

A Guide to

Residential Building Permits



When is a Building Permit Required?

- Construction of a New Home
- Constructing or installing Detached Accessory Building over 10 m², (108 square feet), such as detached garages, tool shed, cabana.
- Wood Decks 24 inches or greater above grade or have a roof above.
- Additions to existing buildings (i.e., sunrooms, porches, carports, attached garages, dormers, second storey etc.)
- Any structural work, including alterations to interior partitions or the installation of new skylights, windows or doors, or other interior non-structural partitioning.
- Prefabricated Structures (i.e., portable Classrooms, garages, tool sheds, sunrooms, patio roofs, etc.)
- Solid Fuel burning appliances, (installation or alterations to wood stoves, fireplaces and metal or masonry chimneys)
- Fire Separations, alterations to, or new fire separations, i.e., fire rated ceilings, walls, floors)
- Exit Facilities, (alterations to or new)
- Swimming Pools (inground and above ground)
- Enclosing or Roofing Over a porch or deck
- Underpinning or raising a house to provide a full basement
- Construction or finishing of rooms in the basement or attic
- Installation of fireplaces and other heating appliances including the replacement of furnaces and ductwork
- Installation of siding, brick veneer, or another new exterior wall covering
- Replacing or installing new plumbing, including repair or installation of an on-site sewage system
- Damp-proofing or waterproofing foundation walls including installation of weeping tile
- Installation of a ramp or elevating device
- Fire alarms, sprinkler or standpipe and hose systems (alterations to, or new)
- Demolition of a building or part of a building

If you are uncertain, please contact the Building Section at (905) 688-5601 ext. 1660

www.stcatharines.ca

Why is a Permit Required?

Building Permits are necessary to ensure compliance with the Ontario Building Code for structural and safety standards, adherence to Zoning requirements and to comply with any other applicable Provincial and/or Municipal regulations.

Constructing or altering a structure without a Permit can result in numerous problems including:

- Complaints from neighbours
- Not conforming with the Building Code
- Difficulty selling the property
- Incurring liability should a Injury occur to someone (visiting your property) as a result of a structure not conforming to the Building Code
- Extra cost in having to reconstruct the structure accordance with the Zoning By-law and Building Code
- Possible demolition of structure.

City of St. Catharines Zoning By-Law

The City of St. Catharines Zoning By-law contains regulations governing the size, height, location and use of the building. Based on the zoning of the property the proposed construction must not exceed the requirements as far as lot coverage and yard requirements (minimum building setbacks from property lines) are concerned.

Building By-Law 2011-334

A copy of Building By-Law 2011-334 is available at the City of St. Catharines, Clerks and Legal Services, or downloaded at the City of St. Catharines website under By-laws www.stcatharines.ca or <https://stcatharines.civicweb.net/filepro/documents/784/>

Applying For a Permit

Applications for Building Permits are available at the City of St. Catharines, Planning and Building Services (PBS) Department or downloaded at the City of St. Catharines website. www.stcatharines.ca or <https://www.stcatharines.ca/en/building-and-renovating/applying-for-a-building-permit.aspx>

With the submission of an application, you will be required to submit two (2) copies of detailed construction drawings, a site plan and the required Building Permit fees (plus damage deposits, if applicable). If you require assistance to develop these drawings, sample and standard drawings are available for your use along with the current fee schedules at the City of St. Catharines, PBS Department.

Building Permit applications for new dwelling units must also include a completed energy efficiency design summary form.

Building permits may be applied for by a property owner, or by an agent on behalf of the owner, such as the contractor or designer. The Schedule 1 portion of the application must be filled out with every submission not involving an architect or engineer. The owner of a single dwelling may produce the drawings, a qualified designer must be provided otherwise.

Note: Residential drawings for a single family dwelling can be prepared by the homeowner. For larger dwellings or multiple unit dwellings a qualified designer may be required. Please contact the PBS Department at 905-688-5601, ext. 1660 for more information

All applicable fees must be paid as required by the current Building By-Law.

Note: A sidewalk damage deposit may be required where heavy machinery may be used over a city sidewalk. Deposits will be returned when the majority of the project has been completed and after inspection to ensure no damage. These deposits are required for projects such as a new house, garage, shed, addition to a house, or an in-ground swimming pool. (Deposits are only applicable when a city sidewalk is located in front of your property.)

What to Do When Waiting for the Permit to Be Issued

Once you have submitted your application, we will review your submission as quickly as we can. We are aware of the importance to you in obtaining the permit quickly. Please make yourself available at the telephone number you provided at the time of application to ensure we can contact you should we require any clarification of your submission.

What to do When the Permit Has Been Issued

Once you receive your permit, please read the approved permit documents thoroughly before commencing construction. The construction must be in accordance with the approved plans and documents issued with your permit. Any changes during or before construction must be submitted to the Building Section for review and additional fees may be applicable.

Several inspections are also required during construction to ensure that all work is done in accordance with the approved plans.

The Building Permit must be posted on the property in a conspicuous location and the approved permit documents must be kept on site and available during all inspections.

Note: It is the responsibility of the owner to ensure that either you or the contractor contact the City of St. Catharines, PBS Department to request an inspection before proceeding to the next phase of construction. All required inspections are listed on the permit.

Failure to schedule will result in not being permitted to occupy or use the addition and may also result in uncovering the work.

To schedule your inspections, call 905-688-5601, ext. 1660. Please have your permit number ready when scheduling an inspection.

If you have any further questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact the City of St. Catharines, PBS Department between the hours of 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. at 905-688-5601, ext. 1660.

What other Approvals may be Required?

The following are examples of applicable law that may need to be confirmed before a permit can be issued:

- **Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority**
- **Ministry of Transportation Ontario (land use permits)**
- **Niagara Escarpment Commission (permits)**
- **Zoning By-Laws under section 34 & 38 of the Planning Act (includes minor variance, approvals & registration of site plan agreements & registered plans of subdivision)**
- **Niagara Region Entrance Permit (regional roads)**

- _____
- _____
- _____

What is the cost going to be for a Building Permit?

Residential:

Please refer to the current Schedule of Rates and Fees at www.stcatharines.ca or by calling the P.B.S. Department at ext. 1660.

Other Costs (when applicable):

Regional development charges (New Dwellings)

Sidewalk damage deposit

Water under construction fee (new construction only)

Note: For actual cost of other fees and to determine if they are applicable please contact the P.B.S. Department at ext. 1660.

Note: Final cost will be determined at the time of application based on the information provided on the drawings submitted.

City of St. Catharines

P.O. Box 3012, 50 Church Street

St. Catharines, ON L2R 7C2