



Building & Zoning Permits, Application Process, & Frequently Asked Questions

This handout is intended only as a guide and is based in part on the 2020 Minnesota State Building Code, Isanti City ordinances, and good building practice. While every attempt has been made to insure the correctness of this handout, no guarantees are made to its accuracy or completeness. Responsibility for compliance with applicable codes and ordinances falls on the owner or contractor. For specific questions regarding code requirements, refer to the applicable codes or contact the Isanti Building Department.

Q.) FOR WHAT TYPES OF WORK DO I NEED A ZONING PERMIT?

Fences, sheds under 200sqft (accessory structures), signs, patios, driveway extensions, and parking pads are permitted through the Zoning department to ensure setback requirements and ordinances are met. These are fixed fee permits.



Q.) FOR WHAT TYPES OF WORK DO I NEED A BUILDING PERMIT?

A building permit is required any time you do work that is regulated by the Minnesota State Building Code. This would include constructing, altering, repairing, moving, or demolishing. If you change the use of a space or finish unfinished space, a permit is required. Some examples include: dwelling additions, garages, deck installation or addition, pools over 24" deep and 5,000 gallons, and sheds 200sqft or larger (accessory structures). Also, any work on gas, mechanical, electrical, plumbing or other equipment which is regulated by the code is required to be permitted.

Work that is exempt from a permit includes painting, wallpapering, flooring, kitchen cabinets, minor repairs, repair of sidewalks and driveways (when not altering/expanding).

If you are unsure if the project you are starting requires a permit, please contact the Building Department for advice.

Q.) HOW DO I OBTAIN A BUILDING OR ZONING PERMIT?

Permit applications are available by the front counter of the City Hall, or can be downloaded from the city website at www.cityofisanti.us. Applications can also be faxed or mailed to you.

Information you will need to provide on the application includes your name, address, telephone number, description of the work, and the valuation of the work. If you need help filling out the application, a staff member will be happy to assist you.

To start the permit issuance process, you will need to submit your completed application and two sets of plans, if plans are required (*please see building handouts*). You can submit the permit application in person, by mail, fax, or email. Once a permit is ready to be issued, you will be called at the number you provided on the application. You may then pay for and pick up the permit.

Q.) HOW MUCH DOES A BUILDING OR ZONING PERMIT COST?

Fixed fee permits require minimal to no plan reviews, and can often be issued the same day. For any building permit requiring a plan review and/or multiple inspections, the fees have a number of different components. First is the *building permit fee* that is derived from a sliding scale based on project valuation. *Plan review fees* are also charged in addition to the building permit fee for projects (*other than fixed fee permits*). The plan review fee is 65% of the building permit fee. In addition to permit and review fees, a *state surcharge* fee and a *contractor license verification fee* are collected. Other fees may apply (*plan copy fees for example*).

*If you are building a new home, other fees such as sewer access charges and water access charges may apply.



- If you wish to have an estimated cost of a permit for budgeting reasons, the Building or Zoning Department would be happy to provide an estimate of the permit fee.
- Please note that permit fees vary by city and are subject to change.

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Phone: 763.762.5765 permits@cityofisanti.us Fax:

763.444.5560

Q.) DO I NEED TO HIRE A CONTRACTOR, OR CAN I DO THE WORK MYSELF?



Nothing prohibits a homeowner from doing work on their own home. So, the answer to whether you need to hire a contractor largely lies with your own abilities to do the work yourself. If you feel uncomfortable doing electrical wiring for example, you may wish to hire an electrical contractor. In either case, make sure you check on the permitting requirements for the type of work you are proposing to do. Hiring a licensed contractor can help protect you from certain liabilities and comes with certain assurances; one of them being that a licensed contractor is legally bound to build to the MN State code requirements, and they should also be insured and/or bonded.

If the building is a commercial building, you may do work on property you own without hiring a contractor and without a license. Exceptions to this include plumbing, mechanical, and electrical work that *must* be performed by licensed contractors.

Q.) ARE CONTRACTORS REQUIRED TO BE LICENSED?

Minnesota law requires residential builders, remodelers, and roofers to be licensed as a means to help protect homeowners. Contractors are required to include their license number in any contracts submitted to you as well as in any advertising. Contractors are required to provide proof of licensure when they obtain building permits. You can verify if a contractor is licensed via the Minnesota Department of Labor and Industry website. If your contractor asks you to obtain a permit for him or tells you that he can do the work cheaper because he is not licensed, he should be reported immediately to the Minnesota Department of Labor and Industry. The Minnesota Attorney General's Office has a number of handouts available about hiring a residential contractor. You are encouraged to contact them or visit their web site for more information.

Q.) WHAT TYPE OF PLANS DO I NEED TO SUBMIT?

Probably the most important step in the permit process is the submittal and review of building plans. The purpose of developing a set of plans is to provide a written document of the scope of your project. A staff member will review your plans to determine in advance that the proposed work complies with the various building rules. In order for the review to be a help to the builder or owner, it is important that the plans be as detailed as possible. The goal is to uncover potential problem areas while the project is still on paper and save costly corrections later. Applicants are asked to provide two sets of plans. The City retains one set, the other set will be returned to the permit applicant with any corrections noted. The plan set returned to you should be made available to building inspectors when they conduct inspections.

Q.) WHAT SHOULD BE INCLUDED IN THE PLANS AND HOW SHOULD THEY BE PREPARED?

As noted above, plans should be detailed. They must be neatly drawn and drawn to a useable scale. One-quarter inch to one foot is a common scale. Typical residential plans would include a site plan (decks, additions, and garages only), floor plans, cross sections, elevations, details of various structural components, and a window schedule. Plans should be dimensioned and include information on use of rooms, wall and ceiling finishes, and lumber sizes and spacing. The Building Department has a handout further outlining what must be included on plans.

Q.) DO I NEED AN ARCHITECT OR ENGINEER TO PREPARE MY PLANS?

The short answer is no. You or your contractor can prepare your own plans, or a drafting service can prepare them for you. If you are having multiple contractors bid on your project, you will be better able to compare the bids if you prepare the plans and specs yourself rather than have each contractor prepare a set. If your project is very complex, you may find it advantageous to hire a professional designer to assist you. Also, if your design involves complicated framing techniques or the use of steel I-beams, for example, you may be required to verify that the designs meet code as a part of the plan review process. The Building Department may require that a licensed engineer provide this verification.



Q.) HOW LONG DOES IT TAKE TO GET A PERMIT?

- *It is important to plan ahead and have the permit application and plans submitted far enough in advance so the permit approval process does not delay the start of a project.*

Permits for work that requires no review are typically issued the same day; usually at the time the permit application is submitted. Permits where review of plans is necessary can take from a few days to two weeks or more. Some plans may need to be reviewed by more than one city department.

Q.) WHAT HAPPENS IF I START WORK WITHOUT A BUILDING PERMIT?

Failure to obtain a permit is a violation of city ordinances and state law, fines may be levied. Also, the building code includes provisions for the fees to be doubled if work starts prior to obtaining a permit.

Q.) ARE INSPECTIONS REQUIRED?

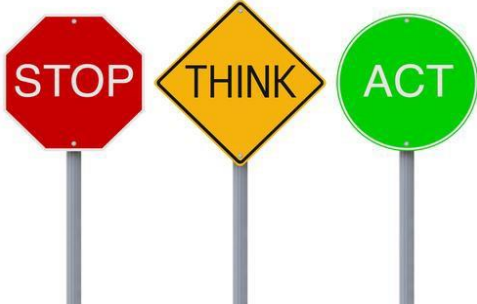
All work is subject to inspection. The number and type of inspections vary depending on the work being done. When the permit is issued, you will receive an inspection record card that lists the types of inspections that you will need to call in for your project. The telephone number to call is also on the record card as well as the permit number. It is the owner or contractor's responsibility to call for an inspection when the work is ready. We make every effort to accommodate requests for specific inspection times. We ask that you call *at least* 24 hours in advance to schedule your inspection.

Q.) WHERE CAN I GET INFORMATION ON CODES AND CONSTRUCTION?

The Building Department has a number of handouts that address common building projects that are free to the public. The Isanti Building and Zoning Departments can always be contacted for assistance and to answer questions. All residential building code compliance regulations can be found in the 2020 MN Residential Code. A lot of the information can be found on the MN Dept of Labor's website, and there is a wealth of excellent information available on the Internet. Other sources of information include books that can be purchased in the home improvement sections of bookstores and building material suppliers, or obtained from your local library.



Safety matters



Please work safely, wear proper protective equipment, and always be aware of surroundings and others!



The city of Isanti urges you to test your smoke and carbon monoxide alarms, and practice fire prevention and escape plans with your family.



**Be a Hero...
Learn Fire Prevention**