



Work Exempt from Permits

Below is a list of items that are exempt from permits according to the California Building, Electrical, Mechanical and Plumbing Codes. For all projects except those listed below, a permit is likely required. Please contact the Permit Center at 510-620-6868 if you have a question about your specific project.

Building:

1. One story detached accessory structures used as tool and storage sheds, playhouses, and similar uses, provided the floor area does not exceed 120 square feet.
2. Fences not over 7 feet high. * A Planning Division permit is required for any fence constructed.
3. Oil derricks
4. Retaining walls that are not over 4 feet in height measured from the bottom of the footing to the top of the wall, unless supporting a surcharge or impounding Class I, II, or IIIA liquids.
5. Water tanks supported directly on grade if the capacity is not greater than 5,000 gallons and the ratio of height to diameter or width does not exceed 2:1.
6. Sidewalks and driveways not more than 30 inches above adjacent grade and not over any basement or story below and are not part of an accessible route.
7. Painting, papering, tiling, carpeting, cabinets, counter tops (*that do not have a sink*) and similar finish work. *Please contact the Permit Center if any of this work is being completed in a kitchen or bathroom.*
8. Temporary motion picture, television, and theatre stage sets and scenery.
9. Prefabricated swimming pools accessory to Group R-3 occupancy (*single family residence*) that are less than 24 inches deep, do not exceed 5,000 gallons and are installed entirely above ground.
10. Shade cloth structures constructed for nursery or agricultural purposes, not including service systems
11. Swings and other playground equipment accessory to detached one- and two-family dwellings.
12. Window awnings in Group R-3 and U occupancies (*single family residence and garage*), supported by an exterior wall that do not project more than 54 inches from the exterior wall and do not require additional support.
13. Non fixed and movable fixtures, cases, racks, counter and partitions, not over 5 feet 9 inches in height.
14. Residential (one and two-family dwellings) decks not exceeding 200 square feet in area, that are not more than 30 inches above grade at any point, are not attached to a dwelling and do not serve the exit door required by California Residential Code Section R311.4

Electrical:

1. Listed cord and plug connected temporary decorative lighting.
2. Reinstallation of attachment plug receptacles, but not the outlets therefore.
3. Repair or replacement of branch circuit overcurrent devices of the required capacity in the same location.
4. Installation or maintenance of communications wiring, devices, appliances, apparatus or equipment.

Mechanical:

1. A portable heating appliance, portable ventilating equipment, a portable cooling unit or a portable evaporative cooler.
2. A closed system of steam, hot or chilled water piping within heating or cooling equipment regulated by this code.
3. Replacement of any component part that does not alter its original approval and is in accordance with other applicable requirements of this code.
4. Refrigerating equipment that is part of the equipment for which a permit has been issued pursuant to the requirements of this code.
5. A unit refrigerating system.

Plumbing:

1. The stopping of leaks in drains, soil, waste or vent pipe, provided, however, that a trap, drain pipe, soil, waste, or vent pipe become defective and it becomes necessary to remove and replace the same with new material, the same shall be considered as new work and a permit shall be procured and inspection made as provided in this code.
2. The clearing of stoppages, including the removal and reinstallation of water closets, or the repairing of leaks in pipes, valves, or fixtures, , provided such repairs do not involve or require the replacement or rearrangement of valves, pipes, or fixtures.