

A Homeowners Guide To Code Enforcement

Town of Windham Building Department

CONTENTS

Applying/Understanding Permits	1
Additions/New Home Construction	1
Alterations/Renovations	2
Decks	2
Garages/Sheds	3
Electrical Work	3
Plumbing Work	4
Heating/Air – Conditioning	4
Roofing	5
Siding	5
Oil Tank Removal	6
Solid Fuel-Burning Appliances	6
Swimming Pools	6
Demolition	7
Q&A	7-10
Complaints	10
Building Permits/Delinquent Taxes	10
Building Department Information	10
Hours	11
Staff	11

APPLYING FOR AND UNDERSTANDING PERMITS

The Town of Windham receives applications for permits for such projects as building, electrical, heating, plumbing, fire sprinklers and demolition; reviews construction plans and specifications, and conducts inspections at the premises at which such permits have been issued; and enforces compliance with the provisions of the Connecticut State Building Code. Many homeowners have asked us for pertinent

information regarding the different types of permits and application

procedures. This guide was developed in an attempt to make the process simple and as uncomplicated as possible. Remember, this is **only a guide**, and there are circumstances where information will be required of the homeowner which is not listed herein.

Additions / New Home Construction



What is required?

- 1) Health Department approval (if private well or private sewage disposal system are on site).
- 2) Zoning Compliance approval.
- 3) Building Permit **application**.
- 4) Proof of worker's compensation coverage.
- 5) **Three** sets of construction drawings.
- 6) Any other information the Building Official deems appropriate.
- 7) Permit Issuance.

The Building Department will need to know where on the site the structure is to be built, the dimensions of the structure including detailed drawings of the foundation system, anchorage methods, framing detail and elevation detail. All structural members such as joists, rafters, beams and headers must be identified as to the **sizes** proposed for use, the **species** of lumber proposed for use, the **grade** of lumber proposed for use, and the **on-center spacing** proposed. If metal-plate-connected wood trusses are to be used, a manufacture's design detail must be submitted. This can be obtained from the dealer you order your trusses from. Plans for prefabricated structures must bear the stamp of an approved third-party inspection agency. Additional

permits are required for electrical, plumbing and heating work. **Separate permit applications** must be filed.

Alterations/Renovations



Many different kinds of projects encompass **alterations** and **renovations**. This may include, but is not limited to dormers, renovation of kitchens or bathrooms, finished basements, opening of, or removal of, interior or exterior walls, stairway replacement, window replacement, skylights and chimneys.

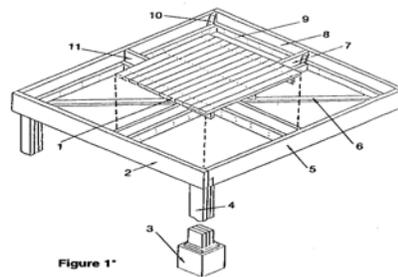
What is Required ?

- 1) Building permit **application**.
- 2) **Two** sets of construction plans (if requested by building Official).
- 3) Proof of worker's compensation coverage.
- 4) Proof of Home Improvement Registration (if applicable).
- 5) Permit Issuance.

The Building Department will need to know the dimension of the room(s) being altered. The construction plans must show a framing detail, where walls are to be removed, and / or constructed. All structural members involved in the alteration must be detailed as to the size of lumber, species of lumber, grade of lumber and on-center spacing proposed in the alterations. Product specifications must be submitted for window replacements and skylights.

Additional permits are required for electrical, plumbing and heating work. **Separate permit applications** must be filed.

Decks



What is required?

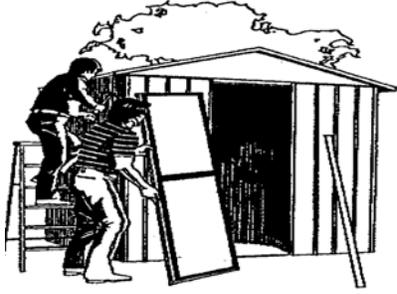
- 1) Health Department approval (if private well or private sewage disposal system are on site).
- 2) Zoning Compliance approval.
- 3) Building permit **application**.
- 4) Proof of worker's compensation coverage.
- 5) Proof of Home Improvement Registration (if applicable).
- 6) **Two** sets construction plans.
- 7) Permit Issuance.

The Building Department will need to know where on the site the deck is to be built, the dimensions of the proposed structure, the foundation system anchorage method, framing detail, spacing between balusters or intermediate rails and, guardrail height. All structural members shall be identified as to **size** of lumber, **species** of lumber, **grade** of lumber and **on - center spacing** proposed for use.

Special note:

The attachment of a deck to a **swimming pool** gives birth to additional safety requirements that must be incorporated into your deck design. If you intend to build a deck at your pool, ask the Building Department representative for the swimming pool handout that specifies the additional requirements.

Garages / Sheds



What is required?

- 1) Health Department approval (if private well or private sewage disposal system are on site).
- 2) Zoning Compliance approval.
- 3) Building Permit **application**.
- 4) Proof of worker's compensation coverage.
- 5) Proof of Home Improvement Registration (if applicable).
- 6) **Two** sets of construction plans.
- 7) Permit Issuance.

The Building Department will need to know where on the site the garage/shed is to be built, the dimensions of the structure including detailed drawings of the foundation system, anchorage method, framing detail and elevation detail. All structural members such as joists, rafters, beams and headers shall be detailed as to the **sizes** proposed for use, the **species** of lumber proposed for use, the **grade** of lumber proposed for use and the **on-center spacing** proposed. If metal-plate-connected wood trusses are to be used, a manufacturer's design detail must be submitted. This can be obtained from the dealer you order your trusses from. If purchasing a prefabricated shed, you will need to submit a copy of the specifications which you can receive from the dealer you purchase the shed from.

Electrical Work



- * Miscellaneous wiring
- * Service Change
- * Electric Heat
- * AC/DC smoke detectors
- * Swimming pool installations

Special note:

No person shall perform electrical work in the State of Connecticut unless that person has first obtained a license for such work from the Department of Consumer Protection. An exemption from this licensing requirement allows persons engaged in the installation, maintenance, repair and service of electrical systems in and about **single family residences** to perform electrical work as long as the person performing this work **owns and occupies** that single family residence, and, provided that any such installation, maintenance or repair is subject to inspection and approval by the Building Official.

What is required ?

- 1) Electrical permit **application**.
- 2) Proof of licensure of electrical contractor (if applicable).
- 3) Proof of worker's compensation coverage.
- 4) Permit Issuance.

NOTE:

Heat loss calculations may be requested.

Plumbing Work



- * Miscellaneous plumbing
- * Water heaters
- * Fixtures, pipes, etc.
- * Water pumps

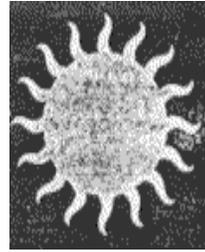
Special note:

No person shall perform plumbing work in the State of Connecticut unless that person has first obtained a license for such work from the Department of Consumer Protection. An exemption from this licensing requirement allows persons engaged in the installation, maintenance, repair and service of plumbing systems in and about **single-family residences** to perform plumbing work as long as the person performing this work **owns and occupies** that single-family-residence, and provided that any such installation, maintenance or repair is subject to inspection and approval by the Building Official.

What is required?

- 1) Plumbing permit **application**.
- 2) Proof of licensure of plumbing contractor (if applicable).
- 3) Proof of worker's compensation coverage.

Heating & Air-conditioning



- *Furnace installation or replacement
- *Boiler installation or replacement
- *Burner replacement
- *Oil tank installation or replacement
- *Central air-conditioning

Special note:

No person shall perform heating or cooling work in the State of Connecticut unless that person has first obtained a license for such work from the Department of Consumer Protection. An exemption from this licensing requirement allows persons engaged in the installation, maintenance, repair and service of heating and cooling systems in and about **single-family residences** to perform heating/cooling work as long as the person performing the work **owns and occupies** that single-family residence, and provided that any such installation, maintenance or repair is subject to inspection and approval by the Building Official.

What is required?

- 1) Mechanical permit **application**.
- 2) Proof of licensure of heating contractor (if applicable).
- 3) Proof of worker's compensation coverage.
- 4) Specifications on equipment/appliances.
- 5) Heat loss calculations.
- 6) Permit Issuance.

Roofing

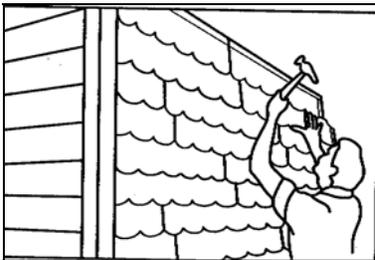


What is required?

- 1) Building permit **application**.
- 2) Proof of worker's compensation coverage.
- 3) Proof of Home Improvement Registration (if applicable).
- 4) Permit Issuance.

The Building Department will need to know how many existing layers of shingles are on the roof. The Connecticut State Building Code does not allow for more than one overlay of roof covering. If two or more applications exist, the existing roof covering must be removed prior to installation of the new roof covering. If existing roof covering is wood shake, slate, clay, cement or asbestos-cement tile, or if the existing roof or roof covering is water soaked, the existing coverings will need to be removed regardless of the number of existing layers.

Siding



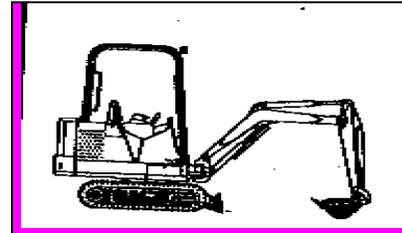
What is required?

- 1) Building permit **application**.
- 2) Proof of worker's compensation coverage.

- 3) Proof of Home Improvement Registration (if applicable).
- 4) Permit Issuance.

The Building Department will need to know the type of siding proposed for installation. Homes with metal siding (i.e., steel, aluminum) must be bonded and grounded to provide electrical safety.

Oil Tank Removal

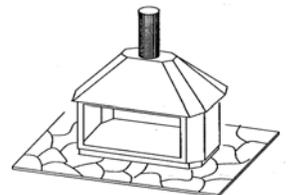


What is required?

The Building Department no longer issues permits for the removal of underground fuel storage tanks.

Oil tank removals are inspected and approved by the Fire Marshal's Office. The Fire Marshal can be reached at 860-465-3044.

Solid Fuel-Burning Appliances



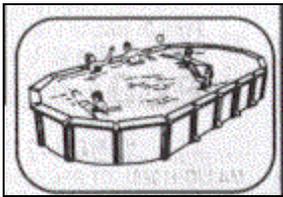
This category includes woodstoves, coalstoves, pelletstoves, fireplace inserts, etc.

What is required?

- 1) Mechanical permit **application**.
- 2) Manufacturer's specifications.
- 3) Proof of worker's compensation coverage.
- 4) Proof of Home Improvement Registration (if applicable).
- 5) Permit Issuance.

Permits are required for the installation of **new** as well as **used** appliances. The Building Department will inspect the new appliance for its clearance to combustibles as prescribed in the manufacturer's specifications. If the appliance you are installing is **used** and **without** manufacturer's specifications, ask the Building Department representative for a handout detailing appliance clearances to combustibles for **used** woodstoves.

Swimming Pools



These regulations cover the installation of above ground and in-ground private swimming pools.

What is required?

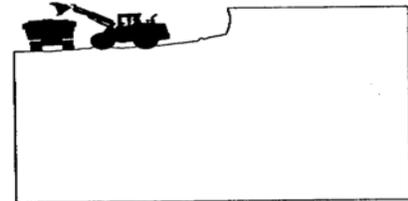
- 1) Health Department Approval (if private well or private sewage disposal system are on site).
- 2) Zoning compliance approval.
- 3) Building permit **application**.
- 4) Proof of worker's compensation coverage.
- 5) Proof of Home Improvement Contractor Registration (if applicable).

- 6) Two sets of pool plans, **bearing evidence of engineered design** in the form of a **seal and signature of the design professional** responsible for the pools design.
- 7) Permit Issuance.

The Town of Windham Building Department takes swimming pool safety **very seriously and strictly adheres** to all pertinent regulations regarding their installation. Ask the Building Department representative for the extensive handout available for the installation of private swimming pools so as to apprise yourself of all the requirements.

An additional permit is required for the electrical work serving the swimming pool installation. A **separate** electrical permit **application** must be filed.

Demolition



Any wrecking activity directed to the disassembling, dismantling, dismembering and/or razing of any structure or part thereof shall require the obtaining of a demolition permit.

What is required?

- 1) Demolition permit **application**.
- 2) Written releases from all utilities having service connections (electric, telephone, gas, sewer, water and cable television). Releases **must** be obtained whether **you** believe these utilities to exist at the structure or not.
- 3) Notification to adjoining property owners by registered or certified mail (when applicable).
- 4) Proof of worker's compensation coverage.

- 5) Certificate of insurance (when applicable).
- 6) Proof of registration as a demolition contractor (when applicable).
- 7) Permit Issuance.

The requirements for the demolition of a single-family residence or out building by an owner of such structure if the structure does not exceed a height of thirty feet shall not apply as they relate to the engaging of a demolition contractor and the certificate of insurance, provided the owner shall be present on site while such demolition work is in progress, shall be held personally liable for any injury to individuals or damage to public or private property caused by such demolition, and provided the buildings to be demolished shall have a clearance from other structures, roads or highways equal to or greater than the height of the structure subject to demolition.

Written releases from public utilities and notification to adjoining property owners may be waived for some minor demolition projects, but **only** when **prior approval** is granted by the Building Official.



QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

1) When is a permit required?

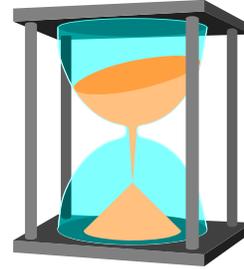
In general, a permit is required for all activities that are regulated by the Connecticut State Building Code. It is recommended that if you have **any question as to the need for a permit**, call the Building Department and ask the question **prior to** commencing any work.

2) Who must obtain the permit? The homeowner or the contractor?

An application for a building permit shall be made by the owner of the building, **or** an authorized agent.

Any “licensed contractor,” (i.e., electrical, plumbing, heating) who seeks to obtain a permit may sign the permit application personally, or such licensed

contractor may delegate the signing of the permit application to an employee, subcontractor or other agent of the licensed contractor, provided, the licensed contractor’s employee, subcontractor or other agent submits to the Building Official a dated letter on the licensed contractor’s letterhead, signed by the licensed contractor, stating that the bearer of the letter is authorized to sign the permit application as the agent of the licensed contractor.



3) How long is a permit good for?

Any permit issued shall become invalid if the authorized work is not commenced within six months after issuance of the permit, or, if the authorized work is suspended or abandoned for a period of six months after the time of commencing the work. There is no expiration if work is diligently pursued.

4) Why must multiple sets of plans be submitted for review?

The code official must retain one set of the approved plans, and another set shall be kept at the building site, to serve as the basis for all subsequent inspections.

5) How long will it take for my plans to be reviewed and the permit issued?

This is contingent on several factors. **First and foremost** is the information submitted by you, the homeowner, with your application. If the plans and specifications contain adequate information, the process will advance rather rapidly. If insufficient information is submitted, this office will need to mail out requests for supplemental information, delaying the process. In some cases approvals must be obtained from other

departments (i.e., zoning, health, fire marshal) prior to permit issuance.

Statutorily, the Building Official must approve or reject all applications for permits and amendments thereto within thirty days after the date of application, although applications **with adequate information** rarely take more than a few days, **if** other town agencies approvals are **not** required.

Additionally, the contractor cannot determine compliance with the **approved** drawings unless such drawings are readily available. Also, some projects require that a third set of plans be filed with the Fire Marshal of the jurisdiction, and his plans review will be conducted concurrently.

6) Must I obtain the permit prior to commencement of work?

Absolutely. It is unlawful to proceed without first filing an application with the code official and obtaining the required permit. In addition, the Town of Windham fee ordinance authorizes a monetary penalty, equal in amount to the cost of the permit, for commencing work prior to obtaining the required permit.

7) Can a homeowner work on their own home?

A homeowner can perform carpentry work on any residential structure they may own. The licensed trades, (i.e., electrical, plumbing, heating) however, are subject to different regulations. A homeowner may perform the work of the “licensed trades” only if the house is a **single-family** and **owner occupied**. If the residence is rental property or multi-family, electrical, plumbing and heating can only be performed by individuals licensed by the Connecticut Department of Consumer Protection. A homeowner **can not** perform “licensed trades” work on a multi-family they own and occupy.

8) Do I need to file a building application to replace a deck that will be identical to the one it’s replacing?

Yes. The allowable stresses for the materials of construction may be different today then when the original deck was first constructed.



9) When do I need to schedule inspections?

The code official is required to make inspections as necessary to determine compliance with the code. Ask the Building Department representative for a handout detailing required inspections. A 24 hour notice is required for an inspection request.

Your request will be scheduled during the first available open inspection time slot. And remember, it is a recommended sound business practice to require that all work pass a **final inspection** by the Building Department before paying the contractor in full.

10) Why do I need to submit proof a worker’s compensation coverage to obtain a permit?

Public Act 96-216 became effective June 4, 1996. The new law requires that prior to issuing a building permit, a Building Official shall require proof of worker’s compensation coverage. This may be in the form of an insurance certificate from the insurance company, or a waiver that is available at the Building Department office. The Building Department representative serving you will aid you in meeting this statutory requirement.

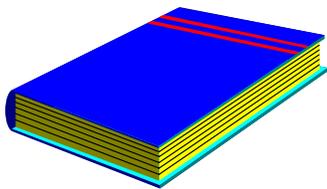
11) Who must be registered as a Home Improvement Contractor?

Public Act 93-215 became effective October 1, 1996. The new law requires that no person shall hold himself out to be a contractor without first obtaining a certificate of registration from the Commissioner of Consumer Protection. For the purpose of this regulation, “contractor” shall be defined as meaning any person who owns or operates a home improvement business, or who undertakes, offers to undertake or agrees to perform any home improvement.

12) What defines a home improvement?

For the purposes of this law, “home improvement” includes, but is not limited to, the repair, replacement, remodeling, alteration, conversion, modernization, improvement, rehabilitation or sandblasting of, or addition to any land or building or that portion thereof

which is used or designed to be used as a private residence, dwelling place or residential rental property, consisting of not more than six units, or the construction, replacement, installation or improvement of driveways, swimming pools, porches, garages, roofs, siding, insulation, solar energy systems, flooring, patios, landscaping, fences, doors and windows and waterproofing in connection with such land or building. "Home improvement" **does not** include: (A) The construction of a new home, or (B) any work performed without compensation by the owner on his own private residence or residential rental property, consisting of not more than six units.



13) Where can I obtain a "copy of the code?"

The Connecticut State Building Code as statutory regulations contains over 1,500 pages of requirements in 135 chapters. This is distributed amongst eight separate publications and thousands of referenced standards. These regulations are available for purchase from several private organizations. Ask the Building Department representative for a list of companies or organizations that have them for sale. The code can also be viewed at your convenience at the Willimantic Public Library.

COMPLAINTS



The Department of Consumer Protection can assist you with any complaints and/or inquires you have about a

particular contractor. Contact the department in person or call the office at (860) 566-3290 or toll free 1-800-842-2649 for information.

WITHHOLDING OF BUILDING PERMITS FOR DELINQUENT TAXES

Pursuant to Public Act 95-320, The Town of Windham has established an ordinance whereby approval of all applications for building permits or final certificates of occupancy, shall be withheld for any property upon which taxes are delinquent and for which an application is made. However, the Building Official may grant a building permit if an emergency exists affecting the health or safety of the occupants of a building upon which property the building application is sought.

BUILDING DEPARTMENT INFORMATION



The Building Department has numerous handouts to assist you with your construction project. Should you need to know the code requirements for swimming pools, sheds, ramps, stairs, chimneys, woodstoves or smoke detectors, just ask the Building Department representative for a handout.

Should you have any questions, comments, or need to discuss an upcoming project and are looking for a starting place, please feel free to call on us. We look forward to serving you and seeing you through that "not so complicated" job. Just remember, the only "dumb question" is the one you **don't** ask !!!

**Town of Windham
Building Department
979 Main Street
Willimantic, CT 06226-2200**

Phone: (860) 465-3040

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Fax: (860) 465-3039

HOURS

**Monday - Wednesday
8:00 AM - 5:00 PM**

**Thursday
8:00 AM - 7:30 PM**

**Friday
8:00 AM - 12:00 PM**

STAFF

**Chief Building Official
Donald W. Schultz
(860) 465-3042**

**Assistant Building Official / HCEO
(Vacant)**

**Zoning Official
Matthew Vertefeulle
(860) 465-3070**

OFFICE STAFF

**Kimberly Sullivan
(860) 465-3041**

