

## Current Building Codes

2016 California Building Code  
2016 California Residential Building Code  
2016 California Electrical Code  
2016 California Plumbing Code  
2016 California Mechanical Code  
2016 California Fire Code  
2016 California Green Building Standards

(Mandatory Measures)

## Useful Information

More information including submittal requirements, applications, forms, codes, and consumer information is available online at the county website:

[www.countyofnapa.org](http://www.countyofnapa.org)

## Check your Permit Status

You can check the status of your permit application online or see information about any permits on your property at [www.countyofnapa.org/pbes](http://www.countyofnapa.org/pbes). Look for the “Property Information” box near the bottom of the screen the enter your address or permit number.

## Planning, Building & Environmental Services

### Building Division

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A Tradition of Stewardship  
A Commitment to Service

## Getting A Building Permit

## Understanding the Process

### Who We Are

The Building Department issues permits for construction in the unincorporated portions of Napa County. Our mandate is to ensure the life safety and structural integrity of buildings. The department reviews plans, issues construction permits, conducts inspections and provides other related services to the citizens of Napa County.

Choosing to build or remodel can be a daunting task. In addition to the cost, you'll be dealing with a variety of highly trained professionals including, contractors, engineers, inspectors, and architects. Since you're new to construction, how will you know you're getting the services you paid for?

The design and construction of a safe building is actually quite complicated. You'll encounter language and regulations you've never even dreamed of but don't panic, we're here to help. Think of us as your insurance policy—helping to guarantee the professionals you hired design and construct your building in a way that meets today's energy and safety standards.

## Getting Started

A building permit is required before commencing construction, alteration, repair or demolition of any structure situated in the unincorporated area of Napa County.

Come in and talk to us about your project. We'll help you determine what type of permit(s) you may need. Most permits will require approval from multiple county agencies, so while you're here be sure to talk to each of them about their submittal requirements. Conveniently many of the agencies are located here in the Administration Building.

The flowchart inside this pamphlet will help explain the permit application process. First determine if you need a permit. Then consult with a member of our staff about your project. The more questions you ask, the better prepared your submittal will be and the easier the review process will go.

How long the process will take depends in great part on the quality of the work done by the professionals you hire, and by the number of applications submitted to our office. Plan reviews are done in the order in which they were received. We try to complete standard reviews within 28 days, but fluctuation may occur during peak periods.

## Do I Need A Permit?

Most work does, but there are a few items which do not require a **building permit**. However, *you may still need a permit from other county agencies*.

It's important to remember that even if your project does not require a building permit, it must still be constructed in a manner that complies with the requirements of the California Building Code and any pertinent ordinances of Napa County.

Work done without a valid permit is subject to penalty & fine. Please be sure you have a permit, or are exempt from needing any permits before you begin construction.

**Construction cannot begin until your application has been approved and a valid permit has been issued.**

## The Cost

The total cost of your permit will include fees from each department reviewing your project. Some are flat fees, and others are based on construction valuation. Which fees you will pay depends on the type of construction proposed. We can provide you with an estimate if you provide us with a good description of your project, and your construction valuation.

## Exempt Construction

Under the Residential Building Code, if you are doing any of the following ten items you do not need a permit.

1. One story detached accessory structures used as tool & storage sheds, playhouses & similar uses, provided the projected floor area does not exceed 120 square feet. **No more than one structure may be allowed under this exemption unless separated by at least 20'. When structure is located in a designated flood plain, a permit is required from PBES Engineering Division. See link.**
2. Fences not over 7 feet (1829 mm) high. **Check with Planning regarding location & heights of proposed fences. See fence & entry structure hand-out)**
3. Retaining walls **which retain not more than 3' of materials unless supporting a surcharge.**
4. Water tanks support directly upon grade if the capacity does not exceed 5000 gallons and the ratio of height to diameter does not exceed 2 to 1.
5. Sidewalks and driveways.
6. Painting, papering, tiling, carpeting, cabinets, counter tops and similar finish work.
7. Prefabricated swimming pools accessory to a residence that are less than 24 inches deep.
8. Swing & other playground equipment.
9. Window awnings supported by an exterior wall which do not project more than 54 inches from the exterior wall and do not require additional support.

*Unless otherwise exempted, separate plumbing, electrical, or mechanical permits may be required for the above exempted items. These items may also be subject to permitting by other county departments.*

## The Permit Process

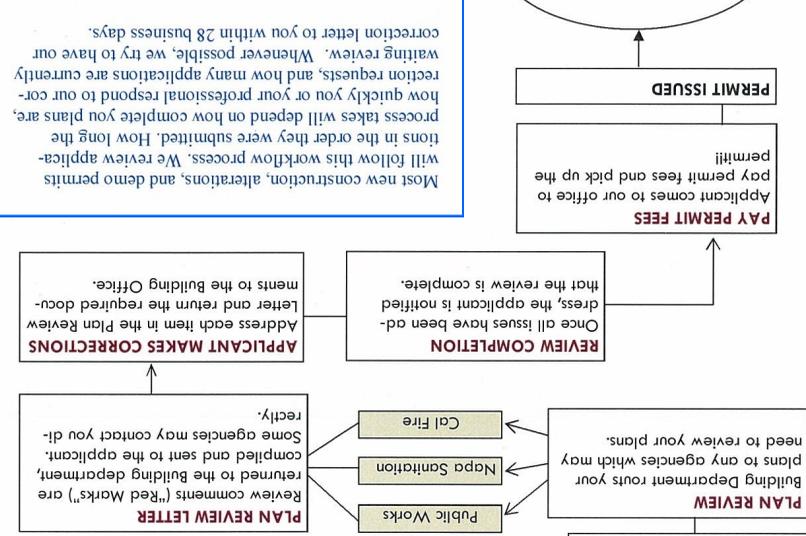
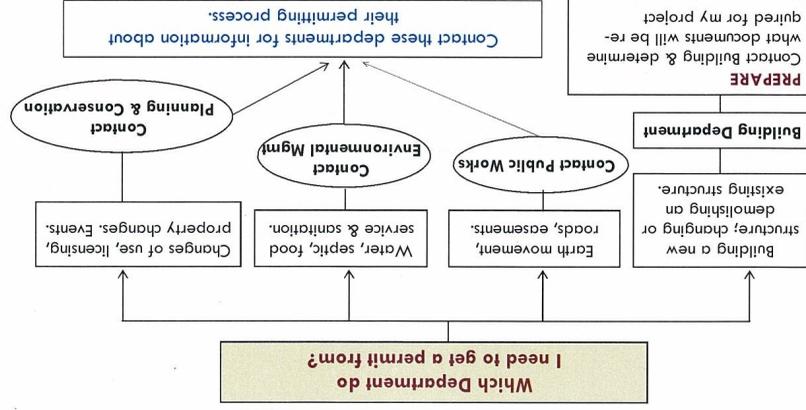
The following steps and descriptions are intended to provide you with an outline of our plan review process. Once you have determined that you need a building permit, our staff can help you determine which documents to submit. You can find more information on the county website: [www.countyofnapa.org](http://www.countyofnapa.org)

**SUBMIT** **Appear in person** at the Building Division's business counter with your required documents (plans, calculations, energy compliance forms and application information). Your application package will be reviewed for completeness by our staff. If your application is complete, we will require the payment of an estimated plan review fee. **Applications that are incomplete will not be accepted.**

**Estimated Plan Review Fees:**  
**A portion of your plan review fees are required at time of submission of plans. Additional fees will be required prior to permit issuance dependant upon plans submitted.**  
 As soon as possible after initial screening, your plans will undergo the first review. The person you designate as the primary contact will be advised by letter and email when provided, as to what deficiencies have been identified in your plans.

**MAKE CORRECTIONS** Following receipt of your plan review letter, you or your plan preparer must pick up your plans at our business counter. Identified plan deficiencies must be addressed and returned promptly to our office. The plans will then be "logged in" to the re-submittal list. **NOTE: You or your plan preparer should carefully address each identified plan deficiency and be sure the corrected plans reflect all necessary changes. Failure to do so may result in delays in the permit process.**  
**REVIEW COMPLETION** Following resubmittal, your plans will be re-checked and approved or re-marked for further corrections. In either case, you will be notified by mail and/or email.

**PERMIT ISSUED!** Once project review has been completed, your permit will be ready for issuance. You will have to come to our office, pay the balance of fees due, and pick up your plans and permit. Permits are valid 1 year from date of issuance, or 6 months after the first approved inspection whichever comes first.



## Commonly Required Drawings

You can find all the necessary forms, required submittal documents, and tips for preparing your submission at our website. When you think your ready to make your submittal, contact our office. A staff member will help you identify which documents will be required for your specific permit application.

**SITE PLAN** - Clearly show location and dimensions of all property lines, easements, setbacks, roads with cross section to show width and grade, drainage, existing structures (identify their use), proposed structures, additions, retaining walls, wells, septic system(s)), fire hydrants, water storage tanks, LP tank(s), streams, north arrow, scale, owner's name, address of project, name of person preparing plans and Assessor's Parcel Number. See our **Sample Site Plan** handout in the documents section of our website.

**FOUNDATION PLANS** - Provide layout of foundation to scale. Show perimeter and interior bearing footings, slab, piers, stairs and fireplaces. Show details of each foundation section indicating size, reinforcement and sill plate attachment.

**FLOOR FRAMING PLAN** - Provide sheathing thickness, size, grade, spacing and layout of all framing members. Show details of all connections, components, attachments, anchorage, etc.

**ROOF FRAMING PLAN** - Provide sheathing thickness, size, grade, spacing and layout of all framing members. Provide wet stamped and signed manufactured truss plan(s) and layout if applicable. Show details of all connections, components, attachments, anchorage, etc.

**FLOOR PLAN** - Show all interior and exterior walls, doors, windows, stairways, fireplaces, closets, counters, attic access, plumbing fixtures (water heaters, toilets, showers, tubs, sinks, dishwashers, clothes washer/dryer, stove/oven, etc.). Show location and layout of HVAC system. Show all electrical outlets, switches, lights, smoke detectors and electric panel(s). For additions and alterations, graphically show new, existing and removed components.

**ELEVATIONS** - Show the elevations being changed. Show all exterior features such as the style of the building, doors, windows, decks, finishes, patios, chimneys, trim, etc

**ENERGY FORMS** - are required for all projects including signatures and supporting calculations showing compliance when heated or cooled. Forms shall be a permanent part of the plans and shall be signed by the owner and designer.

**STRUCTURAL CALCULATIONS** – wet stamped and signed by appropriate engineer.

**SOILS REPORT** - and analysis with foundation design criteria (foundation type, soil load limits, etc.). When required.

**SHEET SIZES/SCALE** - 11" x 17" or larger plan sheets are required. Other common size sheets; i.e., 18" x 24", or 24" x 36" may be required depending on the type of construction you intend to do. The plan sheets should be numbered and assembled to form a complete document.

## Required Documents