BERNALILLO COUNTY

ISSUE 1

BUILDING GUIDE

RESIDENTIAL PERMITS AND INSPECTIONS

Planning and Development Services

111 UNION SQ. SE, STE 100

This guide provides general information about permits and inspections for one- and two-family dwellings in Bernalillo Conty

ONE & TWO FAMILY RESIDENTIAL DWELLINGS

Why get a permit?

Permits protect you, your family, home, and financial investment.

Inspections ensure that work is done safely and meets minimum code requirements. Incorrect installations can result in house fires, structural failure and endanger occupants.

Minor problems that could lead to costly repairs, liability and life safety issues can also be detected during inspections and brought to your attention before the situation worsens.

When selling a property, the buyer, realtor or lender may require that unpermitted work be properly permitted, corrected and inspected before closing. This leaves you in the position of scrambling to get unpermitted work permitted and may cause costly delays.

Where do I get a permit?

Permits can be applied for at the Planning and Development building located at 111 Union Sq. SE, Albuquerque, NM, located one block south of central and 1 block west of broadway. Please visit our website at www.bernco.gov/building for information, building guides and applications.

In This Issue

Why Get a Permit?

It's the law!
State and County Building Code requires that permits be obtained for certain types of work.

Where to get a permit?

P&DS 111 Union Sq. SE Ste 100

Do I need a permit?

Does my project require a permit?
In most cases the answer is yes. Read on to find out more. Pg. 2

Who can do the work?

Homeowner or contractor?
Do I need a contractor? Can I do the work myself? What permits do I need?

How long is a permit valid?

What if work is already done without a permit?

Oops! What now?

Types of permits & Inspections

Building, Zoning and trade permits.

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Do I need a permit for my project? Do I need a building permit or zoning permit?

PERMITS are required for many types of work that you need or desire to have done on your property. Listed below is work that requires permits and work that does not require permits. The information contained in this list is not inclusive of all situations where a permit may or may not be required. Please check with Bernalillo County Planning & Development Services staff if unsure about your permitting needs.

Work requiring a building permit.

- Construction or demolition of a one- or two-family dwelling
- Construction or demolition of an addition, garage, shed or other structure attached to a house.
- Construction or demolition of any detached structure that is greater than 120 square feet in area.
- Addition or alteration to a porch or patio cover.
- Enclose a patio cover, carport or porch
- Convert non-living space into living space, i.e. garage conversion.
- Cut new window or door openings in a wall, or widen or reduce the size of existing openings.
  *All window installation requires a permit.
- Move, remove or add walls.
- Retaining walls that retain greater than 36 inches (915 mm) of unbalanced fill, and have a total height equal to or less than six feet from top of wall to bottom of footing. Retaining walls supporting a surcharge load or impounding class I, II, or III-A liquids are not exempt from permit.
- Build a deck more than 30" high.
- Build a fence more than 6'-0" high.

Work requiring a zoning permit.

- Make any improvement that is required as a condition of a special use or conditional use permit for which a building permit is not required.
- Placement of a mobile (manufactured) home.

Work requiring a mechanical permit.

All mechanical work must be done by a licensed mechanical contractor.

- Install or change any part of Heating or cooling system whether it is ducted or not.
- Installation, alteration or repair of any gas piping between the meter and an appliance.

Work requiring an electrical permit.

- Installation, alteration or repair of any hard-wired electrical system.
- Addition of any wiring, electrical outlets or light fixtures.
- Installation or alteration of any low voltage systems such as an alarm system, central vacuum system or low voltage lighting.
- All service, panel or circuit upgrades.

Work requiring a plumbing permit.

- Repair, replace, relocate or add to the piping system within a home.
- Replace existing plumbing fixtures if the replacement involves alteration of concealed plumbing connections.
- Replacement of water heaters.
- Installation of (septic system requires Environmental Health permit), sewer lines, water distribution lines and sprinkler systems.

Note: Addition of a bathroom requires a plumbing permit and may require a building, electrical and/or mechanical permit.

Work *not* requiring a building permit.

Some minor repairs and maintenance on one- or two-family dwellings do not require a building permit.

Fences and freestanding masonry walls less than 6'-0" in height.

Retaining walls that retain less than 36 inches (915 mm) of unbalanced fill, and have a total height equal to or less than six feet from top of wall to bottom of footing. Retaining walls supporting a surcharge load or impounding class I, II, or III-A liquids are not exempt from permit.

Installation of window awnings less than 54" deep that are supported by an exterior wall.

Replacement flooring, painting of walls and ceilings.

Installation of gutters and downspouts.

Flatwork (i.e. walkways, driveways,etc.).

Construction of a shed that is less than 120 square feet in area.

Removal and reinstallation of plumbing fixtures where necessary to replace cabinetry or flooring as long as the fixtures are not moved or the piping is not modified.

Construction of a deck or patio that is completely self supporting and is not more than 30" in height.

Who can do the work?

In Bernalillo County you could be a contractor or homeowner to do work on a residential project though there are specific requirements for each.

Homeowners. If you are a homeowner wishing to do work on your home there are certain things that must be considered. Are you capable of performing the work on your own? Are you going to do all of the work or are you going to act as the general contractor?

All homeowners acting as the general contractor in the State of New Mexico must complete and sign a "Homeowner's Responsibility" form at time of application. If you wish to do electrical and/or plumbing work on your project you must pass a homeowner's exam. Exams are administered every Monday at 8:30 am. A passing score of 75% is required to obtain a homeowner's permit for that work. Under no circumstances can a homeowner do gas piping or HVAC work. This type of work must be done by a licensed contractor.

Contractors. A contractor that is working on a residential project in Bernalillo County must have a minimum GB02 contractor's license issued by the State of New Mexico, Construction Industries Division as well as a Bernalillo County Business License.

Homeowners may take a test to obtain permits and do trade work for plumbing and electrical systems only. All mechanical (HVAC) systems and gas piping must be done by licensed contractors specializing in these areas.

How long is a permit valid for?

Permits and permit applications are valid for 180 days. Applications that have expired because they have not been issued are entitled to one extension at no cost to you however, if there is no request for an extension, the application will be cancelled. Permits that have been issued are valid for 180 days from date of issuance and 180 days from valid inspection to valid inspection. To get information on requesting a permit extension, please call the Building Department at 505-314-0351 or visit our offices @ 111 Union Sq. SE, Albuquerque, NM.

Licensed trade contractors ensure safe, code compliant, and efficient design and installation of plumbing, electrical and mechanical systems.

What if work is already done without a permit?

First thing, don't worry! Work done without permits can still be permitted and inspected. The process is the same as is required for new work, except that covered work may need to be uncovered and exposed in order to verify that it was installed in compliance with the code and the approved plans. Bernalillo County inspectors will work with you to determine what needs to be uncovered for inspection. If your project was done without a permit and you want to permit it, please call and speak to a building inspector at 505-314-0351.

When can work start?

When the permit is issued and fees are paid, you will receive a set of stamped approved plans and an inspection card. The work can start when the approved plans and the inspection card are available on the job site where the inspector can easily see them.

Building permits, Trade permits and Inspections

Building Permits

See Building Guide, Issue 2 "What Plans do I Need for a Building Permit?" prior to submitting for permit in order to make sure that all submittal documents contain the appropriate amount of detail and information for a complete and accurate review.

How can I get a Building Permit? Permit applications and plans must be submitted in person to the Planning & Department Services. Depending on the complexity and scope of your project, we may be able to review your submittal and issue a permit while you wait. For more complicated projects such as new construction, complicated additions and/or alterations, the plans must be turned in for a more extensive review.

When you are ready to apply for a permit, please bring the following documents:

- A completed ***Building Permit Application,*** available online http://www.bernco.gov/planning/getting-started.aspx or in the Planning & Development office.
- One (1) set of construction documents.
- A complete set of construction documents in PDF format (if available).

Who will review the project? Your permit application will be reviewed by several different groups, depending on the scope of work and specific site conditions. These review groups may include:

Planning and Zoning Review. Most permit applications are reviewed by Planning and Zoning staff, who are responsible for reviewing plans for compliance with Bernalillo County Zoning Ordinance requirements such as setbacks, height, is the proposed use allowed in the site's zoning, compliance with conditions of use.

Building Plan Review. A certified building plans examiner will review your submitted plans for structural,

"I'm a homeowner and want to prepare my own plans be my own contractor, is this possible?"

The simple answer is, of course! Bernalillo County staff members are trained to assist everyone, from the seasoned contractor to the first time homeowner/builder, with all things permit beginning with completeness of plans, scheduling inspections, to alternative building methods and materials. It is our pleasure to assist everyone through the construction process though there may circumstances that warrant the use of professionals to get the job done such as licensed engineers or trade contractors. Feel free to contact any building inspector with any and all of your building/permitting questions. More importantly, do not be afraid to ask questions or seek the guidance of Bernalillo County's trained staff before an issue gets out of control or a step in the process is missed which could lead to costly repairs or changes.

Fire and life safety requirements of the Bernalillo County Building Ordinance.

Plumbing and Mechanical Review. plumbing and mechanical plan reviewers will examine construction documentation/ affidavit for equipment size, duct size and layout as well as energy efficiency in the system design.

Additional Reviews. Depending on site conditions or restrictions as well as work proposed, plans may also be reviewed by the environmental health department, fire marshal, and public works to make sure that all applicable requirements of the various codes and ordinances of Bernalillo County have been met.

What happens with Building Permit Applications that are taken into review? For permit applications that cannot be issued while you wait and have been taken in for review, they are first scanned and electronic copies of are made and attached to the application record in our system. The plans are then examined for compliance and completeness. The progress of the review can be tracked online or by calling the permit desk at (505) 314-0351.

If any additional information, corrections, or changes are needed to

comply with applicable codes, the front counter staff can print out the corrections list for all applicable reviewers that require corrections or clarifications. All corrections must be made and the status from all reviewers be noted as "Approved" before your permit can be issued.

Our goal is to complete all reviews within 10 working days of application for permit. Once necessary reviews have been approved, the permit will then be issued.

Trade Permits

Trade permits are issued at the front counter at the Planning & Development Servies office, usually while you wait. Trade permits may also be applied for and issued to licensed contractors by facsimile. In addition to in-person and facsimile permitting trade permits can also be applied for online http://www.bernco.gov/planning/apply-for-trade-permits.aspx

Applications are available at the Planning & Development Services office. A complete description of the work to be performed needs to be included on the application as well as all applicable contractor information fields on the permit application.

Plans are usually not required; however, there are instances where you may be required to provide plans, schedules or calculations for review by an Electrical, Plumbing or Mechanical inspector.

Plumbing Permits

Plumbing Permits are required for work on the plumbing system of a single family dwelling. Please see "Do I need a Permit for my Project" earlier in this document.

Mechanical Permits

Mechanical permits are required for work on heating, cooling and ventilation systems. Installing a natural gas line, vent, fuel oil tank, chimney liner for appliances or other equipment is also considered mechanical work.

Plans for a mechanical permit may or may not need to have plans. System repairs do not require plans or calculations nor does venting work or gas line work. New construction (new homes or additions/modifications to existing homes) do require the submittal and approval of load calculations for the heating loads in the form of an ACCA Manual J load calculation as well as an ACCA Manual D duct sizing and layout plan prior to the issuance of the mechanical permit.

For further information on plan and calculation requirements for mechanical permits in Bernalillo County please contact a plumbing mechanical inspector at 505-314-0351.

Assistance is always available

We understand that the permit process can sometimes be very daunting and confusing. For this reason we are here to assist you in all of your permitting needs. You can contact any Bernalillo County Inspector to assist you through the process from plan submittal and application to making corrections, all the way through to completion of your project.

Electrical Permits

Electrical permits are required for work on the electrical system of a single family dwelling. Before installing a new meter, call your local electric utility provider to make sure the location is acceptable.

Plans for an electrical permit are not usually necessary for most electrical work. However, electrical services greater than 200 amps will require an engineered one-line drawing as well as load calculations.

Inspections

Inspections are required to verify that work is being done according to code requirements and the stamped approved plans. There are several categories of inspections: Building, Plumbing, Mechanical, Electrical, Public works and in some instances Fire.

Building Inspections

Building inspections are performed for foundations, walls, floors, roof/ceilings, stairs, etc. Whether you are remodeling a small room or building a new home, all the elements need to be

inspected before they are covered, or prior to placing concrete. When the project is completed and all of the trade permits have been inspected and approved, a final building inspection is required to close the permit.

Plumbing Inspections

All piping (water, sewer, storm water, waste and vent systems) must be tested and exposed for inspection prior to burial or covering with floor, wall or ceiling coverings. Tile shower liners need an inspection. A final plumbing inspection must also be approved after all of the plumbing fixtures are installed and operating.

Mechanical Inspections

Mechanical permits are required for all work on heating, cooling and ventilating systems, or installing natural gas line, vents, or chimney liners. All of these must be inspected and approved prior to covering them up or putting them into service.

Electrical Inspections

Electrical permits require a rough inspection (when all new circuits are complete, grounding conductor is connected, nail plates installed, etc.). Do not cover up any electrical work until the rough inspection is approved. A final inspection is required when all the work has been completed (all switches, outlets, fixtures, face plates, etc.).

How do i Request an Inspection?

Inspections are called into our inspection hot line at 505-314-0351. All inspections are done within 24 hours of being scheduled (call in today, inspected tomorrow).

When calling for an inspection make sure that you have the following information available:

- Permit Number
- Address
- Type of inspection you are requesting
- Contact name
- Contact phone number
- Access Code (gate, lock, etc.)

You will not be able to schedule an inspection if:

- Your permit has not yet been issued
- There are any unpaid fees
- There are any required inspections that must be done before the inspection you are requesting that have not been done and approved (frame inspection cannot be done until all trade inspection and approvals have been done).

Information

Websites

Bernalillo County
http://www.bernco.gov

Accela Citizen Access
http://epermits.bernco.gov/CitizenAccess/

Building Information/Forms
http://www.bernco.gov/building-information-199633/

Building Codes
http://shop.iccsafe.org

County GIS
http://ims.bernco.gov/website/ADV/viewer.htm

Phone Numbers

Inspections-Building	505-314-0351
Zoning	505-314-0350
Planning Information	
Environmental Health	505-314-0310
Public Works	505-848-1500
Fire	505-468-1310
Call Before You Dig	811