



Residential Building Inspections

in the City of Hamilton

Introduction

If you are planning on doing any kind of construction or demolition work it is essential that you understand the process and requirements before beginning any project. Most construction projects, small (i.e. building a garage, deck, accessory building etc.) and large (i.e. house) require that the owner apply for and obtain a Building Permit. By understanding and following these procedures you will save time and money as well as avoid receiving an Order to Comply due to unauthorized work.

It is the owner's responsibility to ensure that a Building Permit is obtained, when required, prior to commencing construction or demolition of any structure larger than 108ft² (10m²).

The Building Services Division has several brochures that will help you with projects such as:

- Pool enclosures
- Residential additions
- Accessory buildings (i.e. garages, gazebos etc.)
- Porches and decks
- Tents (more than 60 square meters) and air-supported structures

When is a Building Permit Required?

The first question you need to ask is do I need a Building Permit for my construction activity? Houses, garden sheds, gazebos, garages, fences (pool enclosures), porches, decks, tents that exceed 60 square metres and construction of new rooms are just a few examples of projects that require a Building Permit.



Applying for a Building Permit

Applying for a Building Permit is a vital step before you begin any construction project. Building Permits may be applied for by the property owner, or by an agent on behalf of the owner such as the contractor or designer. Forms for Building Permits, along with fee schedules, are available at the Building Services Division Offices and may also be downloaded at: www.hamilton.ca/building.

When applying for a Building Permit you will need to submit a completed application form, two sets of drawings that include site plan, foundation and/or basement plans, floor plans, cross sections and exterior elevations. The Building Services Division offers several brochures (also available online) that explain the Building Permit process for various kinds of construction projects including: tents, pool enclosures, porches and decks, fences, additions and detached and attached structures.

Please note: Accessory buildings and exterior portions of heating and air-conditioning systems, etc., are subject to setback requirements of the applicable Zoning By-Law. Installation before approval and issuance of a permit (where required) may result in costly re-location or removal.

*For more information on Building Permits, please review the **Understanding Building Permits brochure**.*

Feedback or Approval of Building Permit

It will take approximately ten (10) working days for staff to review Building Permit applications. Staff will contact you or your agent when your application is approved or if your application is incomplete or requires additional information. If there are problems with your application, staff will provide you with a list of deficiencies that you will be required to address in order to get your Building Permit approved.

A Building Permit application is not officially complete (even after staff approval) until the City receives payment for the permit.

Scheduling Inspections

Once you have received approval and paid for your Building Permit you can begin the construction process. Permit holders are responsible for ensuring that required inspections are scheduled and completed prior to continuing construction beyond specific stages. Neglecting these inspections may cause costly delays and time consuming work stoppages.

It is the primary responsibility of the permit holder (applicant/property owner) to call and arrange for inspections.

However, contractors and/or tradespeople may also contact the inspector on the permit holder's behalf during the different stages of inspection.

Inspections can be scheduled by contacting the assigned Building Inspector responsible for specified districts within the City. Building Inspectors are out in the community conducting inspections throughout the day, so it is best to call first thing in the morning.

Inspection requests can be made by calling:
905.546.2424 ext. 3950
8:00 a.m. - 9:30 a.m.

Calls are forwarded directly to Building Inspectors in their assigned geographic areas. Inspectors generally offer same day inspections, depending on seasonal fluctuations in construction activity. To cancel a scheduled inspection you must contact the assigned Building Inspector as soon as possible. If work is not ready and a scheduled inspection is not cancelled additional costs may be imposed.

Building Code Inspections

The Building Permit issuance process verifies that the proposed construction will meet the requirements set out in the Ontario Building Code and all applicable laws. Inspections at key stages of construction are then undertaken to verify whether the actual construction has proceeded as planned and in accordance with the Ontario Building Code regulations and other related municipal by-laws. These inspections are mandatory, and are legislated by the Ontario Building Code.

Understanding Responsibilities

Building Inspectors cannot be on site at all times and as such, do not act as site supervisors. Building Inspectors will inspect key stages of construction as per the list of required inspection stages. It is the permit holder's (applicant/property owner's/contractor's) responsibility to not only call the Building Inspector to arrange for inspections at the required inspection stages, but to ensure they are knowledgeable about the Ontario Building Code and that they meet all of its requirements (above and beyond the required inspection stages).



Final Inspection

For final inspection, call the Building Inspector upon completion of the project. For a new home, a survey showing the location of the building on the lot as built is required.

Required Inspection Stages

When conducting inspections, Building Inspectors must be able to see that part of work under inspection. Any building elements covered prior to the related mandatory inspection has been made may be uncovered for inspection and passed before the completion of the project. Building Permits, along with the stamped, approved construction drawings must be on site for each inspection.

For most projects, one or more of the required inspection stages listed below will apply:

- The commencement of construction or demolition.
- The readiness to construct the footings.
- The substantial completion of footings and foundations (including damp proofing).
- Plumbing and drainage work, the substantial completion of:
 - outside water, sanitary and storm sewer connections;
 - interior underground drains;
 - rough-in of drain waste vents and water pipes; and
 - finalizing plumbing systems.
- Stone and decking or lateral support of foundation walls prior to backfilling.
- The substantial completion of structural framing.
- The substantial completion of insulation and vapour barriers.
- The substantial completion of roughing-in of heating, ventilation, air-conditioning and air-contamination extraction equipment.
- Installation of building drains and building storm drains.
- The commencement of construction or installation of:
 - masonry fireplaces and chimneys;
 - factory built fireplaces using solid fuel and allied chimneys; and
 - solid fuel burning appliances (wood stoves) and allied chimneys.
- The substantial completion of interior fire separations and fire protection systems.
- The substantial completion of all construction, prior to occupancy.
- Final inspection.



Looking for additional Brochures and Applications?

All department brochures can be found at:
www.hamilton.ca/pedpublications

All department applications can be found at:
www.hamilton.ca/pedapplications

Information collected in the building permit application process, including personal information, is collected under the authority of the Building Code Act, 1992, S.O. 1992, Chap. 23 and is subject to the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. M.56.
For more information, please call 905-546-2720 or email building@hamilton.ca

For more information contact:

Building Services Division

Planning and Economic Development Department
City Hall
71 Main Street West, 3rd Floor
Hamilton, Ontario, L8P 4Y5

Monday - Friday

8:30 a.m. - 4:30 a.m.
Phone: 905.546.2720
Email: building@hamilton.ca
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