



GENERAL BUILDING PERMIT FAQ'S

Building Department Contacts:

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Midwest Inspection Services LLC
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MidwestinspectionsservicesND@gmail.com

City of Valley City website: www.valleycity.us

Valley City works to ensure construction of safe buildings and protect community character through building code regulations and zoning requirements. Valley City partners with Midwest Inspection Services for building code administration needs. The Building Department administers these regulations by issuing permits and conducting inspections. When you decide as a builder to build, remodel, or change the way you use the home or property, you may need to obtain a building permit.

When do I need a building permit? Permits are required for:

- New construction, additions, and/or finishing basements
- Interior renovations that include structural modifications
- Changes to square footage
- Decks and porches except as provided below
- Fences over 8.5 feet high (see V.C.M.C. § 11-06-20. - Retaining walls, fences and hedges, for other restrictions)
- HVAC systems – gas appliances, wood stoves, furnaces, etc., including replacements/change outs
- Accessory structures including garages, sheds, gazebos, pergolas, and arbors, except as provided below
- Windows and doors (if changing the size of the opening)
- Construction work that changes the path of egress from the building
- Replacement of gypsum board (drywall), insulation, or framing due to damage or as part of a required rated assembly
- Any retaining wall over 4 feet in height measured from the bottom of the footing to the top of the wall, OR any retaining wall supporting a surcharge or impounding Class I, II or IIIA liquids
- Demolition (asbestos inspection also required for all commercial, industrial, institutional and public buildings; permits can be obtained through the ND Department of Environmental Quality)
- Additions or enlargements of non-structural concrete, including but not limited to sidewalks, driveways, patios, parking pads, and equipment pads

Separate plumbing and electrical system permits are required for the installation, alteration, relocation, replacement, or addition to any wiring, piping, or equipment or appliances associated with those systems.

Electrical Permits (701) 400-1115. Inspections performed and permits issued by the North Dakota State Electrical Board.

Plumbing Permits (701) 799-1555 (Dean Staska). Inspections performed and permits issued by the North Dakota State Plumbing Board.

NO Building Permit is needed for:

- Window awnings
- Fences not over 8.5 feet high (but see V.C.M.C. § 11-06-20. - Retaining walls, fences and hedges, for other restrictions)
- Painting (interior or exterior), papering, tiling, sheetrock repairs, carpeting, cabinets, counter tops, and similar finishing work assuming no other structural modifications
- Paver and stone patios, driveways, and walkways (BUT, must be approved by City Engineer if owner wishes to qualify installation as an improved parking surface)
- Swimming pools
- Decks and porches not exceeding 120 square feet in area, that are not more than 7 inches above grade at any point, are not attached to a dwelling and do not serve the exit door
- Re-siding or reroofing
- Accessory buildings 120 sq. feet or less, not attached to principal structure, and not on a poured concrete slab
- Swings and other playground equipment
- Shade cloth structures constructed for nursery or agricultural purposes, not including service systems.

Why do I need permits?

Valley City has adopted the North Dakota State Building Code which requires building permits to be obtained for all new residential and commercial construction and/or remodeling, and before doing certain types of construction for all existing structures. Building permits allow the city to review all construction projects and ensure that they meet the minimum requirements of the Building Code as well as City Zoning Code requirements such as yard coverage, setbacks and building height. A building permit also establishes a record of the construction and remodeling history of your property. Once the permits have been issued, the building department will conduct on-site inspections to ensure compliance.

How do I apply for a permit?

A building permit application can be found on the City's website, or you can pick one up from either the City Inspection Department at City Hall or Midwest Inspection Services. After the Building Department approves the permit, the City will call you with the invoice amount. **Payment must be made (if applicable) and permit paperwork signed before any work is started on the project.**

What information should I provide when applying for a permit?

Information requirements can vary depending upon your specific project. Handouts and checklists are available which describe the information required to submit an application. For building permits for new construction and additions, you will need to provide a plot plan, together with detailed construction plans, drawn to scale, showing your proposed project.

Homeowners may prepare their own plans; however, the Building Department may require that an architect or engineer prepare plans if necessary to ensure accuracy and legibility. Allow adequate time for you or your representative to prepare the plans.

How long does it take to get a permit?

Most permit applications that are complete and accurate may take up to a week to process; however, it may take longer depending on the complexity of the project. Applications for permits should be submitted well in advance of your scheduled starting date so that staff can help you through the process and issue your permit before you are ready to start work. This is especially true during the summer construction season.

Is there a charge for a permit?

There is a charge for most permits. Building permit charges are based upon the value of the project. The City does not charge a fee for a permit if you are only installing non-structural concrete or demolishing a structure.

Who inspects the work?

With your permit, the Building Department will provide information about when and who to call for inspection(s). Most building inspections are performed by Midwest Inspection Services. Their inspectors will inspect your work several times during the course of construction for things such as footings, framing, insulation, rough-in, mechanical work and building final inspection. You will need to contact their office to schedule an inspection; **no work shall proceed or be covered until**

the requested inspection has been signed off. Call 701-532-1078, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., Monday-Friday to arrange inspections. An inspection card may be attached to your permits. You or your contractor should post the card on the site until completion of the final inspection. This card contains important information about the job and is used to record inspections performed. Smaller projects and demolitions may be inspected by the City Inspection Department.

Other Frequently Asked Questions

Will the City locate my property lines?

No, the city will not locate property corners for private properties. That is solely the property owner's responsibility. You may need to contact a land surveyor to have your property corners identified and located.

Can I install my own HVAC equipment? (all gas and some electric heating and cooling appliances and equipment, as well as gas piping)

It may be possible for you to install your own equipment, but that equipment must be installed as per the manufacturer's recommendations which typically meet and or exceed building code requirements. Keep in mind that a majority of these appliances will require a mechanical permit and inspections. Contact the City Inspection Office or Midwest Inspections with any questions on your HVAC equipment.

What if my project requires a connection to a City water or sewer main?

Connection to a City water or sewer main must be performed by a plumber licensed by the State and the City, and who is insured and bonded within the City for such work. Please have your contractor contact the Public Works business office at City Hall to coordinate the work and applicable inspections: (701) 845-0380.

How can I find if I am located in the flood plain?

Contact the City Inspection Office and they will help you determine if your property is located in the flood plain.

Do I need a building permit to build a deck or porch onto my house or in my yard?

Yes, most decks and porches require a building permit. If ALL of the following apply you do NOT need a permit.: 1) the deck or porch does not exceed 120 square feet in area; 2) the deck or porch is not more than 7 inches above grade at any point; 3) the deck or porch is not attached to a dwelling; and 4) the deck or porch does not serve an exit door.

Is it possible to turn my existing deck into a three-season porch/addition?

It is *possible*, but likely a permit will be needed and the deck/porch may need to be removed and rebuilt on an approved foundation or footings. Any time you enclose a deck or porch and attach it to the house, there needs to be an approved frost protected foundation system in place for the structure. Most existing decks will not meet the frost protection requirement for such structures. In addition to the frost protection, decks constructed out of the code's provisions are not designed to support wall and roof assemblies.

Are there size limitations for detached accessory structures such as storage sheds and garages?

There are size limitations for all accessory structures, but these limitations vary depending on the zoning district in which your property is located. City staff will assist you in determining the appropriate size for your lot.

I want to add a parking slab on my residential lot, is this allowed?

In many cases, yes, but you must contact the City to apply for a concrete permit or to obtain approval for a paver/stone pad. Please note that parking or storage of only *some* types of vehicles is allowed in the front and side yard areas of a residential lot on an improved surface; and there are limits to the total percentage of a front yard or lot that may be covered by an improved surface.

Can I pour concrete for sidewalks and approaches that are located in the City Right-of-Way adjacent to my property?

Permits are required and can be obtained from the City Inspection Department for these types of projects. All concrete that is located in the Right-of-Way must be poured by a contractor that has current State and City contractor's licenses and is insured and bonded within the city to pour said concrete. Inspections are required to ensure compliance with City specifications. Call the City Inspection Department office at (701) 845-8127 to coordinate the inspection.

Do swimming pools require permits to be installed on my property?

A permit is not required to install a swimming pool; however, please note the following:

- The City Zoning Code must be followed for setback, lot coverage, and other size and replacement regulations.
- The City has adopted the International Property Maintenance Code which requires the following for private swimming pools, hot tubs and spas:

Private swimming pools, hot tubs and spas, containing water more than 24 inches (610 mm) in depth shall be completely surrounded by a fence or barrier not less than 48 inches (1219 mm) in height above the finished ground level measured on the side of the barrier away from the pool. Gates and doors in such barriers shall be self-closing and self-latching. Where the self-latching device is less than 54 inches (1372 mm) above the bottom of the gate, the release mechanism shall be located on the pool side of the gate. Self-closing and self-latching gates shall be maintained such that the gate will positively close and latch when released from an open position of 6 inches (152 mm) from the gatepost. An existing pool enclosure shall not be removed, replaced or changed in a manner that reduces its effectiveness as a safety barrier.

Exceptions:

- 1. Spas or hot tubs equipped with a lockable safety cover that complies with ASTM F1346.*
- 2. Private swimming pools equipped with a power safety cover that complies with ASTM F1346 and is in working condition using the control switch.*

How can I get more information?

There are various handouts on permit application procedures and requirements as well as detailed guidelines that can be obtained by request or found on the City website.

- Building an Addition to Dwellings
- Building a Deck
- Remodeling a structure

Helpful Links

ICC International Codes

<https://codes.iccsafe.org/codes/i-codes/2024-icodes>

State Building Code Amendments

<https://www.commerce.nd.gov/community-services/building-codes>

Asbestos Abatement

<https://deq.nd.gov/wm/asbestos/>

State Plumbing Board

<https://www.ndplumbingboard.gov/inspectors/>

State Electrical Board

<https://www.ndseb.com/inspections/general-information/>