

## **RESIDENTIAL BUILDING PERMIT GUIDELINES – PA UCC**

**34 Pa. Code § 403.62.(a)** *An owner or authorized agent who intends to construct, enlarge, alter, repair, move, demolish or change the occupancy of a residential building or erect, install, enlarge, alter, repair, remove, convert or replace an electrical, gas, mechanical or plumbing system regulated by the Uniform Construction Code shall first apply to the building code official and obtain the required permit under § 403.62a (relating to permit application).*

The following information is a brief overview and applies only to single-family dwellings, two-family dwellings, townhouses, and structures that are accessory to these types of residential structures. If you are uncertain, always contact the Building Code Official (BCO) to confirm permitting requirements prior to proceeding with your project.

### **Residential projects that **REQUIRE** a building permit:**

1. **New Residential Construction** (New dwellings)
2. **Additions** to an existing residential dwelling.
3. **Alterations & Renovations:**
  - Involving any removal, replacement, re-enforcement or cutting of any structural beam or header or any load-bearing support wall.
  - Cutting away of any wall, partition, or portion thereof.
  - Addition to, alteration of, replacement or relocation of any water supply, sewer, drainage, gas, soil, waste, vent, or similar piping.
  - Addition to, alteration of, replacement or relocation of any electrical wiring.
  - Addition to, alteration of, replacement or relocation of any mechanical equipment.
4. **Detached Sheds or Garages** which are less than 1,000 square feet of total floor area.
5. **Decks** greater than 30" at the highest point of the deck walking surface measured from the adjacent grade OR if the deck is located at the main egress (exit) door.
6. **Porches, Patios, or Decks with a roof**, regardless of the height of the walking surface.
7. **Enclosing a Porch or Patio**
8. **Fences** which exceed 6' (feet) in height.
9. **Retaining Walls** higher than 4' (feet) at any point measured from the adjacent grade.
10. **Swimming Pools** capable of holding 24" (inches) or more of water. Barriers (e.g. fence) required by the International Residential Code must be provided.
11. **Hot Tubs or Spas**
12. **Attached Garages or Carports** regardless of square footage.
13. **Means of Egress:** The removal or change of any required means of egress, or rearrangement of parts of a structure affecting the egress requirements. (finished basements, habitable attics, exit doors, emergency escape openings, landings, ramps, stairs, handrails, and guardrails)
14. **Demolition** of a principal residential structure (any size) OR accessory structure (1,000 square feet or greater)
15. **Accessory Commercial Uses** (open to employees or the public) in any portion of a dwelling or residential accessory structure. Examples include, but are not limited to, professional/business offices, notaries, beauty shops, nail salons, barber shops, auto or equipment repairs, etc.

**Residential projects that DO NOT REQUIRE a building permit:**

1. Detached structures less than 1,000 square feet and accessory to a single-family dwelling. (carports, greenhouses, sheds, private garages, etc.)
2. Shingle replacements (a permit is required if replacing a substantial amount of roof sheathing).
3. Non-structural remodeling or repairs. (Painting, carpeting, tile work, cabinetry, and countertops)
4. Installation of aluminum or vinyl siding onto an existing residential building.
5. Driveways and sidewalks less than 30" above the adjacent grade.
6. Same size window replacements with no structural changes to the header or framing.
7. Fences that are no more than 6 feet high.
8. Retaining walls that are not over 4 feet in height measured from the lowest level of grade to the top of the wall unless the wall supports a surcharge.
9. Water tanks supported directly upon grade if the capacity does not exceed 5,000 gallons and the ratio of height to diameter or width does not exceed 2 to 1.
10. Sidewalks and driveways that are 30 inches or less above adjacent grade and not placed over a basement or story below it.
11. Prefabricated swimming pools that are less than 24 inches deep.
12. Swings and other playground equipment accessory to a one- or two-family dwelling.
13. Window awnings supported by an exterior wall which do not project more than 54 inches from the exterior wall and do not require additional support.
14. Installation of an uncovered deck where the floor of the deck is no more than 30 inches above grade.
15. Installation or rearrangement of communications wiring.