



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQs) ABOUT BUILDING PERMITS

This information is designed to give home owners basic knowledge of when construction permits and other approvals are required by the City of Edinburg. It also answers some of the most frequently asked questions and offers tips from the City.

Since each construction project is unique, we invite you to call the City of Edinburg Permitting Department at 956-388-8203 for answers to specific questions.

1. REMODELING OR ADDING IMPROVEMENTS TO YOUR HOME?

Home owners thinking about remodeling their home or adding other improvements such as decks, spas, or retaining walls, often have a number of questions about building permits.

2. WHAT ARE PERMITS AND WHY DO I NEED ONE?

Building permits are the way the City of Edinburg regulates construction. Permits help ensure that all construction in the City is safe. The safety of the building occupants is the primary reason for having construction codes.

The City of Edinburg has adopted certain editions of the International Residential & Commercial Building Codes and Fire, Plumbing, Mechanical, Energy and National Electrical Codes. In addition, there are federal, state, and local laws that govern construction, such as regulations covering energy conservation.

There are several different types of permits, based on the type of construction: structural, plumbing, mechanical, electrical, and combination (used for single family home construction and other small projects).

Most home owners' projects require a combination permit. In addition, the complete demolition and relocation of buildings also requires permits.

Obtaining the permit is just the first step in the process. In this step, you may need to create plans to submit to the City, make a plot plan for your property showing the improvements, and show the type of construction you'll be using. The City has handouts to help you through this process.

Once plans are approved, you are required to build the project according to those plans. If any changes are made to the plans, they must be made with the City's approval.

The second half of the process is the inspection of the work. (See FAQ No. 14 below)

3. WHEN DO I NEED A BUILDING PERMIT?

A building permit is needed for all new construction. In many cases, a permit is needed for repair or replacement of existing fixtures, such as replacing windows. A plumbing, electrical or mechanical permit may be needed for any additions or changes to a building's existing system; for example, moving or adding a wall or an electrical outlet requires a permit. To find out if your project needs a permit, call 956-388-8203

4. WHEN DON'T I NEED A BUILDING PERMIT?

A building permit is not needed for items such as wallpapering; painting, or similar finish work (4) feet high or lower.

5. WHERE DO I GET A BUILDING PERMIT?

Building permits are issued by the City's Permitting Department located at Edinburg City Hall, 415 West University Drive. Permit applications can be obtained at City Hall or City of Edinburg Webpage.

6. WHAT IS THE COST OF A BUILDING PERMIT?

The Cost of the Residential New Construction Building Permit is based on square footage. The cost of a residential addition/remodel building permit depends on the work being done and based on the stated value of the construction to be done. The cost of a commercial building permit is based on the stated value of the construction to be done. The Individuals submitting a commercial permit application must pay a plan review fee for the permit application.

7. HOW LONG DOES IT TAKE TO GET A PERMIT?

Permit issuance periods vary. Some projects can be fully permitted over-the-counter, meaning a return trip won't be needed. However, some projects require that plans be left for additional review. Typically, a residential building permit takes approximately seven (7) days to be issued, while commercial building permits typically take ten (10) to fourteen (14) days.

8. WHAT ABOUT OTHER APPROVALS OR PERMITS THAT MAY BE NEEDED FROM OTHER

GOVERNMENT AGENCIES?

Other government agencies may need to review and approve your project. The City will inform you of these reviews and approvals at the time your plans are submitted.

9. WHAT IF I DON'T GET A PERMIT?

When a permit (if needed) is not obtained before construction, you have violated the City of Edinburg regulations and will be subject to penalties. You will be required to obtain permits for the work and such work must pass inspection, or you will have to return the structure or site to its original condition.

10. WHO SHOULD OBTAIN THE PERMIT?

The home/business owner or the project's contractor can obtain the necessary permits.



11. CAN I DO THE WORK MYSELF OR DO I HAVE TO HIRE A CONTRACTOR?

You can do the work yourself, but you must follow certain regulations, including:

- Build to the Plans – Be sure to follow your approved plans, whether they are drawn by an architect or designer, or are standard construction requirements given to you by the City. If you change the plans while building the structure, this will cause problems when the project is inspected. If you do decide to make changes, check with the City's plan review staff or your field inspector.

12. WHO DRAWS UP THE PLANS?

Plans for projects such as room additions can usually be drawn up by a qualified individual such as a draftsman or by the applicant as long as they are detailed.

Other projects may require plans prepared and signed by an architect or engineer licensed by the State of Texas.

13. WHAT ABOUT A CONTRACTOR?

The City recommends that you check references of contractors that you plan to use. All electrical, plumbing and air condition contractors must be licensed by the State of Texas.

14. WHAT ABOUT INSPECTIONS?

It is your responsibility to call us for inspections at specific times during construction. You may have your contractor make the call, but as the property owner, it is still your responsibility to make sure that inspections are made. Inspections are made during certain points in the project, depending on the work that's being performed. For example, retaining walls require inspections of the footing, after the block is laid and steel placed (but before grouting), after backfill has been placed, and when all work is finished.

REMEMBER . . . the project is not complete for legal purposes until it has passed the final inspection.

15. WHAT IF I HAVE A PERMIT, BUT NEVER CALLED FOR AN INSPECTION?

Generally, permits expire after one-hundred eighty (180) days, if no inspections have been made. In order for the project to be complete, it must pass final inspection. If a permit expires before final inspection, the project is in violation of City Code. If this is the case with your project, call 956-388-8203. We will help you to reactivate the permit or apply for another with as little inconvenience as possible. Our interest is in seeing your project completed – including the final inspection/.

SHOULD YOU HAVE ANY OTHER QUESTIONS OR NEED FURTHER CLARIFICATION YOU CAN CONTACT US AT 956-388-8203