

Spring season – projects and permits

Carver County Land Management Department

2023

It is almost spring, and the season of projects is right around the corner. If your project involves new construction, or remodeling of a structure, you will likely need a building permit.

What are building permits and why do they exist?

Building permits are provided by either Carver County if you live in a township, or the city in which you reside. These permits are necessary for maintaining public safety and historical records. Building permits ensure that all work done has been inspected, meets safety standards, and is less likely to need repairs or cause injury. Another benefit is historical records. Building permits keep track of all maintenance and remodeling work done on a property. Thus, if you are in the market for a home, you can review the building permits to see what kind of work has been done, and when and know that the work was completed to standards of the time. The building permit process gives buyers greater confidence that what they think they are buying is in fact what they are buying.

Things to consider

For properties located within one of the 10 townships of Carver County, all structures greater than 200 square feet require a building permit. Whether you are planning for new construction, or adding a porch, shed, pole barn, swimming pool (above ground or in-ground), redoing a roof, windows, siding, or driveway, a permit is required. Additionally, any work with electric, gas, plumbing, or other equipment that is regulated by the state building code requires a permit. These are common violations which are often overlooked. Home projects such as, painting, replacing cupboards (without plumbing) and other finishing work may not require a permit. If you aren't sure, it is best to call Carver County Land Management at 952-361-1820 or email landmanagement@co.carver.mn.us.

Additional permits

An application for a building permit may require a check on septic system compliance or an additional erosion control permit.

Additional requirements if you have a septic system

In townships, about 9 out of every 10 building permit applications also require a septic system compliance check. This is to make sure any new construction does not impact the function of the septic system. If a building permit application triggers a compliance inspection, the landowner must contact a Minnesota Pollution Control Agency certified septic inspector to conduct the compliance inspection. Once completed and the system is compliant, the building permit process moves forward, and County records are updated. If a system is found to be non-compliant, the owner may need to replace or upgrade the system before the building permit can be approved.

Not all building permit applications trigger septic system compliance inspections. Some exemptions include permit requests for repair of heating equipment, roof replacement, or repair from a storm. A septic system compliance inspection will always be required if a building permit request is located in shoreland overlay area (1000 feet from a Department of Natural Resources protected lake or pond, 300 feet from a river, stream, or floodplain).

When erosion control is needed

Some types of building permits (new homes, driveways, garages, etc.) may also require an erosion and sediment control permit. This permit ensures that sediment from the project site does not pollute nearby lakes, wetlands, or streams. Land management staff will let you know if erosion control measures are needed for your project.