



## CITY & BOROUGH OF WRANGELL

INCORPORATED JUNE 15, 1903

### Capital Projects Department

PO Box 531, Wrangell, AK 99929

Phone (907)-874-3902

## When a Building Permit is Required

This information is provided to assist citizens and those who perform work in the City & Borough of Wrangell (CBW) to:

1. Determine when permits are needed for various new construction, remodeling and home repair activities;
2. Describe the kinds of permits that must be obtained prior to performing the work activity;
3. Outline the procedures for obtaining required permits;
4. Describe when inspections are required and when approvals are needed by other City, State, or Federal agencies.

Note: Approvals by other review agencies, Wrangell Municipal Light & Power (WML&P), Planning and Zoning (P&Z), State Fire Marshal's Office, US Army Corps of Engineers, Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation may be required even when a CBW building permit is not required.

### WHEN IS A BUILDING PERMIT REQUIRED?

Permit Application: An application shall be submitted to the code official for the following activities. These activities shall not commence without a permit being issued.

1. Construction value must be equal to \$2,000 or more for building permit requirement.
2. Construct, alter or enlarge a structure.  
*This includes the cutting away of any wall, partition or portion thereof; the removal or cutting of any beam or loadbearing support; the removal or change of any required means of egress; the rearrangement of parts of a structure affecting egress requirements; the addition to, alteration of, replacement of or relocation of any standpipe, water supply, sewer, drainage, drain leader, gas or oil, soil, waste, vent or similar piping, electric wiring, or mechanical work; or any other work affecting public health or general safety.*
3. Construct an addition.
4. Demolish or move a structure.
5. Change the use of a structure when the new use requires a greater degree of structural strength, fire protection, exit facilities, ventilation, or sanitary provisions.
6. Install or alter any equipment regulated by other CBW adopted codes, Plumbing Code, Mechanical Code, Fire Code, etc.
7. Remove or disturb any asbestos or lead containing materials during construction, demolition, alteration, renovation of, or addition to structures.

8. Move a lot line which affects an existing structure's continued compliance with the building regulations under which it was built.
9. Construction of fences, decks, patios, and retaining walls, other than those allowed below.
10. All electrical alterations or improvements require a separate electrical permit from Wrangell Municipal Light & Power (WML&P).

## EXCEPTIONS TO BUILDING PERMIT REQUIREMENTS

1. Construction of detached utility sheds used as tool or storage sheds, playhouses, similar uses when accessory to the primary property use and the floor area does not exceed 150 square feet of building area and 102 inches in wall height.
2. Detached pre-fabricated buildings, which house the equipment of exempted public utilities, provided such does not exceed 150 square feet of building area and 102 inches in wall height.
3. Tents and air-supported structures that cover an area of 900 square feet or less, including all connecting areas or spaces with a *common means of egress* or entrance and with an occupant load of 50 or less persons.
4. Wooden fences and wooden privacy walls not part of a building structure or the barrier for a swimming pool, provided such fences and privacy walls do not exceed six feet in height above the finished grade. Ornamental post caps shall not be considered to contribute to the height of the fence or privacy wall and shall be permitted to extend beyond the six feet height measurement.  
**Masonry, concrete block, and materials other than wood require a permit.**
5. Retaining walls supporting less than two feet of unbalanced fill.
6. Swimming pools which are 150 square feet or less in surface area, 5,000 gallons or less in water capacity, and are less than 24 inches in depth.
7. **Ordinary repairs** which include, but are not limited to, the following:
  - a. In residential uses, the replacement of mechanical or plumbing equipment and appliances, **except those fueled by gas or oil**, and provided that the equipment or appliance is of similar capacity and in the same location in single family homes, townhouses, duplexes, or inside residential multi-family condo or rental units. **Note:** Changes to duct systems, plumbing supply, drain, waste and vent piping, electrical circuits, appliance vent systems and gas piping, other than re-connection to replacement equipment, appliances and fixtures, require a permit.
  - b. The replacement of roof coverings and/or the installation or replacement of siding on detached single-family homes, townhouses and duplexes. This does not include the replacement of plywood or FRT which are considered structural components of the roofing system.
  - c. Installation of cabinets in all occupancies.
  - d. Replacement of porch flooring or non-structural floor coverings within a dwelling unit.
  - e. Painting any portion of a structure and/or the repair of plaster, interior tile and wall coverings in all occupancies.
  - f. Replacement of windows and doors - provided that there is no increase or decrease in opening size- in detached single family homes, townhouses and duplexes.
  - g. Replacement of electrical switches, outlets, light fixtures, and ceiling fans.
  - h. Replacement of interior floor finish and covering materials (i.e.: carpet, ceramic tile, linoleum, hardwood [nonstructural]).
  - i. Replacement of above-ground existing LP-gas containers of the same capacity in the same location and associated regulators when installed by the serving gas supplier.

## THE PERMIT PROCESS

Work requiring a permit shall be performed only after submitting plans and obtaining the permit from the Borough building official. A stop work order may be issued and fines levied when work is started without obtaining the proper permits. A building permit application must be completed, signed and the application fee paid before the application will be processed.

Along with the building permit application, new construction or exterior work requires the submittal of a site plan showing the property lines and the distances of all work from those property lines. The site plan should also show any driveways, drainage, utilities, and existing structures. Setback requirements should be discussed with the Zoning Administrator, Kate Thomas, at (907) 874-2381.

New construction or interior renovations require floor plans to be submitted, including the layout and dimensions of rooms, size and location of doors and windows, locations of all permanent plumbing fixtures, mechanical equipment, cabinets, and appliances.

A **building permit packet** may be obtained at City Hall, 205 Brueger Street, **or** at <http://www.wrangell.com/publicworks/building-permit>.

**Commercial and industrial construction** and any construction on commercial, industrial, or waterfront development zoned property requires a permit from the Alaska State Fire Marshal's office. 2760 Sherwood Lane, Suite 1-A, Juneau, Alaska 9980, Phone (907) 465-4331, Fax (907) 465-5521. <http://www.dps.state.ak.us/Fire/PRB/>.

**Electrical** alterations or improvements require a separate electrical permit from WML&P. Information on this permit is available at (907) 874-2055, the WML&P office on Case Ave, or at <http://www.wrangell.com/electrical/electrical-permit-application>.

Wrangell's **zoning codes** govern what types activities can take place on what properties, they also govern setbacks, building height, and accessory uses. Zoning questions should be directed to the zoning administrator, Kate Thomas, at (907) 874-2381 at City Hall, 205 Brueger Street.

**Private sewer systems** require a permit from the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (ADEC). 410 Willoughby Ave, Juneau, AK 99803, (907) 465-5306. <http://www.dec.alaska.gov/water/wwdp/onsite/index.htm>.

**Site work, clearing, and backfill.** Your land development may require a U.S. Army Corps of Engineers wetland permit if the activity falls under certain criteria. The USACE regulates the discharge of dredged and/or fill material into all Waters of the U.S. A discharge of fill material is the placement of material that raises the bottom elevation of a Water of the U.S. or causes it to become uplands. The USACE also regulates any work and/or structures placed in, over, or under navigable waters. Information on the USACE wetlands permit is available at <http://www.poa.usace.army.mil/Missions/Regulatory.aspx>

**Questions** may be directed to Amber Al-Haddad, Building Official at phone: (907) 874-3902, email: [aal-haddad@wrangell.com](mailto:aal-haddad@wrangell.com).