

Building Permits

The Why, When and How

What is a Building Permit?

A Building Permit is a license which grants legal permission to undertake the construction, alteration, repair or change of use of a building or structure, on private property.

Requirements for Permits.

Building Permits are typically required for the following:

- New Buildings
- Additions to Existing Buildings
- Repair, Renovation and Alteration of Existing Buildings
- Prefabricated and Relocated Buildings
- Building Systems (heating, fire protection, etc.)
- Various Structures (decks, retaining walls, towers, pools, etc.)
- Installation of Plumbing, Drains and Sewers
- Demolition
- Change of Use of a Building

Check with your local Building Department for specific requirements and details.

The Purpose of Permits.

The permit process involves the examination of the plans and details of construction projects against the requirements of the Ontario Building Code and applicable laws, followed by the inspection at various stages of construction of the project. The plan examination and inspection by the staff of the municipal Building Department is undertaken to reduce the risk to the health and safety of the public and the people who use and occupy buildings.

The Use of Permits.

Permits are an essential part of Code enforcement. All of us have a major investment in our home or business, which we may wish to construct or renovate. When that home or business does not comply with the Code or other requirements, then the value of our investment could be reduced, and it is possible that we, or family and the other occupants could be at risk if there is improper construction. Obtaining a permit helps to protect that investment and reduce the risk of improper or unsafe construction.

Ontario Building Officials Association

The OBOA is a self-governing, not for profit organization committed to establishing and maintaining a high professional standard in the field of the enforcement of the Ontario Building Code, including issuance of permits and inspection of buildings, to ensure that the people who occupy buildings, which are subject to the Code, are protected.

The OBOA was founded in 1956 and has expanded to a current membership of almost 2,000 building officials with a Chapter network throughout Ontario.

Membership services provided by the OBOA include:

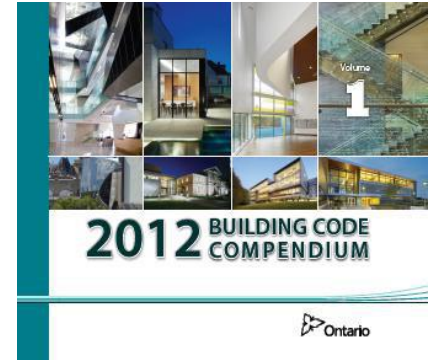
- OBOA Journal. This is published 4 times per year and focuses on the fundamental interests, concerns and opinions of building officials.
- Education and training programs with regard to the Building Code Act and the Ontario Building Code.
- An Annual Meeting and Training Session, which provides 3 days of technical and educational seminars.
- A Certification and Maintenance program for building officials.
- Representation on various Task Groups, Boards and Committees.
- A Province wide forum, which provides opportunities to communicate with other building officials, government officials and the construction industry

Ontario Building Officials Association
200 Marycroft Avenue, Unit 8
Woodbridge, ON, Canada
L4L 5X4

Tel: 905-264-1662 Fax: 905-264-8696
Email: admin@oboa.on.ca
www.oboa.on.ca

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“BUILD IT BY THE BOOK”



ONTARIO BUILDING
OFFICIALS ASSOCIATION
Building Knowledge.
Growing Communities.

Why bother with a permit?

There are several good reasons including:

- The Building Permit process helps you to understand, not only what the Ontario Building Code requires, but also the other local requirements, such as zoning, which apply to your particular project.
- Building Permits provide the means for the local building officials to review the design and to inspect the construction, against the requirements of the Code, other applicable laws and local bylaws.
- Building Permits provide the means for the local building officials to ensure minimum standards are met and thus help to reduce the risks to the health and safety of the public and building occupants.
- It's the law...

The Permit Process, Step-by-Step.

1. Visit or contact your local Building Department.

The Building Department, responsible for the issuance of Building Permits for your property, is usually located in the local Municipal Office or Town Hall or City Hall.

If you are unsure of the requirements, it is useful, at minimum, to take a basic written outline or sketch etc., when you visit the Building Department. Telephone enquiries can be made but are limited in scope, since any plans or sketches that you may have cannot be viewed by the person you are dealing with. Personal contact is preferable, although the use of technology such as fax and email is quite popular.

The initial contact will provide you with some of the information that you will need to make your application so that you can proceed with your project, without undue delay.

2. Submit Application

You can make the application personally or it can be made, on your behalf, by another person such as your contractor or qualified designer. The permit application form and the information required to submit an application is prescribed in the Ontario Building Code and includes such information as the location of the project, the people involved (owner, contractor, designer, etc.) and the plans, documents and specification of the construction, amongst other things.

Timeframes for the issuance of a permit is also prescribed in the Ontario Building Code and the majority of complete permit applications are processed with the minimum of delay. The application is checked against the requirements of the Ontario Building Code and local zoning and other applicable requirements.

3. Receive results of Review Process.

If the application is determined to be in general compliance with the Code and other applicable requirements, then the permit is issued.

If the application is determined not to be in compliance, then you will be advised that the permit cannot be issued and provided with the reasons for this. It may be possible for you to take the necessary steps to amend the application and re-apply.

4. Receive Permit.

The Building Permit is the document granting permission for the proposed construction to be undertaken. You must proceed in accordance with the application and plans submitted and in compliance with any conditions that have been noted on the plans or application by the building official. The permit fee and any associated fees must be paid before any permit can be issued and these fees help to defray the cost incurred by the municipality in the administration and enforcement of the Ontario Building Code.

You are required to post the Building Permit in a prominent location on the construction site and you are also required to keep a set of the plans, on the basis of which the permit was issued, on site. The building official may require you to produce these plans at any stage of the inspection process. Any changes to the reviewed plans should be submitted, for further review, to the Building Department before the construction, involving those changes, takes place.

5. Arrange Inspections.

You will be advised, when the permit is issued, at what stages of construction the Building Department is required to be notified, for purposes of inspection and of the amount of advance notice that is required to be given.

It is the responsibility of the permit holder to make the necessary arrangements.

If a Building Official finds that any of the construction does not conform with the Code or the plans submitted, then you and/or the person performing work will be notified either verbally or in writing. An Order to Comply may be issued and if the necessary remedial action is not undertaken, then a Stop Work Order may result, and construction would have to be suspended until the required corrections have been made. This, however, does not happen in the vast majority of cases and construction is usually completed successfully.