

Planning to Build or Remodel?

Do I Need A Permit?

This handout is to help home owners and contractors determine if the work being done requires a Building Permit.



Geauga County Building Department

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SCOPE The code shall apply to the construction, alteration, movement, enlargement, replacement, repair, equipment, use and occupancy, location, maintenance, removal and demolition of every building

WORK EXEMPT Work that is exempt from the building code and does not need a permit, includes detached accessory structures less than 200 sq. ft.; fences not over 6ft; retaining walls not over 4 ft. in height; decks less than 200 sq. ft., not over 30 in. from grade and detached from the house; sidewalks and driveways not over 30 inches from grade and part of an accessible route; Interior Finishes, decorating, maintenance or minor repair; siding, windows, doors and roof tear offs; temporary theater stage sets and scenery; window awnings; tents; replacement of plug in appliances or plumbing fixtures in the same locations.

MINOR REPAIRS Minor Repair is defined as...The reconstruction or renewal of any part of an existing building for the purpose of its maintenance when the work has limited impact on access, safety or health. Minor repairs do not include the cutting away of any wall, partition or portion thereof, the removal or cutting of any structural beam or load bearing support, or the removal or change of a structure affecting the egress requirements; nor shall minor repairs include addition to, alteration of, replacement or relocation of any standpipe, water supply, sewer, drainage, drain

leader, gas, soil, waste, vent or similar piping, electric wiring or mechanical or other work affecting public health or general safety



SO... You can change out flooring, cabinets, light fixtures, plumbing fixtures, replace drywall, replace receptacles, and plug in appliances.

BUT... In addition to new construction, permits are required for any remodeling which involves electrical, framing or plumbing work, installation and replacement of: air conditioning and heating systems, electrical wiring, panels, and meterbases, generators, swimming pools (in ground and above ground) and hot tubs, decks, waterproofing, storage buildings, carports, garages and workshops, adding or removing walls, demolition of structures, and house moving.

Things to Look For when Hiring A Contractor.

When deciding on a contractor use one that has been in business for a while. Pick one that is state licensed and registered with the County. Make sure they have insurance

Before You Hire

Get multiple estimates. Make sure you feel comfortable with them (they will be in your house for a while). Ask a lot of questions... (How many projects have they done like yours, who will be doing work, will work require permit, what type of insurance (liability, workers comp, property damage). Get a list of references and call them.

The Contract

Ohio requires a contract for any job that exceeds \$25,000. We recommend you have one no matter what the cost. In that contract you should have information such as... contractor info, start date, finish date, description of work, materials, payment schedule, warranty, even clean up responsibility.

Payment

DO NOT PAY CASH!!! Ohio limits down payments (limits it to 10% unless special order item than max 75%). Make periodic payments. Usually three payments at specific points of project (this is where you can use passing inspections as payment points). Save a significant amount for final payment.

Potential Signs of a Scam

Potential signs of a scam could be if...The contractor knocks on your door to solicit work. If they pressure you into an immediate decision. If they only want cash or large upfront payment. If they ask you to get the building permits, or if they offer financing through contractor



Things To Do

Don't be afraid to call

Don't be afraid to ask questions

Have them show proof

Most Importantly

Call Us

440-279-1780

Geauga County Building Dept.

We have great office staff that will try to help with anything.