



City of Owosso Building Department
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- The purpose of this guide is to assist you in the permitting process.
- This handout is intended to cover information for a basic plan submittal and typical projects under the building codes.
- It is not intended to cover all circumstances.
- Depending on the scope and complexity of your project, additional information may be required.
- Discuss your project with city staff to determine if it is subject to additional requirements.

DID YOU KNOW?

- As owner, you are the responsible party of record on permits.
- If your work is being performed by a contractor, you may protect yourself from possible liability if the contractor applies for the permits in their name.
- As owner, if you plan to do your own work, then you may apply for the permits.
- Frequent practices of unlicensed contractors is to secure an "owner-builder" permit, erroneously implying the property owner is providing their own labor and material personally.
- It would benefit you to hire a licensed contractor to perform the trade work.
- Permits are valid for six months.

TIPS ON HIRING CONTRACTORS

- Hire only licensed contractors
- Get at least 3 bids
- Get 3 references and ask to see a project
- Get it in writing – but before you sign the contract, make sure you completely understand
- Don't make final payment until you have a final inspection by the City Inspector and you are satisfied with the work
- Have the contractor apply for the required permits
- It is the duty of the contractor to notify the city that work is ready for inspections

WHY DO I NEED A PERMIT?

There are many important reasons to obtain building permits and to have inspections performed for your construction project.

PROTECTS PROPERTY VALUES

Your home is typically your largest investment. If your construction project does not comply with the building codes, your investment could lose value. If others in your neighborhood make unsafe or substandard changes to their homes, it could lower the resale values for the entire community.

SAVES MONEY

Homeowner's insurance policies may not pay for damages caused by work done without permits and inspections.

MAKES SELLING PROPERTY EASIER

Listing associations require owners to disclose any home improvements or repairs and if permits were obtained. Many financial institutions will not finance a purchase without proof of a final inspection. If you decide to sell a home or building that has had modifications without a permit, you may be required to tear down the addition, leave it unoccupied, or do costly repairs.

IMPROVES SAFETY

Your permit allows the building department to inspect for potential hazards and unsafe construction. By ensuring your project meets the minimum building code standards of safety, the building department can reduce the risk of fire, structural collapse and other issues that might result in costly repairs, injuries, and even death. Inspections complement the contractor's experience and act as a system of checks and balances resulting in a safer project.

IT'S THE LAW

The City of Owosso and the State of Michigan require permits for building, electrical, mechanical, and plumbing work. Work without a permit may be subject to removal or other costly remedies. In addition, the City of Owosso may require a Zoning Compliance Permit. This is to ensure the work being done complies with the City's Zoning Ordinance.

FOLLOWING IS A LIST OF COMMON PROJECTS AND WHETHER A PERMIT IS REQUIRED OR NOT. IF UNSURE, PLEASE VERIFY WITH CITY STAFF.

IS A BUILDING PERMIT REQUIRED?		
Accessory structures	Under 200 square feet – Zoning Permit. Over 200 square feet – Building and Zoning Permit	YES
Additions	Room, dormer, breezeway, sunroom, gazebo, spa enclosure	YES
Basement	Waterproofing	YES
Bathroom	New	YES
	Removing existing fixtures/replacing (Electrical/Plumbing)	YES
Chimney	Removing/replacing chimney cap or brick veneer chimney stack	YES
Decks	Addition/enlarging	YES
	Less than 200 square feet, not more than 30 inches above grade, not attached to a structure	NO
Doors	Installing new or wall requiring framing	YES
	Exterior-Removing/replacing	NO
	Replacing with a larger door	YES
	Enclosing archway or doorway interior	NO
	Installing or enlarging arch, door or pass through between rooms	YES
Drywall	Damaged drywall – patching small areas only	NO
	Removing interior finish material, replacing damaged framing members, re-insulate/vapor barrier and replace with approved interior finish	YES
Fence	Replacing or installing new - Zoning Permit	YES
Floors	Removing/replacing floor finish covering – carpet only	NO
	Removing/replacing sub floor material/joists	YES
Foundations	Removing/replacing with new foundations for the masonry	YES
Garage	New attached or detached	YES
	Replacing door	NO
	Enlarging door	YES
Garden fixtures	Arbors/trellis, fountains/waterfalls	NO
	Green house	YES
Gutters and Downspouts		NO
Kitchen cabinets	Replacing with new (no drywall demo or wall changes)	NO
Paint	Exterior painting of buildings	NO
Play equipment	Pre-manufactured	NO
Pools	Pool, spa, hot tub, sauna (may also require Electrical permit)	YES
Porches	Addition/enlarging/enclosed	YES
Retaining walls	Elevated landscaping retaining wall for elevation change requires Zoning permit review	YES
Roofs	Removing/replacing	YES
Siding	Removing/replacing	YES
Stairways	Removing/replacing interior and exterior	YES
Surface areas	Brick pavers, landscaping blocks, planters (not to exceed 25% of lot coverage)	NO
	New-walks, drives, patios, porches, parking pads, including brick pavers, etc. (surface may not exceed 25% total lot coverage or 40% coverage in front yard) – Zoning Permit	YES
	Driveway approaches Right-of-Way	YES
Walls	Removing, relocating or installing new	YES
Windows	Removing/replacing existing windows	YES
	Replacing with a larger window	YES