

Arvada Homeowner Building Permit Requirements

As a new homeowner or the owner of an existing home there are a few things that you should be aware of with regard to work you may have planned for your home. One of the first questions is usually “can I do the work on my own home? The answer is yes you may do work on your own home if you are the “owner occupant”. That does not however exempt you from obtaining the required building permits and that leads to the next question, “what requires a permit and what does not?” The following table lists some of the work that is commonly done and what requires a permit and what does not.

You do need a permit for:	You do not need a permit for:
Additions, Alterations (remodels) and basement finishes	Painting, gutters and downspouts
Electrical, Plumbing and Mechanical work including water heaters, air conditioners and evaporative coolers	Repair of existing plumbing and mechanical systems including the replacement of receptacles, light fixtures and plumbing fixtures. (The general rule is if you do not need to get into the wall to move plumbing or electrical wiring, you do not need a permit).
Patio covers, fences and Decks	Drives not on public right-of-way
Lawn Sprinkler Systems	Landscaping
Detached Garages, carports and sheds greater than 120 square feet.	Sheds less than 120 square feet in area and not in the front setback
Retaining walls over 30” in height	Retaining wall less than 30 inches high.
Solar Panels and Wind Generators	Concrete or brick patios or paths
Hot tubs and Swimming pools	
Windows and Siding	
Roof Replacement	

These lists are not all inclusive. Please call us first to determine if a permit is required.

If you are doing the entire project on your own home yourself (or with a little help from your friends) you must get a permit before starting any work. If you hire a contractor, the contractor shall obtain the permit which shows that he/she is responsible for the work before starting and this is a requirement of the city contractor licensing ordinance. There is no difference in fees for a contractor or for the homeowner.

The Applicable Building Codes are the 2006 International Building Codes and the 2008 National Electrical Code.

There are valid reasons for all of these permits and codes, and we hope you will take time to learn more about them:

Fences need to be regulated for location and height so your neighbor's fence doesn't restrict your view when backing out of your drive way for example. Visibility for vehicles at intersections is a major concern.

Structures such as decks and patio covers first and foremost need to be able to stand up to the snow, wind and people loads anticipated for the life of the home. They also need to be kept back from your property line so that the open spaces are not reduced, and the spread of fire is minimized.

Although hidden inside your castle, improperly done basement finishes can be dangerous to you, your family and future homeowners. It has been shown over time that basements can be a dangerous place in the event of a fire. Properly sized egress windows are of primary importance. These are designed to allow emergency escape and also access by fire or rescue personnel should the need arise. It is also very important to make sure that all wiring, plumbing and furnace installations are properly done. Safety from fire, exiting in emergencies, and light and ventilation are the major concerns here.

Lawn sprinkler systems need to be inspected so that any contaminated or dirty water in the sprinkler lines does not back up into your home and into your drinking glass! We also watch for the connection to the water line for proper installation.

Most importantly, the staff at the City of Arvada is here to assist you; from foundations to roofing, electrical, mechanical, plumbing or structural, we can answer your questions and ensure that your home is safe and satisfying for you and your family.

Building Inspections Division Questions: 720-898-7620

Zoning and Setback Questions: 720-898-7435

If you would rather speak to us in person, our office hours are 8:00-5:00, Monday through Friday. Our office is located on the second floor of City Hall, 8101 Ralston Rd.