



125 East College Street  
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www.covinaca.gov

# DO I NEED A PERMIT?

## Handout #01

### Building or Improving? Do it Right! Why do I need a permit?

According to the California Building Standards Code, no building or structure may be erected, constructed, enlarged, altered, repaired, moved, improved, removed, converted, or demolished unless a separate permit for each building or structure has first been obtained from the Building Official. Permits are the way the State of California and the City of Covina regulate construction. This is designed to ensure that all construction in the city is safe. The safety of the occupants of buildings is the primary reason for having construction codes.

### When is a construction permit required?

A construction permit is required for all new construction. In many cases, a permit is required for alteration, repair, or replacement of existing fixtures. A plumbing, electrical, or mechanical permit may be required for any addition or changes to a building's existing system. Common examples of projects requiring permits are:

- New homes and buildings
- Room additions
- Remodels, alterations, and repairs
- Demolition of any structure
- Decks and patio covers
- Re-roofing
- Siding/Stucco
- Window and door replacements
- Fences/Walls over 6' in height
- Fireplaces and fireplace inserts
- Retaining walls over 3' in height
- Storage sheds over 120 square feet
- HVAC change out, upgrade, or alteration
- Electrical system repair, upgrade, or alteration
- Shower/tub enclosure replacements
- Water Heater change out
- Water/Sewer/Gas lines installation or repair
- Swimming pools and spas (new or remodel)
- Swimming pool demolition

### When is a construction permit NOT required?

Permits are not required for: (***note: planning department approval is required***)

- One story, detached accessory buildings used as tool and storage sheds, playhouses, etc., providing the floor area does not exceed *120 square feet*. 8' tall
- Fences or block walls less than 6 feet in height. (measured from top of footing)
- Platforms, walkways, and driveways not more than 30 inches above grade, and not over any basement or story below.
- Retaining walls not over 3 feet in height, (measured from the bottom of the footing) to the top of the wall, unless supporting a surcharge.
- Painting, papering, and similar finish work

The City of Covina highly recommends hiring an appropriately licensed State of California contractor to obtain permits and to ensure success of your project. However, a home owner (Owner/Builder) can obtain construction permits as well. Contractors, as well as home owners, may authorize an agent to obtain building permits on their behalf by signing a City of Covina Authorization Letter. The authorization letter needs to be notarized and provided by the authorized agent at the time of building permit issuance.



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### WHO CAN PULL A BUILDING PERMIT?

1. A RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY OWNER;
2. A STATE OF CALIFORNIA LICENSED CONTRACTOR; or
3. AN AGENT FOR A RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY OWNER/CONTRACTOR (with proper authorization)

**A residential tenant of a building CANNOT pull a permit unless appropriately authorized as an agent for the property owner or contractor (see below)**

### **The following are required to obtain a building permit in The City of Covina:**

#### Property Owners

1. Proof of identification (driver's license, state Issued ID card, Alien Registration Card or U.S. Passport – photo ID's only);
2. Proof of ownership if there has been a recent transfer of ownership (e.g. Grant Deed, Escrow Closing Statement);
3. Completed and signed 'Notice to Property Owner' form (refer to Owner-Builder Packet);

**Trust** – If the property is owned by a Trust, a copy of the trust paperwork showing the trustee or executor as an authorized signatory for the property.

**Corporation, LLC or Partnership** – If the property is owned by a Corporation, LLC, or Partnership, you will need to provide a copy of the operating agreement or corporate paperwork from when the corporation was formed, which verifies the President, Vice-President, CEO, Partner, or Managing Member.

**Condominiums and Townhomes**— If the project is in the common area or exterior of a condominium building, a letter of authorization signed by the HOA president is required along with documentation (e.g. HOA minutes) verifying the authenticity of the president's position with the HOA. Alternatively, authorization from all condominium owners may be considered.

#### **Agents acting on behalf of property owners shall provide the following additional documentation:**

1. Completed 'Authorization of Agent to Act on Property Owner's Behalf' at the bottom of the 'Notice to Property Owner' form with notarized property owner signature.
2. Proof of identification for authorized agent. The name on the authorization form must match agent's identification.

#### **Contractors:**

1. Proof of identification (driver's license, state issued ID card, Alien Registration Card or U.S. Passport – photo ID's only);
2. Current City of Covina business license;
3. Proof of current State of California Contractor's License & classification (pocket card);
4. Proof of valid Worker's Compensation Insurance;

**Condominiums and Townhomes**— If the scope of work is in the common area or exterior of a condominium building, a letter of authorization (signed by the HOA president) is required along with the HOA minutes to verify the president.

#### **Agents of contractors shall provide the following additional documentation:**

1. Letter of Authorization on the contractor's letterhead authorizing a person (not a business) to pull the building permit.
2. Proof of identification for authorized agent. The name on the authorization letter must match agent's identification