

Frequently Asked Questions

This is a guide only and is intended to help you, the homeowner/builder, to better understand the steps to follow in obtaining a Building Permit; it is not a substitute for the Municipal Building By-law. It also outlines what is expected of you during the course of construction. If you have any doubts or questions, please contact the Building Inspector, at the Municipal Office, 636 St. Lawrence Street, Winchester, 613-774-2105.

Fees and Permit requirements are regulated by the Township's Building By-law 99-12.

[When Do I Need a Building Permit?](#)

[Why Do I Need a Building Permit?](#)

[How Do I Apply?](#)

[What Is A Site Plan?](#)

[Can I Draw My Own Building Plans Or Drawings?](#)

[What Do I Need For My Water And Sewage Systems?](#)

[Do I Need A Plumbing Permit?](#)

[Do I Need A New Home Warranty Registration Number?](#)

[What Does A Building Permit Cost?](#)

[When Do I Need To Contact The Conservation Authority?](#)

[What Are Development Fees?](#)

[Are There Any Other Matters I Should Consider?](#)

[What Are My Obligations During Construction?](#)

[When Can I Occupy The Building?](#)

[Can I Occupy an Unfinished Building?](#)

[Why Do I Need Inspections?](#)

[What Happens If I Build Without A Permit?](#)

When Do I Need a Building Permit?

Building Permits are required for the following:

- Any new buildings including farm buildings and structures
- Adding a carport, garage, rooms or another storey to an existing building
- Adding structural features such as a balcony, decks, a canopy or dormer, or enclosing a porch
- Excavating to construct a new or full basement under an existing house
- Constructing any accessory building over 10 sq. metres (100 sq. ft.) such as a garage or utility building
- Doing renovations or repairs of any kind, including the addition of a bedroom in a basement, or undertaking structural changes such as removing a load bearing partition or wall
- Signs having structural components or over 7.5 metres in height, retaining walls over 1 metre in height, antennas or towers over 16 metres, pools deeper than 3.5 metres, and dishes or solar collectors over 5 metres²

- Changing the use or occupancy of a building
- Installation of wood burning equipment and/or chimneys
- Installation of a public pool
- Installation or alteration of any building system such as plumbing, heating, ventilation or any life safety systems
- When a building or structure is to be moved

A demolition permit is required if you are tearing down a building or part of a building. A farm building (located on a farm) does not require a demolition permit.

Why Do I Need a Building Permit?

To ensure that construction within the municipality meets with standards set out in the Ontario Building Code, and in doing so protects the Public's Health, Safety and Welfare. Building Officials use Building Permits as a vital step in their enforcement of codes. The value of your home or business investment could be reduced if it does not meet with the code requirements.

How Do I Apply?

You will be required to complete and sign an application form. This form is available at the Municipal Office. You may also be required to submit other information depending on the type of construction project you propose (refer to the check list provided to determine what common types of information are required for various projects).

What Is A Site Plan? (A plot plan or survey showing a “bird’s eye” view of the property)

- Municipal address
- Lot and Concession number
- Use of building
- Location of all buildings
- Lot dimensions
- Set backs from rivers, ponds, property lines
- North Arrow
- Vehicle access (drive way)
- Retaining walls (if applicable)
- Right-of-way (if applicable)
 - Easements
 - Location of septic system
 - Location of well
 - Location of ground source heat pump (if applicable)

- Drainage plan showing how the water will be draining away from the building
- Location and discharge of sump pump

Can I Draw My Own Building Plans Or Drawings?

Yes, plans are required for new buildings, additions, accessory buildings and structural alterations, the following information must be included for each of the plans:

- 2 sets of plans to be submitted; one set will be returned to you to be kept on the construction site at all times
- Measurements may be in metric or imperial
- Plans may vary depending on the type of construction but generally should include:

A. Foundation Plan

- All dimensions
- Floor framing, size and spacing
- Beams, columns (sizes)
- Stair location, number of steps or height of steps
- Foundation wall
- Footings
- Partitions
- Door, windows (sizes)
- Plumbing fixtures
- Furnace
- Floor drain
- Lintels
- Cross bridging
- Use of space
- Scale of plans

B. Floor Plan

- All dimensions
- Floor framing, size and direction
(Submit Manufacturers Floor Layouts)
- Beams, lintels, and columns (sizes)
- Stair location, number of steps or height of steps
- Partitions
- Doors, windows (size)
- Plumbing fixtures
- Cross bridging
- Intended use of spaces (names of rooms)
- Roof framing (upper floor), size and direction
of framing, include ridge lines and valleys
- Fireplace/stove and chimney locations
- Scale of plans

C. Fire Separations

- Plans to show locations, rating and construction detail

D. Roof Plans

- Truss and Floor Layouts from the Manufacturer must be submitted with your application. The engineered shop drawings for trusses and manufactured floor joists may be provided at the time of your framing inspection.

E. Building Elevations

- Finishing details of the exterior
- Accurate grade location
- Steps and handrails
- Deck and porch construction details
- Windows, doors
- Roof Pitch
- Chimney height

F. Plumbing Drawings (except for detached dwelling units)

- Schematic of all drains and vents
- Fixture locations and details of grab bars and stall sizes for Barrier Free washrooms

G. Cross Sections

- Scale of plans
- Vertical height dimensions
- Identify all materials used in walls, roof and floor construction
- Stair sections (dimensions)
- Roof pitch
- Construction details
- Exterior grade
- Lintels, Beams, columns
- Roof overhang
- Dimensions of materials

What Do I Need For My Water And Sewage Systems?

- Certificate of Approval for Sewage System
- Certificates are required for the installation or enlargement of any private sewage system i.e. septic tank and tile field
- Copy of certificate must be submitted to the Building Inspector before a Building Permit can be issued
- In the case of an addition, change of use, etc., a letter of approval is required.

Do I Need A Plumbing Permit?

- A Building Permit is required for the installation of any plumbing fixtures or modification to any plumbing and drainage systems
- Plumbing inspections are required .

Do I Need A New Home Warranty Registration Number?

A registration number is required for new house construction where a person other than the homeowner is the builder or general contractor. You are not a builder or general contractor unless you are specifically arranging, organizing, and paying for each of the trades.

What Does A Building Permit Cost?

Building Permit fees are set by By-law, you may ask for a copy of the By-law or call the department to get an estimate of costs. The types of fees will vary but include building inspections, entrance permits, civic addresses, development charges, health permits, electrical permits, etc.

When Do I Need To Contact The Conservation Authority?

You need to contact the Conservation Authority whenever you plan to build within the flood plain or in an area that is likely to flood once in a 100 years. This can be difficult to tell because this flood line is not usually visible on the ground. If you are not sure then call either the South Nation Conservation Authority or the Rideau Valley Conservation Authority depending on which river takes the water runoff from your property.

What Are Development Fees?

Development fees are established by By-law for new development on a property, the fees help offset the costs of municipal infrastructure effected by expanding development. The fees are due before a Building Permit may be issued.

Are There Any Other Matters I Should Consider?

- Bell Canada: for telephone connections and the location of buried cable
- Insurance: contact your own agent for coverage during construction
- Ontario Hydro: electrical permits and inspections are required for any electrical wiring information about a hydro service for your property or the location of buried cable is available by contacting Hydro One.
- Location of: Make sure that location of services will not affect future plans, ie. Garages, decks, pools, additions, sewage/water systems, playground equipment, fencing, etc.

What Are My Obligations During Construction

1. **POST** your Building Permit so that it is visible from the street.

2. **KEEP** a copy of your Building plans on the construction site.
3. **NOTIFY** the Building Inspector at least 48 hours in advance of the stage of construction requiring notice indicated on the Building Permit.
4. **NOTIFY** the Building Inspector of any proposed changes to your building plans. These will require approval prior to changes.

When Can I Occupy The Building?

When notice of the date of completion is given to the Chief Building Official and a final inspection has been made.

Can I Occupy an Unfinished Building?

Occupancy of an unfinished building may be granted provided the conditions of the Ontario Building Code are met, e.g. Fire and Life Safety components, water & sewage components, etc.

Why Do I Need Inspections?

Proper inspections will help ensure that construction is safe and that it meets code requirements. This will help protect your investment and contribute to a better standard of development for the community.

What Happens If I Build Without A Permit?

Building without a permit is against the law and is subject to fines or penalties set out in the Building Code Act and the Provincial Offences Act. Furthermore, the cost of issuing a permit where construction has begun is double the standard permit fee. The Chief Building Official may also ask for engineering inspections on the existing building or parts thereof before a permit can be issued. This is an unwise and expensive proposition, don't do it.

NOTE: The issuing of a Building Permit does not in any way relieve the Owner or his agent from complying with all the rules and regulations of the Zoning By-laws, the Ontario Building Code, or any other applicable law.