing condition, the addition or the change being made.

3. Floor plans of each floor being remodeled or added to. It should also show the existing and proposed work on the floor(s) being improved, the name of each room and its dimensions and windows.
4. Type and size of all building materials to be used. It should show how they are connected or attached.
5. Structural drawings and calculations when required.
6. Parking plans.
7. Conditioned areas would require California Code Regulations (CCR), Title 24 Part 6 Energy calculations. For more information, please visit the California Energy Commission's website for Title 24 at <http://www.energy.ca.gov/title24/index.html>.
8. Information and forms that have been glued, pasted or taped onto plans are not acceptable, nor is "white-out" allowed on any drawings.

DO I NEED AN ENGINEER OR ARCHITECT?

The California Architect and Engineer Practice Act mandates certain work be prepared, designed, signed, and stamped by an Engineer or Architect for the project. Owners, contractors, and/or designers may prepare and sign plans for remodeling work on, or the new construction of, a single family dwelling of wood frame construction not more than two stories in height with spans between bearing walls not exceeding 25 feet.

However, special structural components such as engineered foundation or shear walls, retaining walls over 4 feet high, underpinning, rigid frames, structural steel or reinforced concrete or wood trusses, glulam beams, columns and arches must be designed and signed by a California licensed architect, civil engineer or structural engineer.

If an addition includes new conditioned space(s), it is necessary to have an architect, engineer or energy consultant prepare the required energy calculations and State of California forms.

MAY I DO THE WORK MYSELF?

Work on an owner-occupied home may be done by the owner. You may also hire another person or contractor to do the work on your own home. The contractor must be a California licensed contractor and maintain the proper insurance and San Francisco Business License. State law requires workers' compensation insurance be provided for all workers, so be sure you or the contractor have this. No permit may be issued unless workers' compensation is indicated upon the permit application. Consult the Contractors State License Board for more information if you wish to do work as an owner/builder at <http://www.cslb.ca.gov>.

WHEN MUST AN EXISTING BUILDING BE RE-DESIGNED FOR AN EARTHQUAKE?

San Francisco is located in an area where earthquakes occur often and with such force as to cause damage to buildings. Therefore, when a building is remodeled, the remodeling may have to include earthquake strengthening. San Francisco Building Code Sections 3403 and 3405 cover the conditions under which an existing building must be seismically upgraded. Examples of remodeling work that may require earthquake design are:

- When 2 out of 3 stories are remodeled substantially.
- Structural alteration.
- Horizontal addition
- Changing of the building or a floor level.



You may receive an estimate of fees when you file your permit application or may contact DBI's Central Permit Bureau at (415) 558-6070 for a general idea of applicable fees.

The Plan Review Services Division staff at the counter can help you determine if earthquake strengthening is needed for your project.

WHAT IS REQUIRED FOR COMPLIANCE WITH ENERGY REGULATIONS?

The State of California and the City and County of San Francisco regulates designs of residential additions and new buildings to prohibit recessive energy use. New buildings and additions to existing buildings are required to comply with the energy regulations.

Major alterations may require compliance with the energy requirements depending on the work being done and its dollar value. Minor alterations of exiting heated space are not subject to those regulations. Sale of your home required compliance with the San Francisco Residential Energy Conservation Ordinance (RECO), as will projects that fall under RECO due to job value. A booklet outlining the energy requirements and RECO is available at DBI's Housing Inspection Services Division at (415) 558-6220, or call/visit the California Energy Commission at 1-800-772-3300, <http://www.energy.ca.gov> .

WHAT FEES WILL BE REQUIRED?

Fees consist of the following:



- Permit application filing fee (payable when you file the permit application)
- Plan review fee, if plans are needed (payable when you file the permit application)
- Permit fees (payable when the permit is issued)
- Other fees collected by DBI's Central Permit Bureau for other City agencies such as Planning Department, Department of Public Works, and Public Utilities Commission.

School fees are required to be paid to the San Francisco Unified School District (SFUSD) BEFORE permit issuance. The fees charged by the Department of Building Inspection are based on the estimated cost of the proposed work. The estimated cost used by the Department is determined from data from a national appraisal organization and may not reflect the actual cost of your project. However, the cost estimate will be uniform for all permit applications submitted to the Department.

WHAT HAPPENS IF I HAVE PROBLEMS WITH THE PERMIT PROCESS?

The Department of Building Inspection plan review staff will write up and mail a Plan Review Comment sheet to the designer and/or owner when the plans cannot be approved. You will be notified by the reviewing agency telling you the code issues and you will be given a certain amount of time to comply. The first thing to do is to discuss code issues with the agency that is waiting for your reply to the plan review comments. Contact the plan reviewer if you have any questions or comments. You can find contact information for your plan review at <http://www.sfgov.org/dbi> or call (415) 558-6088.

If you believe your permit application or plans are unduly delayed or you believe that you are caught between different requirements, you should contact the plan review staff's supervisor. Call DBI's general number at (415) 558-6088 to retrieve this information.

HOW IS THE PERMIT ISSUED?

After your permit application has been reviewed and approved by all required agencies, DBI's Central Permit Bureau will notify you by mail when the building permit is ready for issuance. The permit can be paid for at DBI's Central Permit Bureau. You must pay all applicable fees before the permit can be issued. This includes fees that must be paid at other agency locations before payment at DBI. Please call Central Permit Bureau at (415) 558-6070 for more information.

Any permit can be appealed to the Board of Appeals within 15 days of permit issuance. Please call (415) 575-6880, or visit <http://www.sfgov.org/site/bdappeal> for more information.

APPROVED PRODUCTS AND MATERIALS

Products used in home remodeling projects must be listed by a nationally recognized independent agency. Some of the listing agencies include:

- Underwriters Laboratories (UL) <http://www.ul.com>
- American Gas Association (AGA) <http://www.aga.org>
- International Conference of Building Officials (ICBO) <http://www.iccsafe.org>

Agency listings include fire rated assemblies, prefabricated fireplaces and stoves, furnaces and heaters, insulation, etc.

When you have identified a specific brand and model you want to install, check with your District Inspector to see if it has been approved for use in the City and County of San Francisco. In most cases, the brand and listing must be shown on the plans to be approved.

III. MECHANICAL PERMITS

WHEN ARE PERMITS REVIEWED FOR MECHANICAL PLAN CHECK IN RESIDENTIAL PROPERTIES?



Mechanical work is covered under building permit applications and to a lesser extent under plumbing and electrical permits. New additions or converting garage/storage areas into conditioned areas need to comply with the California Energy Requirements. The Plan Review Services staff, Mechanical Team reviews these energy calculations for compliance. Section 112.2 of the San Francisco Mechanical Code lists various types of work for which a building permit is not required. Subject to the exemptions listed in the plumbing and electrical codes, separate permits may be required for

plumbing and electrical work, even if a building permit is not. Please call the Plumbing Inspection Division at (415) 558-6054 or the Electrical Inspection Division at (415) 558-6030 for further guidance.

THE MECHANICAL “OVER-THE-COUNTER” PERMIT

Some permit applications for mechanical work can be approved over-the-counter. These may include:

1. Installation of a new furnace in the same location as a furnace is to be replaced. Please note that replacement of a thermostat may also be required if the existing thermostat does not meet the mandatory setback requirements of the California Code of Regulations, Title 24, Part 6, Section 150(i). No plans are required.
2. Installation of new heating ducts within a single dwelling unit in which the volume of heated space is not increased. Please note that any ducts routed within unheated space requires a minimum of R4.2 insulation in accordance with the California Code of Regulations, Title 24, Part 6, Section 150(m), Mandatory Features. No plans required.
3. Installation of any listed appliance in strict accordance with the manufacturer’s instructions. No plans required.

4. Minor alterations of or additions to residential single family dwellings with complete energy calculation and documentation of plans.
5. Minor fire-damage repair projects such as replacement of ducts, mechanical units, etc.
6. Minor revisions of previously-approved mechanical permits.

Newly constructed heated buildings are required to meet all applicable energy conservation standards. In addition, these standards apply to any alterations of the energy-related features (lighting, mechanical and building envelope) of existing heated buildings. Conversely, unheated buildings such as warehouses and parking garages are exempt from the energy standards, but conversions of unheated space to heated space must comply, such as garage/storage into new living area.

The California Energy Commission (CEC) requires all plans submitted with building permit applications that involve energy-related work to include proper documentation (commonly referred to as “energy calculations”). Furthermore, this documentation must be incorporated directly onto (not stapled, taped or glued) the submitted plan sheets. As a minimum, the following compliance forms are required on the plans:

- Residential (new construction and alterations/additions) – “Certificate of Compliance: Residential” Form CF-IR
- “Mandatory Measures Checklist: Residential” Form MF-IR

Forms must be full size. Please do not reduce in size. Copies of these forms can be found at the California Energy Commission website at <http://www.energy.ca.gov> .

All these required certificates must be signed on the spaces indicated, and all other information (addresses, license numbers, checkmarks, etc.) must be included.

MOST COMMON MECHANICAL QUESTIONS

The most commonly asked questions pertain to residential window replacement, residential kitchen hoods, flexible duct and legal locations for various types of exhaust discharges, flues and chimneys.

RESIDENTIAL WINDOW REPLACEMENTS

If you are replacing an existing single plane window with the same size opening, then the new window is not required to be dual pane. However, dual pane windows with a U-value no larger than 0.55 are required if,

- Windows are added (new or increased size opening).
- Alteration apart from the window changes requires a building permit, then any new or replaced windows within the area being altered must have a maximum U-value of 0.55.

All manufactured windows, skylights, and glass doors are required by the California Energy Commission to have a sticker that indicates the certified U-value. Please do not remove these stickers until final inspection is completed.

RESIDENTIAL KITCHEN HOODS

Please remember when you are installing a residential kitchen hood to:

- Locate the exhaust discharge no closer than 3 feet from property lines or other building openings.
- Ensure that the systems include a backdraft or automatic damper to prevent leakage of conditioned air.
- Observe all installation instructions furnished with your listed hood.

FLEXIBLE DUCTS

Flexible ducts are referred to in the California Mechanical Code as “factory-made” air ducts. Please note that flexible ducts are not intended as a substitute for rigid metal ducts. Its use is limited by the manufacturer’s instructions, as well as Section 602.3 and 604.2 of the 2001 California Mechanical Code and Section d601.5 and 603.2 of the 2001 California Energy Code.

LEGAL LOCATIONS FOR VARIOUS TYPES OF EXHAUST DISCHARGES

The aforementioned “3 feet” rule for residential kitchen hood exhausts outlet locations also applies to domestic clothes dryer exhausts, as well as domestic laundry room exhaust fans and the exhaust fan discharge from bathrooms in any building (residential and non-residential).

FLUES AND CHIMNEYS

Flues of furnaces, water heaters, boilers and gas fireplaces should terminate at least 4 feet from property lines, and at least 3 feet above any roof opening (such as an operable skylight) located within 10 feet. Please refer to Section 806.0 of 2001 California Mechanical Code for further guidance.

Chimneys for solid-fuel burning fireplaces shall terminate as required in Table 31-B of the 2001 California Building Code, and shall be provided with a spark arrester in accordance with Section 3102.3.8 of the 2001 California Building Code.

Should you have any other questions related to the Mechanical Code requirements, please call (415) 558-6672.

IV. ELECTRICAL PERMITS

THE ELECTRICAL PERMIT PROCESS

The electrical permit is the process by which wiring and systems and installations in San Francisco are inspected to assure compliance with the minimum standards of safety established by the adopted Codes. The inspection process begins with obtaining an electrical permit.

WHEN IS AN ELECTRICAL PERMIT REQUIRED?

An electrical permit is required before installing new wiring or making any alterations, extensions, or additions to existing electrical installations, unless exempt under San Francisco Electrical Code Section 89.18.

WHAT KIND OF ELECTRICAL WORK DOES NOT REQUIRE AN ELECTRICAL PERMIT?

The following work is exempt from electrical permit. Exemption from permit does not relieve the property owner from complying with the Electrical Code.

- Listed, temporary holiday lighting that is cord and plug connected to approved receptacles in safe condition. Exterior temporary lighting is required to be connected to ground fault protected receptacles.
- Repair or replacement of the following equipment of the same type and rating as the part they replace is exempt from permit if no change in the building wiring is required.



- Domestic appliances.
- Electrical lighting fixtures weighing 50 pounds or less.
- Fuses, controls, and motors of less than 2 horsepower.
- Switches and receptacles of not more than 20 amperes rating.
- Circuit breakers and externally operated switches, and not rated in excess of 100 amperes. Exception: Replacement of the main service disconnect requires a permit and inspection regardless of rating.

MAY I DO THE WORK MYSELF?

The owner of a single-family dwelling may apply for an Electrical permit provided the work will be performed by the homeowner. Permits are obtained directly from the Electrical Inspection Division duty inspector. In order to be issued the permit, the homeowner must accurately describe the scope of work including locations of outlets, wiring methods, wire size and types, circuit ratings, and equipment description.

HOW DO I APPLY FOR AN ELECTRICAL PERMIT?

Contractors who are licensed by the State of California to perform electrical installations and who are registered with the Central Permit Bureau may file electrical permits over-the-counter. Registered contractors with license Classifications: C10, C61, D28, D34 may file electrical permits on-line. The following documentation is required to register with the Central Permit Bureau:



- A valid California State Contractor's License.
- A current Business Tax receipt from the San Francisco Tax Collector's office.
- A valid certificate of insurance for Workman's Compensation.

The next step is to complete a Permit Application Worksheet detailing the scope of electrical work to be performed. Note, an electrical permit is separate from the building permit and shall be filed whenever electrical work is to be performed. This means that a separate electrical permit is required in addition to any other permits being filed.

ARE ELECTRICAL PLANS REQUIRED?

Consult with the Electrical Inspection Division to determine if your project will require electrical plans.

WHERE DO I REGISTER AND APPLY FOR AN ELECTRICAL PERMIT?

The San Francisco Permit Center is located on the first floor of 1660 Mission Street. The Permit Counter is open from 8:00 AM – 4:30 PM Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday, and 9:30 AM – 4:30 PM on Wednesdays. The Permit Counter is closed on all City holidays.

V. PLUMBING PERMITS

THE PLUMBING PERMIT PROCESS

The Plumbing Inspection Division is a division of the Department of Building Inspection whose job is to insure that water systems, drainage and waste piping systems, gas piping systems, and vents from gas-fired appliances, water heaters and furnaces are installed according to the Plumbing and Mechanical codes of the City and County of San Francisco.

WHEN DO I NEED A PLUMBING PERMIT?

A plumbing permit is not required for:

- Repair of leaks not requiring cutting into or removing piping.
- Unstopping of traps, sewers, vents or waste pipes not requiring cutting into or removal of piping.
- Replacement, repair or maintenance of faucets, valves, hose bibbs or roof drains not requiring cutting into or removal of piping.
- Replacement of toilets with 1.6 gallon (6.06 liter) per flush toilet fixtures.
- Replacement of furnace filters.
- Removal of drainage, water or gas piping from a building when the water supply, gas and drainage lines have been disconnected in an approved manner under a permit.
- Work involved in setting up for display of plumbing fixtures or appliances, when not connected to any supply or drainage lines, in a sales establishment.
- Installation of plumbing systems installed by a utility company in the operation of their utility business.
- Replacement of water conservation device not requiring cutting into or removal of piping
- Work performed in buildings or structures owned and occupied by the State and Federal governments.



All other plumbing work requires a permit and inspection.

WHO CAN APPLY FOR PLUMBING PERMITS?

- A contractor, licensed by the State of California, who is registered with the City and County of San Francisco.
- The Homeowner, of a single family dwelling, who will perform the work specified under description of work to be performed, by their own hands, and who does occupy or intends to occupy the property, provided said Homeowner can reasonably demonstrate he/she holds the requisite knowledge necessary to perform such work.



Note: Permits for condominiums, townhouses or duplex type residences can only be applied and issued to State licensed contractors only.

HOW DO I APPLY FOR A PLUMBING PERMIT?

When a Plumbing Permit is required, the Permit may be filed for at 1660 Mission Street or online if the applicant is a registered contractor signatory to DBI database and to the Online Program. To register for online permitting, please visit <http://www.sfgov.org/dbi>.

A form, Application/Permit to Install Plumbing and Mechanical Worksheet, is to be completed. Be advised, a Plumbing Permit is a separate and independent permit and as such is not included under a Building or Electrical Permit.

If assistance is required in filing for a Plumbing Permit you may come to the 3rd floor of 1660 Mission Street, ask for a Plumbing Inspector and he/she will assist you in the process.

CALLING FOR INSPECTION:

Once the Plumbing/Mechanical Permit has been issued, before any work has been covered, and all necessary tests are in place, the Permit Holder, (the person the permit has been issued to) shall call the Plumbing Inspection Division at (415) 558-6054 to schedule an inspection appointment between the hours of 7:30 AM – 8:00 AM and 3:00 PM – 4:00 PM.

PLUMBING PERMIT FEES

Plumbing permit fees are based on several criteria:

1. Inspection fee which is currently \$80.00 per inspection
2. Issuance fees based on the type of work performed, i.e. plumbing, water, gas, mechanical, and sewer or boiler installation. Additionally, there is currently a processing fee of \$20.00 per application.

The Plumbing Permit Inspection fee is based on the number of inspection your project will require. If you are unsure of the number of inspections necessary, you may call the district inspector or inquire at 3rd floor counter for assistance.

WHY IS A PLUMBING PERMIT REQUIRED?

A plumbing permit is required to assure compliance with the California Plumbing and/or Mechanical Code. Additionally, permits document any and all work done to a particular property and memorialize documentation for the work for future transactions regarding the property.

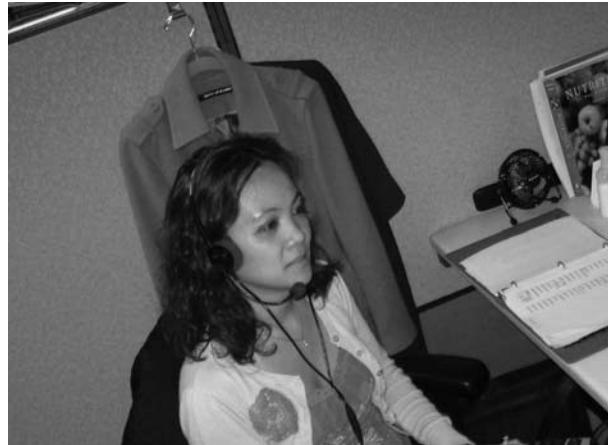


VI. WHAT TO DO AFTER YOUR PERMIT IS ISSUED

As important as it is to have your permit issued it is equally important to make sure that all of your required inspections are made and that your construction work is approved and finalized.

In order to assure that this process is completed, please review the following steps listed below:

1. Your permit is valid for a set period of time only. Generally, work must begin within 90 days or it will be subject to cancellation, and it may expire if work is abandoned for more than 90 days. Requests for time extensions must be made in writing prior to expiration to the applicable divisions (Building, Plumbing and Electrical). Your permit can be appealed to the Board of Appeals during a 15 day period after issuance, and work may be stopped. Remember that separate permits are required for building, plumbing and electrical work as applicable. Be sure to schedule a “Start of Work” inspection with your District Building Inspector. The “Start of Work” inspection is required within 90 days of the issuance of the building permit. You may schedule building inspections by calling the Building Inspections Division at (415) 558-6096.



2. Make sure that you schedule your inspections 24 – 48 hours in advance. When your inspector arrives have your copy of the approved permit, job card and the approved plans (if applicable) on the site. Keep in mind that if your project is not ready for inspection or permit documents are not on site when we arrive, you will be subject to a re-inspection fee for an additional inspection. At the time of the inspection, if workmanship is satisfactory, and the work corresponds with the approved plans, you will receive approval on the job card to continue.

Remember that signature on the job card by the building inspector is required before covering any work. If corrections are required your inspector will specify all items needed to be changed on a correction notice. Your inspector will be available to answer questions and discuss further required inspections. Make sure to obtain any required energy conservation inspections and clear all special inspection reports prior to calling for any final inspections.

3. After all your work has been completed you may call for a final inspection. At this time your building inspector will sign off your project and issue any required certificates to you.

Remember, we are here to assist you. If you have any questions about your project, please call (415) 558-6088.