Why do I need a permit?

Permits allow the City to inspect work performed by a contractor or yourself to make sure it's safe and meets the minimum standards of the building code. Permits also allow the City to verify a contractor's license and keep a record of the work performed.

If you don't get a permit for work performed on your home you may run into problems when trying to sell your home. Real estate agents usually check to make sure permits were obtained for repair work.

You may also run into problems if a contractor performs work on your home without the proper licenses. If you try to take a contractor to court and he doesn't have a license and didn't get a permit, it will be hard for the judge to rule in your favor.

Some helpful advice about hiring a contractor:

☑ Always have a contract in writing outlining exactly what the contractor is supposed to do. Make sure you both sign it.

☑ Always check to see if a contractor has the proper licenses before he starts the work.

☑ Make sure the contractor obtains a permit for any work he will perform.

☑ It's ok to ask for references of work the contractor has done in the past. Call the references to find out if the customers were satisfied.

ROCKHILL
PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT

155 Johnston St., Room 300

Rock Hill, SC 29730

(803) 329-5590

www.cityofrockhill.com/plandev

Do I Need a Building Permit?

ROCKHILL
PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT

What types of work require a permit?

It can be confusing trying to figure out what requires a permit and what does not. If you are planning to do remodeling or other work on your home, there are several things that do require a permit and inspection. Here are a few examples:

Roofing - Installing new shingles

Windows - replacing windows

Vinyl or Wood Siding - replacing vinyl, wood or other types of siding or trim boards

Sheetrock - replacing or installing sheetrock to remodel or finish an unfinished room

Framing - adding new interior walls or extending an existing wall, creating a new door or opening in an existing wall

Plumbing– replacing a sewer line or water line, adding plumbing to a room that did not previously have it, replacing water heater, installing an irrigation system

Electrical - installing new wiring or replacing wiring, adding outlets or lights

Mechanical - installing heating and air units or equipment, installing ductwork

Gas - installing or replacing gas lines

Permits and inspections are also required for...

- Swimming pools including above ground pools 24 inches deep or more or more than 5,000 gallons
- Storage buildings, garages and carports
- Fences including privacy walls
- Retaining walls over 4 ft. in height or that provide structural support

What types of work do not require a permit?

The following types of work are exempt in our ordinance from requiring a permit:

- Painting
- Wallpapering
- Tiling
- Flooring & Carpeting
- Cabinets
- Countertops
- Retaining walls not over 4 ft. in height and not providing structural support
- Swimming pools less than 24 inches deep, not exceeding 5,000 gallons and entirely above ground

Please note that even if a permit is not required, a Certificate of Appropriateness may be required if your home is located in any of the City's Historic Districts and you are working on the exterior of your home. Visit www.cityofrockhill.com/historic for more information.

Can I do work on my own house without hiring a contractor?

Yes, there are some types of work the City allows you to do on your own home. State regulations require you to live in the home you wish to work on for a period of two years. You must sign an Owner/Builder affidavit and have it recorded with the register of deeds before you can obtain a permit. A homeowner is basically allowed to do any type of remodel or repair work on their home that does not include electrical, mechanical (heating and air), plumbing or gas. Electrical, mechanical, plumbing and gas work is required to be done by a state licensed contractor. You should obtain a permit for any work that requires a permit before starting the work. All permits require inspections.

How do I find out if a contractor has a license or if it's the right kind?

You can check a contractor's state license online at the South Carolina Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation at www.llr.state.sc.us. Click on Licensee Lookup. Electrical, plumbing and mechanical contractors should be listed under Commercial Contractors. Other types of contractors for roofing or remodeling should be listed under Residential Builders. You can also call us at (803) 329-5590 to check a contractor's license. In addition to a state license, contractors are required to have a City of Rock Hill Business License. We can also check this for you. Just give us a call at (803) 329-5590.