

# Home Owner's Building Permit Guide

CITY OF ALBUQUERUQE  
PLANNING DEPARTMENT, BUILDING SAFETY DIVISION

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## Introduction

This manual is designed for the Albuquerque homeowner. It is intended to:

- Identify work that requires a permit.
- Provide the requirements for obtaining a building permit.
- Provide examples of plans and details that will aid in project completion and code compliance.
- Inform the homeowner of the requirements that must be met by them or contractors depending on who is performing the work.
- Answer some of the most commonly asked building code and compliance questions.

Unless noted, all references in the document use the International Residential Code and the City of Albuquerque Uniform Administrative Code. Albuquerque City Codes can be found using the following link: <http://www.cabq.gov/planning/building-safety-permits/current-building-codes>

It is the responsibility of the homeowner to locate the property lines and have all underground utilities located. Surveys of underground utilities can be requested using the following link: <http://www.nm811.org>

Individual handouts referenced in this manual can be accessed at:

<http://www.cabq.gov/planning/building-safety-permits/building-safety-forms-reports-permit-searches>

**Note: If your home is in a subdivision with a homeowners association, the plans should be approved by the association before applying to the City for a building permit. The City does not enforce HOA regulations. You, the homeowner, are responsible to know and follow any HOA requirements or restrictions.**

## Obtaining a Building Permit

The Permit Desk is located on the first floor at 600 2<sup>nd</sup> Street NW, Albuquerque. Any construction requiring a building permit also requires that a licensed contractor do the work, unless the owner-applicant performs the work. It is the responsibility of the homeowner or contractor to obtain a building permit. If you own a home that you lease or rent to others, a licensed contractor is required to obtain a permit. Additional permit information can be viewed at: <http://www.cabq.gov/planning/online-planning-permitting-applications/online-planning-permitting-applications#online-building-safety-permits>

## Application

Once an application is submitted, it can take up to ten (10) business days to review your residential permit application. Application submission will require two (2) sets of detailed plans that include but are not limited to the following:

- Plot or Site plan, which must show property lines, all buildings on the lot and dimensions from any new structures to related property lines.
- Foundation Plan, Floor Plan, Framing Plan and Building Elevations.
- Sections and/or Details showing but not limited to; footing information, wall and roof information, mechanical connections for structural elements, truss calculations, and all materials to be used.
- Mechanical, plumbing, electrical plans, (if applicable).

The applicant will be notified by telephone when plan reviews are complete. Please arrange to have a contact person, telephone and extension number listed on the application.

Comments are available on line at: <http://www.cabq.gov/planning/our-department/building-safety> , then click on “View plan review comments” or call (505) 924-3320.

The permit will be issued when approved by each division (Hydrology, Transit, Zoning and Building Safety). The permit will only be issued to the homeowner or general contractor (GB-2 or GB-98) licensed in the State of New Mexico. If the building permit is not issued within six (6) months from the date of submission, the application will expire.

## Fees

Building permit and plan review fees are charged according to the valuation of your project. The valuation is based on the approximate cost to have a contractor do the job, including labor and materials.

The City of Albuquerque Fee Schedule utilizes the ICC Building Valuation Data to determine the minimum value per square foot for newly constructed buildings. If the valuation you provide is less than the valuation in the fee schedule adopted by the City, your permit fees will be based upon the City Fee Schedule. All valuation adjustments are computed as part of the plan review process. Please Note:

- Plan review fees are due at the time you submit your application and plans.
- Permit fees are due once reviews have been approved and you have been contacted.
- Any project under construction or completely built without a permit may be charged a double permit fee.

## Adopted Codes

The following codes are minimum standards and are to be used as a base guideline for building construction.

- 2015 International Building Code (IBC)
- 2015 International Residential Code (IRC)
- 2009 International Energy Conservation Code (IECC)
- 2012 Swimming Pool, Spa and Hot Tub Code (ISPSA)
- 2015 New Mexico Earthen Building Code (NMEBMC)
- 2012 New Mexico Solar Energy Code (NMSEC)
- 2015 New Mexico Existing Building Code (NMEBC)
- 2012 Uniform Plumbing Code (UPC)
- 2012 Uniform Mechanical Code (UMC)
- 2017 National Electrical Code (NEC)
- 2012 New Mexico Elect. Safety Code (NMESC)
- 2015 New Mexico Administrative Code (NMAC)
- 2018 Albuquerque Uniform Administrative Code (UAC)

UAC - Table 301.2(1)				Subject to Damage From						
Ground Snow Load	Wind Speed (MPH)	Rainfall	Seismic Design Category	Weathering	Frost Line Depth	Termite	Winter Design Temp	Ice Shield Under-Layment Required	Air Freezing Index	Mean Annual Temp
20	115	2" per hour	C	Moderate	16"	Moderate to Heavy	12° F	N/A	263	54.6

## Inspections

All work must be inspected during the construction process. You may schedule inspections by calling (505) 924-3320. See page 17 for a list of required inspections. Before calling you will need:

- Your Permit number
- Type of inspection
- Address
- Contact Number

## Work Exempt from Permitting

A building permit will not be required for the following:

1. One-story detached accessory buildings used as tool and storage sheds, playhouses and similar uses, provided the building area does not exceed 120 square feet.
2. Exterior fences and freestanding masonry walls not over six feet high above grade on the lowest side.
3. Oil derricks.
4. Non-fixed and moveable fixtures, cases, racks, counters and partitions not over 5 feet 9 inches high.
  - Exception: Non-fixed and moveable cases, counters, and partitions, including fences, of any height, permanently or temporarily installed in an A-2 occupancy (Assembly Occupancies i.e. Café, church, restaurant) shall be approved by the Albuquerque Fire Department
5. Retaining walls, which do not have a difference in finished grade on opposite sides exceeding 24 inches, unless supporting a surcharge or impounding flammable liquids.
6. Water tanks supported directly upon grade if the capacity does not exceed 5000 gallons and the ratio of height to diameter or width does not exceed two to one.
7. Platforms, walks, and driveways not more than 30 inches above adjacent grade and not over a story or basement below and not part of an accessible route.
8. Painting, papering, tiling, carpeting, cabinets, counter tops and similar finish work.
9. Temporary motion picture, television and theater stage sets and scenery.
10. Window awnings not projecting more than 54 inches that are supported by an exterior wall, and nothing else, of a building regulated by the International Residential Code.
11. Prefabricated swimming pools accessory to buildings regulated by the International Residential Code that are less than 54 inches deep, do not exceed 5000 gallons, and are installed entirely above ground.
12. Repairs, as defined herein, less than \$1000.00 in valuation.
13. Installation or work which is done after regular business hours or during a holiday or when immediate action is imperative to safeguard life, health, or property, provided such person making the installation or performing the work applies for a permit covering the installation or work not later than the next business day.
14. Construction, alteration, or repair work for which a permit is not required by law or ordinance.
15. Tents. Exception: Tents regulated by Chapter 24 of the International Fire Code shall be approved and permitted by the Albuquerque Fire Department.
16. Interior plastering or paneling of existing surfaces provided the material meets all applicable requirements of flame spread required by this Code.
17. Exterior re-plastering that any does not require the application of exterior lath.

18. Signs. The following signs shall not require a sign permit. These exemptions shall not be construed as relieving the owner of a sign from the responsibility of its erection and maintenance, and its compliance with the provisions of this Code or any other law or ordinance regulating the same.
- a. The changing of the advertising copy or message on a painted or printed sign only. Except for theater marquees and similar signs specifically designed for the use of a replaceable copy, electric signs shall not be included in this exemption.
  - b. (B) Painting, repainting, or cleaning of an advertising structure or the changing of the advertising copy or message thereon shall not be considered an erection or alteration which requires a sign permit unless a structural change is made.
  - c. (C) Signs less than 6 feet above grade.
  - d. (D) Non-electric signs with an area of 2 square feet or less.
19. Interior non-structural demolitions.

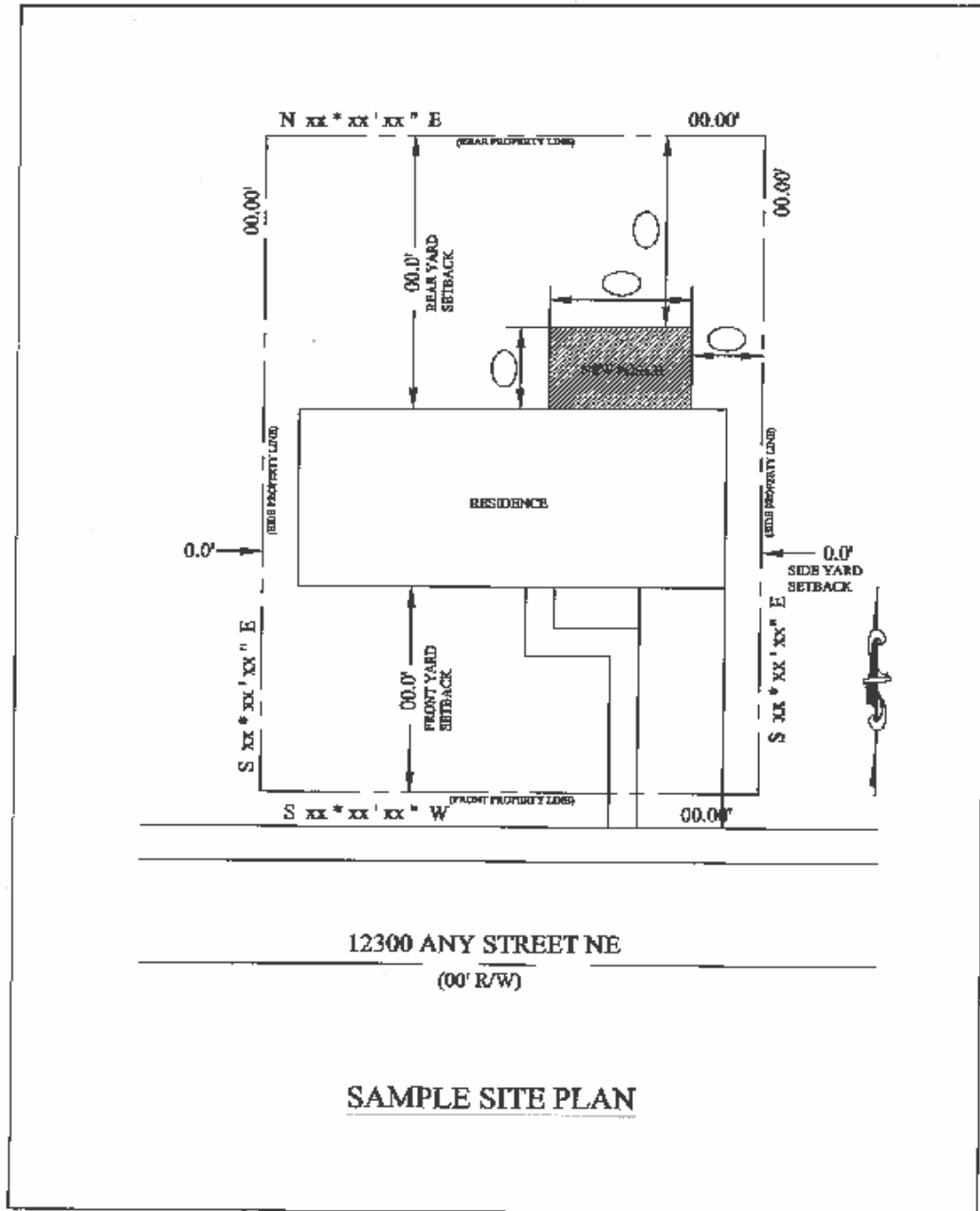
Unless otherwise exempted by this City of Albuquerque Uniform Administrative Code, separate plumbing, electrical and mechanical permits will be required for the above exempted items.

## Plot Plan, Site Plan

Every permit that requires plans must be accompanied by a Plot Plan or Site Plan. You may view an aerial photograph to assist with drawing the layout of the home and all buildings, structures and pools on the property at: <http://www.cabq.gov/gis/advanced-map-viewer>. A Plot Plan is a drawing of the lot showing the following information:

- Location of property lines on all sides.
- All existing buildings on the lot, including their dimensions and distances to property lines
- All proposed additions or structures with their dimensions and distance to property lines
- Identify all required setbacks.
- Contact the Zoning Department with questions at (505) 924-3857

The following illustration is a sample of a Plot/Site Plan



## New Home

See “New Residential Construction” Handout:

<http://documents.cabq.gov/planning/BuildingSafety/BS-NewResConstructionSheet-2016.pdf>



## Carport to Garage Conversion, Garage conversion to Living Space and Patio Enclosure

This section applies to a building permit for a carport to garage conversion or a garage converted to living space that is attached to a primary residence. If this project is *not* attached to a primary building, please refer to the section on detached accessory buildings.

A carport is defined as a structure primarily used for parking vehicles, with two (2) sides totally open, with a minimum clear dimension of 8 feet 6 inches by 18 feet per parking space.

A garage is defined as a structure primarily used for parking vehicles with a minimum clear dimension of 8 feet 6 inches by 18 feet per parking space. To obtain a permit for a carport to garage conversion, please submit the following:

- Completed Application.
- Completed “Energy Plan Review Checklist” or equivalent documentation
- Two copies of the plot plan, showing the house, the lot and the carport with distances to property lines.
- Two copies of the building plan, showing applicable details.

**Note:** The garage shall be separated from the residence and its attic by not less than a minimum 5/8 inch Type X gypsum board. Any door into the dwelling from the garage must be a Minimum 20-minute fire rated door, a 1 3/8 inch solid wood door, or a solid or honeycomb core steel door not less the 1 3/8 inch thick, and must have self-closing hardware. The required side-hinged main exit door for the house cannot open into the garage. Under no circumstances shall a private garage have any opening into a room used for sleeping purposes.

Smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors are required when performing interior work that requires a permit, except work such as plumbing or mechanical (air conditioning). If they are not pre-existing throughout the whole house, they must be added at time of construction. Dual (CO & Smoke) alarms are available. They may be required to be interconnected if access is available. If in question, ask your inspector.

Any main door to the outside must have a landing. The width of each landing shall not be less than the door served. Every landing shall have a minimum dimension of 36 inches measured in the direction of travel.

A switched exterior light is required at the exterior side of each egress door. A light must also be provided inside the garage and the switch must be located at the interior door. Switches located on the exterior of a building shall be weatherproof. A minimum of one electrical outlet for each vehicle space is required in a garage in addition to any provide for laundry or garage door openers. All readily accessible electrical outlets shall have ground fault circuit interrupter (GFCI) protection.

Non-bearing exterior walls added on top of existing slabs may not need an additional footing, but shall have a bottom plate of treated wood or wood of natural resistance to decay. This bottom plate must be fastened to the slab in an approved manner and must be 4 inches above adjoining finished grade for masonry veneer and 6 inches above for other materials. This may require that you either thicken your slab or build a stem wall and a detail showing this is required as part of your submittal.

The garage conversion must be architecturally integrated with the existing residence. The drawings that are submitted need to clearly indicate what the wall and roof covering are on the existing residence as well as on the proposed garage.

See “Garage Conversion” and “Patio Enclosure” handout:

<http://documents.cabq.gov/planning/BuildingSafety/BuildSafe-GarageConversion-2017.pdf>

<http://documents.cabq.gov/planning/BuildingSafety/BuildSafe-PatioEnclosure-2017.pdf>

## **Retaining Walls Over Twenty Four Inches (24 “) , Garden Walls and Fences Over Six Feet (6’)**

Where grade elevation changes from one side of a wall to the other, the wall height is measured from the low side of grade. In cases where garden walls are built on top of retaining walls, the wall height is the combined height of the retaining wall and the garden wall, measured from the top of the footing to the top of the wall. New garden walls and/or fences in excess of six (6) feet in height or existing walls and/or fences raised in excess of six feet (6’) must be certified by a New Mexico Registered Structural Engineer or Architect.

Retaining walls having a difference in finished grade on opposite side exceeding twenty-four (24) inches shall be certified by a New Mexico Registered Structural Engineer or Architect.

See “Retaining Walls, Garden Walls and Fences” handout:

<http://documents.cabq.gov/planning/BuildingSafety/BuildSafe-WallFenceOver6ft-2017.pdf>

## **Landscaping**

Landscaping does not generally require a permit. However, a permit is needed to install the water supply to an irrigation system (but no plan review is needed). This permit allows inspectors to check the installation of the required backflow preventer. The potable water supply to lawn irrigation systems shall be protected against backflow.

Water professionals can recommend a number of options for connecting an irrigation system. Whichever option you choose, it is recommended that an anti-siphon/vacuum breaker assembly be installed with its own gate valve. This enables the irrigation system water to be shut off without disrupting water service into the home.

Turning off the water at the meter is not recommended. This may cause a leak at the supply line coupling to the meter. All leaks on the home side of the water meter are the owner’s responsibility to repair.

## **Electrical and Plumbing Permits**

Homeowners may take an exam which upon passing will allow the homeowner to apply for the applicable permit. Otherwise a licensed plumber or licensed electrician can pull the required permits.

## **Gas Permits**

Homeowners may not install work associated with gas. A licensed New Mexico contractor is required.

## Porches and Carports

Prior to submitting for a permit, please consult with the Zoning Department for zoning restrictions and minimum building setback requirements for adding a porch or carport to a residence.

Post for porches and carports will require footings. The minimum footing size is 18 inches square and 16 inches below finished grade.

Rafters and beams must be sized to carry the calculated roof loads. (Laminated beams may not be used in exposed locations unless they are approved for exterior use.)

Ledgers supporting rafters must be secured directly to existing wall framing members. Rafters may not be attached directly to the existing fascia or to roof truss tails. They must bear on the existing wall top plate or attach directly to the house by ledger board that butts directly against vertical studs. (Any stucco or gypsum board covering the studs must be removed.)

The *minimum* required roof slopes for various finishes are:

- Asphalt Shingles 2/12
- Clay and Concrete Tile 2.5/12
- Roll Roofing 1/12
- Metal Roof Panels 3/12

The minimum roof slope varies depending on the type of roofing material you propose to use. The type of roofing material shall be indicated on your drawings as well as the roof slope.

A transfer of design loads must be clearly indicated from the roof to the foundation by means of mechanical connections. Show all uplift rated connectors, the manufacturer and part number.

The minimum height from the finished floor to the bottom of any beam is 6 feet 8 inches.

Balconies, decks, and porches that are accessible from inside of the dwelling unit shall have at least one receptacle outlet installed within the perimeter of the balcony, deck, or porch.

The receptacle shall be located not more than 6 feet 6 inches above the balcony, deck, or porch surface.

See “Covered Patio” Handout:

<http://documents.cabq.gov/planning/BuildingSafety/BuildSafe-CoveredPatioCarports-2017.pdf>

## **Storage Sheds, Gazebos, Detached Buildings and Structures**

Prior to submitting for permit, determine zoning requirements for your single-family residential subdivision. For detached buildings and structures such as storage shed, open-air gazebos, and other accessory buildings, compliance with a property’s zoning district is required including minimum building setbacks and maximum lot coverage as applicable. Please speak with the Zoning Department to determine your subdivision’s zoning requirements. Based on the square footage and height proposed, different building setbacks apply.

An accessory building cannot be used for dwelling purposes. Indicate the proposed use of your building on your drawings.

If you plan to use engineered roof trusses on your project, you must submit signed and sealed engineer roof truss calculations with your permit application.

You must include roof vent calculations in your drawings.

See “Storage Building” Handout:

<http://documents.cabq.gov/planning/BuildingSafety/BuildSafe-StorageBuilding-2017.pdf>

## **Remodeling**

A permit is needed for remodeling work not listed as exempt in the previous section and in the Uniform Administrative Code. Remodeling Projects typically need to comply with the same requirements listed for permit application.

Some small projects may only require a “Minor Alteration and Repair” permit. Speak with a Building Safety plan reviewer to determine if you need a building permit or minor alteration and repair permit.

## Re-Roofing and Roof Conversion

Re-roofing and roof conversion will require a permit. A re-roofing permit may be obtained at the permit and inspections counter located in the basement room 190.

Roof conversions will require drawings and truss shop drawings to be reviewed prior to the issuance of permit.

See “Roof Conversion” Handout:

<http://documents.cabq.gov/planning/BuildingSafety/BuildSafe-RoofConversion-2017.pdf>

## Stucco

You need to get a permit to re-stucco your house or accessory building:

- “One-coat” Stucco systems require a permit and inspection under all circumstances. The building inspector will need to see that the installation contractor is a licensed applicator. Provide and ICC-ES report for the one-coat stucco when applying for a permit. See <http://www.icc-es.org/>
- Other stucco systems, such as a three coat system, require a permit so that the inspectors can ensure that the lath and other components are properly installed.

## Room Addition

A room addition is defined as any space added on to an existing dwelling, including the enclosure of an existing covered area, such as a patio cover.

Prior to submitting for a permit, please speak with the Zoning Department to determine zoning building setbacks, lot coverage and architectural design requirements for the residential subdivision.

To obtain a building permit, please see “Residential Addition” handout for drawing submission requirements as well as the following:

- Completed application.
- Two copies of the plot plan showing the house on the lot and the proposed room addition with distances to property lines.
- Existing and proposed dimensioned floor plan - Label proposed and existing rooms adjacent to new room addition, as well as room dimensions. Show sizes and location of windows, doors (existing and proposed), location of plumbing fixtures, electrical outlets, heating, lighting and smoke alarms. If you propose to

remove or cover existing windows, this information must be included in your drawings.

- Foundation plan
- Electrical plan
- A switched exterior light is required at the exterior side of each exterior door. At least one wall switch controlled lighting outlet shall be installed in every habitable room and bathroom.
- Wall section & details
- Show the footing size on your wall section and foundation plan. The sill plate shall be preservative treated and a minimum 6 inches above grade.
- Exterior elevations.
- You must provide elevation drawings showing both the existing residence as well as the proposed addition.

The addition must be architecturally integrated with the existing residence such as building material, roof type, and architectural finished. The drawings need to clearly indicate the wall and roof covering and color on the existing residence as well as the proposed addition.

Typically, any room (other than a bathroom or kitchen) that has a closet shall be considered a sleeping room and will need to meet all sleeping room requirements. Sleeping rooms, as well as the area outside of sleeping rooms, are required to have smoke alarms and carbon detectors. When interior alterations, repairs or additions requiring a permit are made, or when one or more sleeping rooms are added or created in existing dwellings, the individual dwelling unit shall be provided with smoke and carbon alarms located as required for new dwellings. Smoke alarms and Carbon monoxide detectors are required when performing interior work that requires a permit, except work such as plumbing or mechanical (air conditioning). If they are not pre-existing throughout the whole house they must be added. Dual (CO & Smoke) alarms are available. They may be required to be interconnected if access is available.

Every sleeping room shall have at least one operable emergency egress escape and rescue opening. If the opening is a window, it shall have a sill height of not more than 44 inches above the floor. Emergency escape and rescue opening above or below grade floor shall have a minimum net clear opening of 5.7 square feet. Grade floor openings shall have a minimum net clear opening of 5 square feet. The minimum net clear opening height shall be 24 inches. The minimum net clear opening width shall be 20 inches. Emergency escape and rescue openings shall be operational from the inside of the room without the use of keys or tools.

Any main door to the outside must have a landing. The width of each landing shall not be less than the door served. Every landing shall have a minimum dimension of 36 inches measured in the direction of travel.

Any wood framed non-bearing or bearing wall, to be added onto an existing slab should be verified that the existing footing is adequate and shall have a bottom plate of treated wood or wood of natural resistance to decay. This bottom plate must be fastened to the slab in an approved manner and must be a minimum of 6 inches above and adjacent unfinished exterior grade.

If you plan to use engineered floor or roof trusses on your project, you must submit signed and sealed engineered roof truss calculation with your permit application.

Provide a complete floor plan that indicates and labels rooms adjacent to the proposed room addition.

Provide in all habitable living areas a heating source capable of maintaining a minimum room temperature of 68°F. Portable space heaters *shall not be used* to achieve compliance with this requirement. Indicate how the required heating will be provided.

Any addition of conditioned space shall meet the minimum energy efficiency requirements of the New Mexico Mechanical Code and New Mexico Energy Conservation Code.

The thermal envelope shall be durably sealed to limit infiltration. The following shall be caulked, gasketed, weather-stripped, or otherwise sealed. (For new construction, testing is required.)

- All joints, seams and penetrations.
- Site-built windows, doors and skylights.
- Openings between window and door assemblies and their respective jambs and framing.
- Utility penetrations.
- Dropped ceilings or chases adjacent to the thermal envelop.
- Knee walls.
- Walls and ceilings separating the garage from conditioned spaces.
- Behind tubs and showers on exterior walls.
- Common wall between dwelling units
- Other sources of infiltration.
- Tile backer (dens-shield) at showers. No green board allowed.



Enclosed attics and enclosed rafter spaces formed where ceilings are applied directly to the underside of the roof rafters shall have cross ventilation for each separate space by ventilating openings protected against the entrance of rain or snow.

The total net free ventilating area shall be not less than 1 to 150 of the area of the space ventilated, except that the total area is permitted to be reduced to 1 to 300, if at least 40 percent and not more than 50 percent of the required ventilating area is provided by ventilators located in the upper portion of the attic or rafter space. Upper ventilators shall be located no more than 3 feet below the ridge or highest point of the space, measured vertically, with the balance of the required ventilation provided by eave or cornice vents.

Where the location of wall or roof framing members conflict with the installation of upper ventilators, installation more than 3 feet below the ridge or highest point of the space shall be permitted. You must include roof vent calculations in your drawings.

See “Residential Addition” Handout:

<http://documents.cabq.gov/planning/BuildingSafety/BuildSafe-ResAddition-2017.pdf>

## **Residential Swimming Pools and Spas**

The following should be provided when applying for a pool permit;

1. Provide a Site Plan that indicates location of proposed work taking place.
  - a. Provide all dimensions from proposed pool to adjacent property lines and dwelling (5’ minimum).
  - b. Provide dimensions for proposed pool to enable verification of square footage and water capacity (gallons).
2. Indicate on plan that barrier requirements are being met.
  - a. Locate and specify heights for all walls enclose pool area (minimum 4ft with auto cover, minimum 6’ without auto cover).
  - b. Clarify/locate and label all access gates.
  - c. Provide alarms listed in accordance with UL 2017 at all dwelling doors with direct access to pool area. Exception: Alarms not required if automatic cover is provided.
3. Provide a minimum R-12 cover for Spa heated above 90 degrees
4. Indicate the pool is not to be heated above 90 degrees or provide an R-12 cover
5. Provide boiler details if applicable (specify type and capacity)

6. Indicate drain/suction outlets comply with ANSI/APSP-7 (provide Specifications)
7. Indicate pool plan and pool section match installation proposed (make site Specific)
8. Provide current professional seal of architect or engineer for gunite pools or current ICC-E's report for fiberglass. Provide at minimum the following required documents: Skimmer/Floor Drain, Auto Cover, Boiler.

## **Required Inspections**

During the construction process, after permits are issued, inspections are required to ensure compliance with approved plans and ordinances. Permit number is required for all inspection requests. For inspections call: Building Safety: (505) 924-3320

### **Required Items at Site**

- The Permit Card.
- The Approved set of plans.

Generally, the following types of inspections are always required. This is a general list of the most common types of inspections, other inspections may be required.

### **Building Inspections**

- Foundation/Footing Inspection/Slab
- Insulation (Call before pour)
- Framing Inspection (seismic if required)
- Sheathing Inspection
- Air Barrier (Thermal Bypass) Inspection
- Insulation Inspection
- Exterior Lath Inspection (or)
- Wall Board Inspection (firewalls, shear walls and fire stop systems if required)
- Final Inspection

### **Plumbing Inspections**

- Rough-In Inspection
- Top-Out Inspection
- Final Inspection

### **Mechanical Inspections**

- Rough-In Inspection
- Top-Out Inspection
- Final Inspection

## **Electrical Inspections**

- Temporary Pole Inspection
- Rough-In Inspection
- Slab
- Low-Voltage Rough & Inspections
- Final Inspection

## **Inspection Outcomes**

The inspector posts either:

- A green tag indicating work passes inspection,
- A yellow tag indicating code deficiencies which must be corrected before violations are concealed, or
- A red tag indicating that work in that particular category must be stopped and corrections made and approved before work can continue.
- If corrections are necessary, the contractor or homeowner is responsible for making the corrections and calling for a re-inspection.

**If you have any questions, please call us at 505-924-3320.**