

Does My Project Require a Permit?

To assure that the county harbors safe and sustainable communities, it grants permission in the form of a “permit” that allows a given use on a property and its associated construction.

Land Development Services (LDS) issues several types of permits for construction including building permits, trade permits (electrical, mechanical and plumbing) and stormwater and/or land disturbance permits. The type of permit you require depends on the scope of work. Additional permits or approvals may be required by other agencies, even when an LDS permit is not. For more information, see the Additional Permits May Be Required section below.

Permits are applied for in the [Planning and Land Use System \(PLUS\)](#), where applications are commonly referred to as records.



A Permit Is Required For:

- Direct replacement of [household appliances](#)
 - Includes stoves, ovens, water heaters, HVAC, etc.
- New, repair or relocated [electrical](#) fixtures
 - Includes lights, outlets, switches, panels, ovens, dryers, EV chargers, etc.
- New, repair or relocated [mechanical](#) or gas fixtures
 - Includes duct work, range hood, fireplace, propane tanks, HVAC, etc.
- New, repair or relocated [plumbing](#) or gas fixtures
 - Includes sinks, tubs, showers, hose bibs, wet-bars, water heaters, stoves, ranges, water closets, connecting or disconnecting to sewer or water, etc.
- [Interior alterations/renovations](#)
 - Includes kitchen renovations, finished basements, bathroom remodels, removing an existing wall, building new wall(s), creating a bedroom, installing new window openings, new door openings, etc.
- New [addition](#) to an existing home
 - Includes decks, sunrooms, screen porches, front porch/stoops, bump outs, second story additions, dormers, garages, carports, etc.
- [Detached buildings/structures](#)
 - Includes sheds, garages, carports, barns, gazebos, pool houses, etc.
- [New homes](#)
 - Includes detached single-family homes, duplexes and townhomes.
- [Miscellaneous work](#) (both interior and exterior)
 - Includes areaways, asbestos removal, chimney repairs, foundation repairs, waterproofing, roof repairs, etc.
- [Swimming pools](#)
- [Solar panels](#)
- [Retaining walls](#)
- [Removal of a building or structure](#)
 - Includes the demolition of an entire home and/or removal/filling-in of swimming pools.

Scan for more information
about permits





Additional Permits May Be Required

- Setbacks and other zoning requirements may apply, depending on the nature of your project. Contact Zoning at 703-222-1082, TTY 711 or by email at DPDZoningPermits@fairfaxcounty.gov, for more information.
- A land disturbance permit may be required, depending on the area of disturbance associated with your project. Visit the Land Disturbance 101 page, Email staff, or call 703-222-0801, TTY 711, for more information before you dig.
- Separate county approval may be required if the proposed improvement is located within a floodplain or resource protection area (RPA). For more information, call 703-324-1720, TTY 711 and speak with one of our engineers.
- The Health Department permits and inspects certain public establishments and oversees installation, maintenance and monitoring of private wells and septic systems. For more information on Health Department permitting, visit their Permit Applications, Forms and Resources page or call 703-246-2201.
- For driveway improvements, water connections, sewer connections or landscaping within the state right-of-way, a VDOT permit may be required. Visit VDOT's permitting page, call 703-259-1773, TTY 711 or email novafairfaxpermits@vdot.virginia.gov for more information.

A Permit Is Not Required For:

- Fences (except as a barrier around swimming pools)
- Direct replacement of existing windows and doors
- Direct replacement of electrical, plumbing and mechanical work (no change in location and must be a like-for-like replacement)
- Re-siding of building/home with similar material
- Replacement of roof shingles
- Replacement of less than 256 square feet (9 boards) of roof plywood (unless required to be fire rated, such as townhomes)
- Detached storage sheds under 256 square feet in size and no more than one-story in height
- Gutters
- Kitchen cabinets
- Replacement of tiles
- Replacement of flooring material
- Painting and/or wallpaper
- Playground equipment installation
- On-grade paver and concrete patios (including wood patios)
- Driveways
- Concrete and/or masonry walls that do not exceed 6 feet in height
- Retaining walls holding less than 3 feet of dirt/earth
- Cannot have additional surcharge/weight (i.e., supporting a driveway or patio)
- Cannot be tiered
- Temporary ramps that are no more than 30 inches high
- Direct replacement of above-ground liquefied petroleum (LP) gas containers
- Low voltage (50 volts maximum) wiring systems and equipment that are not a component of any fire protection system, access control system, egress control system, located in a plenum or penetrate fire rated or smoke protected construction
- Flagpoles 30 feet or less in height
- Tents that are less than 900 square feet with less than 50 persons