

The information herein is the most common for how to obtain the necessary permits for your project and is not representative of all the conditions you may encounter.

Contact and locate us...

Building Development Agencies

The Herrity Building

12055 Government Center Pkwy
Fairfax, VA 22035

- ▶ Permit Application Center
2nd floor, 703-222-0801
- ▶ Building Plan Review
3rd floor, 703-222-0114
- ▶ Zoning Review
2nd floor, 703-222-1082
- ▶ Commercial Inspections
3rd floor, 703-222-0114

Hours of Operation

Monday–Thursday: 8 a.m.–4 p.m.

Friday: 9:15 a.m.–4 p.m.

Health Department

10777 Main Street
Fairfax, VA 22030
703-246-2201

VDOT

4975 Alliance Drive
Fairfax, VA 22030
703-259-1773

Wastewater

12000 Government Center Pkwy
Suite 358
Fairfax, VA 22035
703-324-5030

All telephone numbers are accessible in TTY by calling 711.

This document is available in alternative formats and languages. Please call 703-324-5033, TTY 711 for more information.



A Fairfax County, Virginia Publication



PERMITS REQUIRED

You must obtain permits for a new commercial building or an addition to an existing building. Listed below are the types of permits required depending on the complexity of your project.

- ▶ Building permit for architectural and structural elements and for a change in occupancy.
- ▶ Electrical permit for all electrical installations and fire alarm systems.
- ▶ Mechanical permit for heating and air conditioning systems (HVAC), chemical exhaust systems, range hoods, etc.
- ▶ Plumbing permit for plumbing, fire sprinkler, storm drains and gas installations.
- ▶ VDOT permit for construction on or from a state-maintained road or right-of-way.
- ▶ Health Department permit for food service establishments, private schools and daycare facilities.

Publications, forms and other useful information can be found online at

www.fairfaxcounty.gov/buildingpermits

DOCUMENTS REQUIRED

When applying for permits, you must submit the following documents. To obtain the applicable forms, go to our website.

- ▶ [Permit application form.](#)
- ▶ [Building Information Form.](#)
- ▶ [Statement of Special Inspections.](#)
- ▶ [Accessibility Compliance Form.](#)
- ▶ [Electrical Energy Certification Form.](#)
- ▶ [Construction plans](#) (see Page 2).
- ▶ [Site plan](#) (see Page 5).
- ▶ [Property Ownership Affidavit](#) (when property ownership must be verified)
- ▶ [Permit Authorization Affidavit](#) (when there is no contractor and the applicant is not the property owner).

PLANS CHECKLIST

When applying for a permit, you must submit two copies (three copies if a Health Department permit is required) of plans during the permit process. Plans must clearly illustrate the nature of the work to be performed and must show the information or meet the requirements listed below.

General

- Minimum scale of 1/8 inch = 1 foot.
- Minimum sheet size: 21 x 30 inches; no pencil.
- Code year used for the design (see Regulations).
- Name, address and occupation of the building designer.
- If prepared by a Virginia registered architect or professional engineer, the plans must bear the **original** signature, seal and date.
- Project name, address of the building and tax-map reference number.
- Key plans indicating location of work when multiple spaces are involved (e.g., malls, office buildings, etc.).

? Need Assistance ?

You can schedule a pre-submission conferences with building plan review staff to discuss code related compliance issues, special design considerations or code interpretations. Contact Building Plan Review to set up an appointment.

Architectural

- Completed Building Information Form; attach one copy to each set of drawings.
- Completed Statement of Special Inspections; attach one copy to each set of drawings.
- Completed Accessibility Compliance Form (for additions only); attach one copy to each set of drawings. See the companion guide [Accessibility Fundamentals](#) on our website for more information.

- Group(s) and type of construction.
- Architectural plan(s) showing the dimensions and use of all rooms, including design occupant loads.
- Building height, number of stories and floor areas.
- Building elevations (all sides)
- All fire resistance design numbers when fire-rated assemblies are required.
- R-values of building insulation components.
- U-factor of fenestration.
- Dimensions of all corridors and aisles.
- All exits.
- Door and hardware schedule, including special locking devices.
- Partition schedule.
- Floor to ceiling height and height from floor to underside of lowest structural member.
- Fire sprinkler and system monitoring information.
- Any additional details or sections necessary to accurately depict intended construction.

Structural

- Soils report.
- Foundation plan.
- Footing schedule.
- Framing plan, cross sections and details showing all structural elements for each level and roof.
- Connection details.
- Material specifications.
- Live load and live load reduction.
- Roof live load.
- Roof snow load and applicable factors.

- Snow exposure factor.
- Snow importance factor.
- Thermal factor.
- Wind load and all applicable factors:
 - Wind importance factor.
 - Building category.
 - Wind exposure.
 - Internal pressure coefficient.
 - Wind design pressure.
 - Components and cladding wind pressure.
- Earthquake design data:
 - Seismic design group.
 - Spectral response coefficients.
 - Site class.
 - Identify basic seismic-force-resisting system.
 - Base shear.
 - Analysis procedure used.

Fire Protection

- Fire sprinkler information.
- Standpipes, fire hose valve location.
- Fire alarm locations and candela ratings.
- Card reader for card reader doors.
- Push button and control sensor for access control doors.
- Elevator recall.
- For smoke removal/control systems include:
 - A sequence of operation
 - A description of the system's function under various fire conditions.
 - Details of the interrelationship with fire alarm systems, suppression systems and

emergency power.

- Show fill and vent pipes, valves and provide buoyancy calculations for underground tanks of 1,000 gallon (use 1.5 safety factor). Stairwell and elevator shaft pressurization.
- Emergency generator information, to include:
 - ✓ Tank capacity.
 - ✓ Type of fuel.
 - ✓ Associated Underwriters Laboratory design number.
- Range hood fire protection information to include location of manual pull (10 to 20 feet from hood along path of egress).
- Other specialized detection and suppression system(s).
- Medical gas.

Shop Drawings

Shop drawings and manufacturer's data for fire alarm systems, flammable/combustible liquid tanks, sprinkler systems, range hoods or other fire protection systems require a review from the Fire Department after permit issuance. Submit your drawings at the Burkholder Building, 10700 Page Avenue in Fairfax. Call 703-246-4800, TTY 711 for more information.

Shop drawings for the main structural reinforcing system as part of the [Special Inspections Program](#) can be submitted to the Critical Structures section in Suite 316 of the Herrity building.

- Petroleum and liquefied petroleum gas storage tank and distribution systems.

Regulations...

Virginia Construction Code

- ▶ 2009 International Building Code
- ▶ 2009 International Energy Conservation Code
- ▶ 2009 International Plumbing Code
- ▶ 2009 International Mechanical Code
- ▶ 2009 International Fuel Gas Code
- ▶ 2008 National Electrical Code

International codes are available for view (NEC excluded) [online](#) purchase at [iccsafe.org](#). The electrical code is available for purchase at [nfpa.org](#).

- Schedule of hazardous chemicals used or handled in the space to include:
 - ✓ Quantity.
 - ✓ Storage method.
- Fixture details, e.g., shelving, racks, stock/storage.

Electrical

- Floor plans showing luminaires, receptacles, branch circuits (and home-runs), panels, equipment and battery packs.
- Symbol legend.
- Panel schedule to include:
 - ✓ Panel size, phases and voltage.
 - ✓ Breaker/fuse and conductor sizes.
 - ✓ Indicating if MCB (main circuit breaker) or MLO (main lug only).
 - ✓ If MLO, indicate the size of the overcurrent protection.
 - ✓ If MCB, indicate sizes. Feeder conductor sizes and insulation types.
 - ✓ Clear, evident and specific circuit identification directory.
- Load calculations broken into total connected and demand loads, and continuous and non-continuous load.
- Equipment schedules.
- Riser diagrams to include:

- ✓ Size of feeder conductors and insulation types, conduits and overcurrent protection.
- ✓ Connections and sizes of emergency/stand-by generator.
- ✓ Fire and jockey pumps.
- ✓ Ratings of transformers, conductor sizes, voltage levels, grounding conductor sizes and overcurrent protection sizes.
- ✓ Size of motors.
- ✓ Main grounding at the service.

- Exit, emergency and battery pack luminaire locations and branch circuits.
- Attached a completed Electrical Energy Certification Form.

Mechanical

- Duct, piping layout for the HVAC system to include:
 - ✓ Main trunk and branch sizes.
 - ✓ Size and CFM of all registers.
 - ✓ Location of all equipment and outside air intake and exhaust air opening locations.
- Symbol and abbreviation list.
- Calculations demonstrating compliance with the International Energy Conservation Code.
- Details demonstrating compliance with the UL design numbers of the required fire-rated floor, roof assemblies.
- Details for boilers and safety devices.
- Fire and smoke dampers and fire/smoke detection devices.
- Fuel oil piping in building.

Get it right the first time!

Avoid the mistakes made by others. Check out common design errors online; go to our website and search on "common rejection reasons."

Is a seal required?



Some drawings, based on specific thresholds are required to be signed and sealed by a registered design professional in the commonwealth of Virginia. To learn more, go to county's [Sealed Drawings](#) publications.

- Equipment data for the HVAC system to include:
 - ✓ Make and model number, BTU rating for heating and cooling.
 - ✓ Total supply and outdoor air capacities of each air handling unit.
- Identify economizer cycle when required by code. Provide sequence of operation.
- Heat loss and heat gain on a room-by-room basis for apartment buildings of three stories or less and townhouses.
- Detailed shop drawings for commercial hoods which to include:
 - ✓ Hood dimensions.
 - ✓ Construction material.
 - ✓ Size, number and type of filters.
 - ✓ Output of exhaust.
 - ✓ Size and number of ducts.
 - ✓ Method of providing make-up air and amount.
 - ✓ Evidence of compliance with Chapter 5 of the International Mechanical Code or a report by an approved testing agency indicating compliance with UL 710 for factory-built hoods.

Plumbing

- Minimum required plumbing facilities.

What are Fixture Units?



A drainage fixture unit or DFU is a value assigned to a plumbing fixture that measures its probable discharge into the county sanitary sewer. For instance, a lavatory is 1 DFU and a water closet is 4 DFUs.

Fairfax County's Wastewater Management Program charges \$401 for each new DFU to help maintain and expand the county's treatment facilities.

To learn more, contact Wastewater or go to our website and search on "drainage fixture units."

- Floor plans and riser diagrams showing the location of all plumbing fixtures, sanitary, water, storm and gas piping.
- Identify size, slope and type of piping material and location of all required valves.
- Fixture connection schedule including waste, vent, gas, hot and cold water connection sizes.
- Identify all fixture symbols used on the plans and risers. Include backflow preventers and other water control equipment.
- Water pipe calculations.

Health

Food Service

- Food service menu.
- Layout of food service equipment and plumbing fixtures for dish-washing, food preparation, food storage, service and bar areas.
- Seating capacity and type of food service, i.e., carry-out, delivery or sit down.

- Details of equipment, i.e., water heater, to include:
 - ✓ Manufacturer, model number.
 - ✓ Output and recovery rate for producing 140 degrees F water.
- Note: all equipment must be commercial standard and NSF or UL listed.
- Finish schedule of floors, walls and ceilings, including type of material and color. In some cases, a sample finish may be required.

Hotels

- Plan for a typical guest room.
- Room equipment schedule.
- Baths/washroom toilets.
- Foodservice plans (continental breakfast), submitted separately.
- Pool plans, submitted separately.
- Laundry room and equipment schedule.
- Water heating equipment: manufacturer, model number and recovery rate.

Private School and Daycare Facility (excluding religious facilities)

- Child-size toilets.
- Area of playground.
- Water supply system.
- Sewage disposal system.
- Staff restroom.

?Who's water am I?

In most cases you will need to contact Fairfax Water for your connection to public water services. However, neighboring jurisdictions may be your water provider. Use the numbers below to contact.

Fairfax Water 703-698-5600
Alexandria 703-838-4488
Fairfax City 703-385-7915
Herndon 703-435-6835
Vienna 703-255-6385
All numbers are accessible in TTY by calling 711.

PERMIT PROCESS

When applying for the building permit, bring the required documentation listed on Page 1 to the Permit Application Center. County staff will direct you through the multiple-agency review process. Use the chart to the right to help guide you.

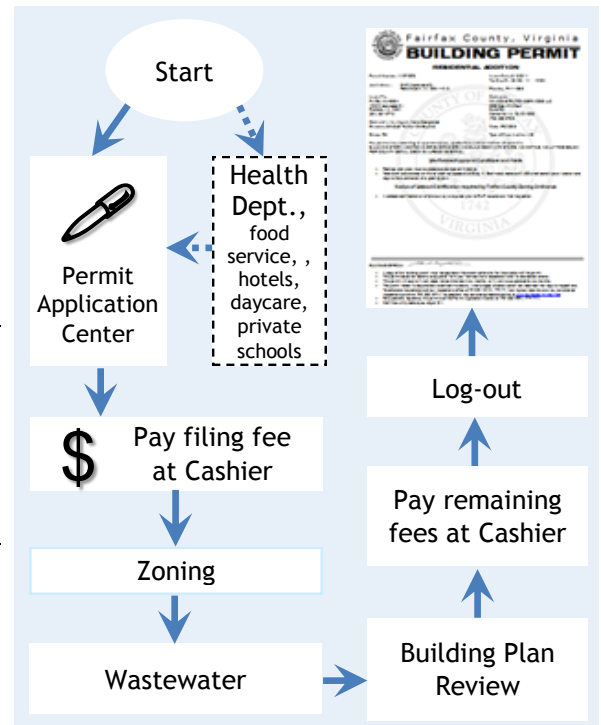
If your space contains a food service establishment, private school or daycare facility, you must begin your process at the Health Department.

BUILDING PLAN REVIEW

Code compliance of the plans is verified by Building Plan Review staff. The status of your reviews and review comments can be found online at fairfaxcounty.gov/fido. You may pick up your drawings or consult with staff at Building Plan Review.

TRADE PERMITS

Mechanical, electrical and plumbing permits can be issued only after the building permit has been issued. You may apply in-person or online at fairfaxcounty.gov/fido.



Site Plans vs. Building Plans

Since the development of your site plans and building plans takes place at times, the review processes for each may take place independently. If the site plan is not approved at the time of building permit application, simply submit an unapproved copy of the site plan with your building plans. However, an approved site plan is required prior to permit issuance. For more information on site plans, contact Site Review at 703-324-1720, TTY 711.

SPECIAL PROGRAMS

The special programs below can help expedite the review process for applicable projects.

Modified Processing Program

- ▶ Large, complex commercial buildings.
- ▶ Value in excess of \$25 million for new construction.
- ▶ Value in excess of \$20 million for alterations to existing buildings.
- ▶ Allows for the application of a footing and foundation permit prior to completing the site and building plans.
- ▶ Contact the Site and Addressing Center for more information or go to our website and search on “modified processing.”

Expedited Plan Review Program

- ▶ Priority processing for any building

type, size or occupancy.

- ▶ Prior to submission, reviews are conducted by certified private peer reviewers.
- ▶ Independent peer reviewer fees apply.
- ▶ Contact Building Plan Review for more information or go to fairfaxcounty.gov/dpwes/epr.

Revitalization Districts

- ▶ All projects in designated revitalization districts are eligible.
- ▶ Expedited zoning reviews.
- ▶ Facilitated building plan reviews.
- ▶ Go to fcrevit.org for more information.

\$ Fees \$

The building permit fee for a new commercial building is based on square footage and type of construction. Go to our website to learn more and to compute your building permit fee. Additional fees apply:

- ✓ Filing fee is 35 percent of your permit fee and must be paid up front.
- ✓ Building Plan Review provides free initial reviews; however, subsequent reviews for plan corrections or revisions carry additional fees.
- ✓ DFU fee for Wastewater must be paid prior to permit issuance (see Page 4).
- ✓ Fire Marshal reviews, trade permits and Health Department permits carry separate fees.

INSPECTIONS

As part of the [Special Inspections Program](#), you are required to hire an inspection and testing agency to conduct inspections of specific building components. For more information, go to our website and search on “special inspections.” You are also required to obtain inspections from the county; please review the following when requesting an inspection.



- ▶ The county must be notified when the stages of construction are reached that require an inspection.
- ▶ Ladders, scaffolds and other equipment necessary to access construction must be provided to the inspector.
- ▶ Before you dig call Miss Utility at 811, TTY 711.



- ▶ Schedule your inspections using the

following options:

- ✓ Telephone during hours of operation at **703-631-5101**, TTY 711.
 - ✓ Automated telephone system at **703-222-2474**. Use the codes listed to the right.
 - ✓ Online using FIDO at fairfaxcounty.gov/fido or on the Fairfax County iPhone app.
- ▶ Call **703-246-4821**, TTY 711 to schedule a Fire Marshal inspection and **703-246-2510**, TTY 711 to schedule a Health Department inspection.

Can I use my own inspectors instead of county inspectors?

Yes. You are permitted to have a third-party inspection team separate from the Special Inspections Program. The Certified Inspections Program allows private sector “third-party” inspection firms and personnel to conduct inspections on behalf of the county. They must be employed directly by the project owner, be independent of the contractors performing the work and have no financial interest in the project. Both the inspection firm and its personnel must be approved by the county on a project-by-project basis prior to commencement of construction.

Staff certifications are required and some restrictions apply. To learn more, go to our website and search on “[third party inspections](#).”

Inspection Codes

Listed below the inspection codes for the automated telephone system.

| Code | Inspection Description |
|------|---------------------------|
| 01 | Backfill |
| 02 | Ceiling concealment |
| 03 | Cross connection |
| 04 | Ductwork |
| 05 | Electrical concealment |
| 06 | Electrical service |
| 07 | Electrical, temp to perm |
| 08 | Final |
| 10 | Fireplace throat |
| 11 | Fireproofing |
| 12 | First gas |
| 13 | Footing |
| 14 | Framing |
| 15 | Groundwork storm |
| 16 | Groundwork sanitary |
| 17 | Insulation |
| 18 | Lateral |
| 19 | Manhole tap |
| 20 | Masonry |
| 21 | Mechanical concealment |
| 23 | Plumbing concealment |
| 25 | Reinforced concrete pour |
| 26 | Retaining wall |
| 28 | Routine |
| 30 | Sanitary sewer |
| 31 | Sewer tap |
| 32 | Slab |
| 33 | Storm sewer |
| 34 | Structural steel |
| 37 | Temporary service on pole |
| 38 | Wall concealment |
| 39 | Water service |
| 40 | Waterproofing |