



Concord Building Department Frequently Asked Questions

Does Concord have its own Building codes?

No, we utilize the 8th Edition of the Massachusetts State Building code for one and two family dwellings, multi-family dwellings, and Commercial Buildings.

When is a permit required?

A permit is required for any type of construction, change of use of a building or installation of an accessory building.

Why A Building Permit?

Building permits provide the means for building officials to protect us by reducing the potential hazards of unsafe construction and therefore ensuring the public health, safety, and welfare.

When is a permit necessary?

When you do any structural work and or the following: reroofing, replacement windows & decks, additions, some interior alterations, sheds, garages, above and inground swimming pools, docks, stairways, fences over 6 feet in height and any new construction. If you are not sure, call the office at 978-318-3280.

What requires a building permit?

Permits are required for including but not limited to the following;

- Pellet and wood stoves
- Gas Stoves (Gas permit)
- Siding, roofing & windows
- Signage and Tents

A permit is not required to install a fence under 6'-0" in height, corner lots have different requirements

- Additions and Renovations
- Change of use/Change of occupancy
- Demolition or moving a structure
- Swimming pools
- Decks, Modular homes
- Sheds
- Solar Panels
- Insulation

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What if I want to change or amend my plans?

If you need to change or revise your plans after your permit has been issued, you must file an amendment (with the revised plans or a description of work to be changed and pay an amendment fee.)

Can I start work after I apply for my permit?

No, you cannot begin work until you have received an “**ORANGE**” building permit card and your stamped and approved plans, if required.

How long is my permit good for?

Your building permit is good for 6 months after it is issued, however the work must continue without interruption, it may, with permission of the Building Department, be renewed for up to 6 months provided that the request to extend the permit is Made within the first 6 months. After that, if you have not started your work, your permit will be considered abandoned and you will have to reapply.

What do I do when the work is complete?

When you have completed your project, you will need a Certificate of Occupancy if:

- The building or structure is new
- The Use of an existing building or structure has been changed, floor reconfigured, egress affected or capacity change
- The Owner of the Building requests a Certificate of Occupancy
- No Certificate of Occupancy was issued prior to the start of work

Who can be issued a Building Permit?

Building permits are issued to Construction Supervisors licensed by the State of Massachusetts. Please note that there are several specialty licenses also. The state license is only valid for work involving structures less than 35,000 CF, for one and two family dwellings. As an exception to this requirement, building permits are also issued to homeowners doing work on one and two family dwellings where they reside or intend to reside. It is noted that when homeowners are issued building permits, they are liable for contractors working on their property and they are not eligible for protection under the provisions of the Home Improvement Contractor Law. The Concord Building Department encourages homeowners to have the building permit taken out by a licensed contractor.

Licensed Contractors and Home Improvement Registrations can be checked online at:

[www.mass.gov-DPS](http://www.mass.gov/DPS) License Lookup

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What about access requirements for handicapped persons?

The Massachusetts Architectural access board regulations are part of the building code. Enforced for new construction, alterations/remodeling and change of use. In Public Buildings and Some Multi-family Dwellings.

How many layers of roofing are allowed to remain when re-roofing?

One layer may remain

How long does it take to obtain a permit?

The Massachusetts State Building code has a maximum of 30 days in which to issue or deny a building permit. The actual time can vary depending on other department's prior approvals and complete and accurate building plans and information.

Where should the Building Permit be kept? (Not in the Contractor's Car!!)

In a visible location to the street and accessible to all inspectors, Building, Plumbing, electrical and Fire. We provide a weather tight plastic sleeve to protect the permit.

Do I need to provide anything else to an inspector?

Yes, if plans were submitted. A stamped "approved" site copy should be available at the time of inspection. As well as any structural calculations and energy code information. The State of Massachusetts follows the **2009 IECC** for REScheck. The Town of Concord has adopted the Stretch Code and for all new construction a HERS rater is required.

Does someone need to be home during an inspection?

If access to the new work requires an inspector to walk through your existing, furnished house. Someone must be present to let the inspector in. The inspector will not enter an unoccupied furnished house. We also will not enter a house in which only a child is home, unaccompanied by an adult.

I am interested in buying a lot of land to build a house. How do I know if this lot is buildable?

The first step is to determine whether the lot meets the current zoning bylaws. If the lot is non-conforming (does not meet current setbacks). It may still be buildable but may require a special permit.

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Do Building Inspectors carry identification?

Yes, please feel free to ask.

My neighbors recently started some construction should I have been notified before it began?

If there are no zoning issues, notification of abutters is not required. If you would like to know what your neighbors are building, all building permit files are public record and can be viewed at 141 Keyes Road, 2nd Floor.

Do I need a permit for a driveway?

You do not need a building permit. Contact Engineering at 978-318-3210 to apply for a “curb cut” permit.

What is Construction Control?

Projects that require the services of a professional architect or engineer throughout the entire project. The Architect or Engineer provide reports and affidavits claiming that the work meets the Massachusetts building Code and other requirements if necessary.

Where can I see a copy of the Building Code?

Most public libraries have a copy. You can view and download chapters of the Massachusetts State building Code 780 CMR by visiting www.mass.gov- Massachusetts Department of Public Safety

Can I have an inspector from the Concord Building Department office do a home inspection for me??

No. Homeowners should contact a registered home inspector and/or check the yellow pages.

How do I know what kind of license is required on a job?

The State Board of Building Regulations and Standards have a table of activities requiring (or not requiring) either a Construction Supervisor License or a Home improvement Contractor registration. Please Visit www.mass.gov/Eops/docs/dps/inf

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I am curious about the house that is going up next door. How can I find out about it?

You can come to the Building Department, give us your neighbor's street address, and look through the map and parcel folder for that property.

Do I need a Building Permit to add a stone patio or walkway?

Not if it is on level ground. If your patio is more than 30 inches above grade a guardrail is required.

I would like to apply to the Zoning Board of Appeals for an additional dwelling unit. What guidelines should I follow?

I would like to apply to the Zoning Board of Appeals for a non- conforming use and structure. What guidelines should I follow?

I would like to apply to the Zoning Board of Appeals for a Special Home Occupation. What guidelines should I follow?

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I would like to apply to the Zoning Board of Appeals for work in a Flood Plain. What guidelines should I follow?