



Town of Henniker

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www.henniker.org

Permit Application Frequently Asked Questions

When is permit required?

Any owner or owner's authorized agent who intends to construct, enlarge, alter, repair, move, demolish or change the occupancy of a building or structure, or to erect, install, enlarge, alter, remove, convert or replace any electrical, gas, mechanical or plumbing system, the installation of which is regulated IRC (International Residential Code), or to cause any such work to be performed, shall first make application to the building official and obtain the required permit.

When is work exempt from permit?

Exemption from permit requirement of IRC shall not be deemed to grant authorization for any work to be done in any manner in violation of the provisions of this code or any other laws or ordinances of this jurisdiction. Permits shall not be required for the following:

Buildings:

1. One-story detached accessory structures, provided that the floor area does not exceed 200 square feet.
2. Fences not over 7 feet high.
3. Retaining walls that are not over 4 feet in height measured from the bottom of the footing to the top of the wall, unless supporting a surcharge.
4. Water tanks supporting directly upon grade if the capacity does not exceed 5,000 gallons (18 927 L) And the ratio of height to diameter or width does not exceed 2 to 1.
5. Sidewalks
6. Painting, papering, tiling, carpeting, cabinets, counter tops and similar finish work.
7. Prefabricated swimming pools that are less than 24 inches (610 mm) deep.
8. Swings and other playground equipment.
9. Window awnings supported by an exterior wall that do not project more than 54 inches (1372 mm) from the exterior wall and do not require additional support.

Electrical:

1. Listed cord-and-plug connected temporary decorative lighting.
2. Reinstallation of attachment plug receptacles but not the outlets therefor.
3. Replacement of branch circuit overcurrent devices of the required capacity in the same location.
4. Electrical wiring, devices, appliances, apparatus or equipment operating at less than 25 volts and not capable of supplying more than 50 watts of energy.
5. Minor repair work, including the replacement of lamps or the connection of approved permanently installed receptacles.

Gas

1. Portable heating, cooking or clothes drying appliances.
2. Replacement of any minor part that does not alter approval of equipment of make such equipment unsafe.
3. Portable-fuel-cell appliances that are not connected to a fixed piping system and are not interconnected to a power grid.

Mechanical:

1. Portable heating appliances.
2. Portable ventilation appliances.
3. Portable cooling units.
4. Steam, hot or chilled water piping within any heating or cooling equipment regulated by IRC.
5. Replacement of any minor part that does not alter approval of equipment or make such equipment unsafe.
6. Portable evaporative coolers.
7. Self-contained refrigeration systems containing 10 pounds (4.54 kg) or less of refrigerant or that are actuated by motors of 1 horsepower (746 W) or less.
8. Portable-fuel-cell appliances that are not connected to a fixed piping system and are not interconnected to a power grid.

Plumbing:

1. The stopping of leaks in drains, water, soil, waste or vent pipe; provided, however, that if any concealed trap, drainpipe, water, soil, waste or vent pipe becomes defective and it becomes necessary to remove and replace the same with new material, such work shall be considered as new work and a permit shall be obtained and inspection made as provided in IRC.
2. The clearing of stoppages or the repairing of leaks in pipes, valves or fixtures, and the removal and reinstallation of water closets, provided such repairs do not involve or require the replacement or rearrangement of valves, pipes or fixtures.

Is a plot plan or survey required?

A Building Permit application must be accompanied by a plot plan drawing of the site. You are responsible for accurately showing the property boundaries and location of structures and features. You should NOT rely on the tax map to prepare the plot plan, particularly if your application involves a new structure, a change in the footprint of a structure or any change that would reduce a setback. Refer to your deed and or consult a surveyor. In order to prepare an accurate plot plan, it is strongly recommended that you have a survey done of the property. The site may require septic design, wetlands permit, shoreland permit, or floodplain permit and if any new structures are proposed, or any use is proposed which may reduce the setback to said natural features, a survey that is less than ten (10) years old showing the location of the features and property boundary lines must be provided. The sensitive site features boundaries must be based on a site survey provided by a NH licensed surveyor. If the survey is older than ten years, the applicant must affirm in writing that there are grounds to believe the survey remains reliable. If only one boundary line is an issue, you may rely on other known surveys prepared for the adjacent property, if such boundary line is included in said survey of the property. All surveys submitted with a Building Permit application must include the name, stamp and signature of a NH licensed surveyor.

What Building Codes must be followed?

You must be in compliance with the New Hampshire Building Code or State Building Code, refer to RSA 155-A, as may be amended. Please contact your contractor or other professional to assist you with any specific questions or details related to these codes.

Do I need to hire an architect if I am building a new house or changing the interior layout of the structure?

No, you do not need to hire an architect, unless it is required per RSA 310-A Joint Board of Licensure and Certification. Refer to the following links for specific details. You may prepare your own floor plan drawings, unless required by the RSA (see Section 310-A:52). Any plans submitted must include enough details to adequately show the existing layout and proposed layout of the structure, noting all proposed changes to the structure.

How long do I have to complete my building project?

All permit is valid for one (2) calendar years from the date of issuance (date signed by the Town). The Town may grant a one-year extension to the permit provided it has not already expired or will expire before an extension is granted. If you are applying for an extension, you must submit your application thirty (30) days in advance of the expiration date, or you may need to submit a new application.

Must I display the approved building permit?

Yes, the approved permit must be posted in a prominent place on the building or site until the work is completed.

Is there a fee and is it refundable?

Yes, there is a permit fee (please refer to the fee schedule found in Chapter 25 Building Construction Fees). The application fees must be submitted with the completed application. Checks can be made payable to the Town of Henniker. You may pay with cash, but please do not mail cash. The fee is non-refundable even if the application is denied. If you submit the incorrect amount you will be asked to submit the correct amount when you pick up the approved permit. All fees must be paid in full before the permit is issued.

Can I get a building permit if my property is on a private road?

Per RSA 674:41.

What are setbacks?

Setbacks are requirements of the Henniker Zoning Ordinance which must be met to place a structure, or other improvement on the property. Setbacks vary by which zoning district the property is located in. Refer to the Henniker Zoning Ordinance, which is available on the Town's website or for purchase at the Town Office. There may also be setbacks required for various State permits.

Does the Town issue a Certificate of Occupancy (CO)?

The Town does issue a Certificate of Occupancy (CO). A Change of Use (Occupancy) or Layout of a Non-Residential property or building may require review and approval by the Fire Chief and Planning and Zoning Administrator per the Site Plan Regulations.

Can vegetation be removed or cleared prior to getting the building permit?

In most instances, yes. However in some instances other approval may be required. Questions regarding an Intent to Cut should be directed to the Assessing Coordinator. If your property includes sensitive natural features such as wetlands, streams, or located on a pond or lake, you may need Planning Board, Conservation Commission, and or Zoning Board of Adjustment (ZBA) approval prior to any cutting or removal of trees. For many properties, cutting vegetation can be done without any Town approvals.

Is asbestos testing and abatement required?

Yes. Refer to the pamphlet titled, "Renovation, Demolition and Asbestos- What Building Owners & Contractors in New Hampshire Should Know." This is a NH. Department of Environmental Services (NHDES), pamphlet 2011(or as many be updated). Please contact NHDES directly with questions.

Can I demolish a structure by burning it?

Questions regarding a controlled burn to demolish a structure should be directed to the Town Fire Chief. It is the owner's responsibility to insure that all DIG SAFE and Utilities are contacted (to disconnect services) if a structure is burned or demolished.

How do I know if my property is enrolled in the Current Use program?

Current Use status is reported on your property tax card – for a copy, contact the Assessing Department at the Town Office or visit the Assessing page on the Town website: www.henniker.org.

Are there penalties for not getting a building permit?

Yes, the Town may impose penalties and after the fact fees, and a building permit is required.

How do I know if my property is located in a flood zone?

The FIRM (Flood Insurance Rate Map) for Merrimack County are available in the Town Office for review. You can also find information on the FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency) website. What State approvals may be needed? Each property is unique and has various features, which may include proximity to a pond/lake, wetlands, streams or other sensitive environmental features. You may need approvals from the State, including New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (NHDES). NHDES application materials and instructions are available on the NHDES website. If you are unfamiliar with the State process or permits, you are advised to contact a professional to assist you in the permitting process. This may include a surveyor, engineer, septic designer, landscape architect, storm water professional or other appropriate professional depending on your project. You are advised to be proactive, and retain the professional best suitable for your project. This generally saves you time. If you are required to have state approval, for example a Shoreland Permit, please include a copy of the approval with your application materials.

What should I do with the construction debris?

Disposal of all construction materials must be in compliance with all Federal, State and local laws, rules and regulations. You are advised to contact a private hauler to remove all construction debris. If there is asbestos, you must dispose of it in accordance with all applicable State laws, refer to the NHDES pamphlet (found at the Town Offices) Asbestos- What Building Owners & Contractors in New Hampshire Should Know, 2011 or as amended. NHDES contact number: (603) 271-1370.

Will someone from the Town visit the property?

Yes, this may include the Building Inspector/Code Enforcement Officer, someone from the Assessing Department, Planning and Zoning or other Town Departments. The Fire Chief may inspect property for Fire and Life Safety codes issues.

May the Town ask for additional information?

Yes, the Town may ask for additional information. Please submit the required information to avoid delays in processing your application. A complete application will help you secure your permit in a timely fashion.

Town Departments or other governmental agencies that you may need to contact

Henniker Waste Water: sewer connections or modifications. A fee is charged for any additional living area added to a structure (603) 428-7215

Cogswell Water Works: water connections, including upgrades and or changes (603) 428-3237

Henniker Fire Department: Life Safety and Fire Code compliance (603) 428-7552.

Henniker Transfer Station: regarding disposal of construction debris or other materials (603)428-7604

NH Department of Environmental Services (DES): for septic, wetland, shore land, hazardous waste, asbestos removal, lead abatement and other environmental related permits www.des.nh.gov (603) 271-3503

NH Department of Transportation, District # 2 Office: for a driveway permits with access on a State Road (603) 448-2654

US Environmental Protection Agency: EPA- lead abatement requirements, pre 1978 structures. (617) 918-1773

Architect's Stamp, refer to provisions of NH RSA, Chapter 310-A, Joint Board of Licensure and Certification

FEMA, Federal Emergency Management Agency <https://www.fema.gov/base-flood>