

This information 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.

Building Development Agencies

The Herrity Building
12055 Government Center Pkwy
Fairfax, VA 22035

- ▶ Permit Application Center
2nd floor, 703-222-0801
- ▶ Site Application Center
2nd floor, 703-222-0801
- ▶ Building Division
3rd floor, 703-631-5101
- ▶ Zoning Review
2nd floor, 703-222-1082
- ▶ Residential Inspections
3rd floor, 703-631-5101

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

Website

Publications, forms and other useful information can be found at fairfaxcounty.gov/buildingpermits

All telephone numbers are accessible in TTY by calling 711.

This document is available in alternative formats and languages. Please call 703-222-0801 for more information.



A Fairfax County, Virginia Publication



PERMITS & FEES

You must obtain permits for the installation of a residential swimming pool, spa or hot tub. Listed below are the types of permits required depending on the complexity of your project. Apply at the Permit Application Center or [online](#) (see below).

- ▶ Building permit (for pools with a surface area more than 150 square feet, capacity over 5,000 gallons and depth over 24 inches).
- ▶ Electrical permit (for lighting, outlets and filter/circulating equipment).
- ▶ Mechanical or plumbing permit (for fuel-fired heaters).
- ▶ A portable, self-contained spa or hot tub on a slab usually requires an electrical permit only.

Permit fees vary depending on the scope of your project; use the online fee estimator to help determine your costs. Access the estimator by visiting our [website](#) and clicking on “permit fee estimate.”

Apply Online



Fairfax County’s FIDO system allows you to apply and, in some cases, obtain your permit online. This could save you time and even a trip to county offices. Go to fairfaxcounty.gov/fido to apply.

Contractors must have a FIDO-issued identification number in order to apply. Contact the Permit Application Center to obtain yours.

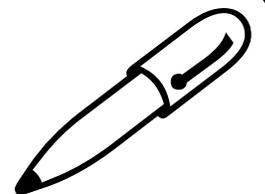
DOCUMENTS REQUIRED

When applying for a permit, you must submit the following documents:

- ▶ [Permit Application Form](#) and equipment worksheet.
- ▶ [Property Ownership Affidavit](#) (when property ownership must be verified).
- ▶ Building plans (see Page 2).
- ▶ [Permit Authorization Affidavit](#) (when there is no contractor and the applicant is not the property owner).
- ▶ Site-related plan (see Page 3).

Who should apply for the permit?

Homeowners may obtain permits in their own name. However, it is strongly recommended a properly licensed contractor pull the permits as the responsible party so the county can better assist in gaining compliance for defective work.



BUILDING PLANS CHECKLIST

When applying for a permit for a swimming pool, you must submit two copies of your building plans (three copies if you are on well or septic). The plans must meet or include the following, if applicable:

- Minimum scale of ¼ inch = 1 foot; fully dimensioned.
- Minimum sheet size: 8½ x 11 inches; no pencil.
- Code year used for the design.
- 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. (This is required for in-ground concrete/gunite pools.)
- List of materials used, including concrete strength and yield stress of steel strength.
- Method of pool discharge drainage.
- Wall section with size and spacing of reinforcing steel for concrete/gunite pools.
- Manufacturer's specifications for fiberglass pools, spas and hot tubs.
- Assembly instructions for above-ground pools.

POOL BARRIER REQUIREMENTS

All outdoor pools, spas and hot tubs must be protected with a barrier (fence) as listed below. Powered safety covers for pools and lockable safety covers for spas and hot tubs can be substituted for barriers if designed to meet the ASTM F 1346.

- ▶ Minimum height measured from outside face grade shall be 48 inches.
- ▶ The clearance from the bottom of the barrier shall be:
 - ✓ 2 inches to grass, gravel or mulch.
 - ✓ 4 inches to concrete, wood or other hard surface.
 - ✓ 4 inches maximum between the top of an above-ground pool and bottom of the barrier.
- ▶ Openings:
 - ✓ Minimum size shall be to 1¾ inches (measured horizontally).
 - ✓ If horizontal elements are more than 45 inches apart, vertical elements can be space less than 4 inches.
- ▶ Barriers shall not be climbable such that:
 - ✓ Brick or stone walls must have no protrusions or indentations.
 - ✓ Horizontal elements less than 45 inches apart must be on inside face.
- ▶ Barriers must be a minimum of 20 inches from the edge of the pool.
- ▶ A 36-inch zone outside the barrier shall be free from climbable structures or equipment.
- ▶ Barriers must be a minimum 3 feet from the property line.
- ▶ Access gate:
 - ✓ Must meet barrier requirements.
 - ✓ Must be self-closing/latching and swing away from pool.
 - ✓ Latches must be 54 inches from bottom and at least 3 inches from top of gate on pool side.
 - ✓ There shall be no openings ½ inch or greater within 18 inches of the latch.
- ▶ Mesh fences such as *Protect-A-Child* or *Life Saver Pool Fence* are permitted provided such barriers meet the requirements of the International Swimming Pool and Spa Code.
- ▶ Door and windows with sill heights less than 48 inches high that open into the pool area shall be alarmed. Alarms shall be in accordance with UL 2017 with a reset switch 48 to 54 inches above the door threshold or floor.

Where can I put my pool?

Zoning regulations restrict the location of a pool as follows:

- ▶ Pools in rear or side yards are permitted.
- ▶ Pools in front yards are permitted in lots over 36,000 square feet. (Corner lots are considered to have two front yards.)

For more information, please contact Zoning Review.

Temporary Pool?



- ▶ Kids pools with that are drained and filled daily with 12 inches or less of water ARE NOT required to meet county regulations.



- ▶ On-ground portable and storable pools installed seasonally ARE required to meet county regulations.

Regulations...

Building Code & Ordinances

- ▶ International Swimming Pool and Spa Code (see our [website](#) for the current edition)
- ▶ Fairfax County Zoning Ordinance (for setbacks, height and size limitations)

Covenants

Contact your homeowners association for building requirements and restrictions specific to your subdivision.

OTHER REQUIREMENTS

Swimming pools, spas and hot tubs must also meet the highlighted requirements listed below. All other requirements and design standards can be found in the International Swimming Pool and Spa Code.

- ▶ Energy Conservation:
 - ✓ Heaters shall have an accessible on-off switch that can be activated without adjusting the thermostat.
 - ✓ Gas heaters shall not be equipped with a continuous pilot burner.
 - ✓ Heaters and pumps serving swimming pools shall be controlled by timers that can automatically turn equipment on and off.
 - ✓ Heated pools and spas must be equipped with a vapor retardant cover.
- ▶ Pool areas, patios and decks:
 - ✓ Areas around pools, spas and hot tubs shall have surfaces that are slip resistant.
- ✓ Surfaces shall be sloped to prevent the standing water. Typical slopes are 1/8- to 1/2-inch per foot depending on the type of surface.
- ✓ Edges of decks and patio shall be rounded or tapered with no sharp corners.
- ✓ Decks and patios shall have access to an outdoor hose for rinsing operations.
- ▶ Safety:
 - ✓ Pool filtering and circulation systems shall be designed to prevent suction entrapment.
 - ✓ Pools with depths greater than 42 inches shall have handholds located a maximum of 12 inches above the waterline and no more than 4 feet apart.
- ✓ Pools shall not have obstructions that can cause entrapments by pinching or wedging.
- ✓ Pools with varying depth shall have a rope float in the shallow end within 1 to 2 feet of the slope-break.
- ▶ Recreation Equipment:
 - ✓ Pools equipped with diving equipment shall have a clear area free of obstructions and a depth as required by the International Swimming Pool and Spa Code.
 - ✓ Diving equipment shall be labeled by the manufacturer and slip resistant.
 - ✓ Slides are permitted and shall be installed in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.

SITE-RELATED PLANS

To determine your project's impact on your property, one of the site-related plans listed below must be submitted. For more information, see our [Site-Related Plans](#) publication or contact the Site Application Center.

1 A House Location Plat, is drawn from survey data of your property. You may use an existing plat if your project disturbs 2,500 square feet or less. Draw your new construction in ink on a clean, unfaxed version in its original scale.

Look in your closing documents for your plat. You may need to hire a surveyor or civil engineer to prepare a new one. Plats used with previous projects are prohibited.

2 A Conservation Plan is much like a house location plat, but also shows erosion and sediment controls. You can use one when...

- ✓ new construction disturbs 5,000 square feet or less and
- ✓ drainage improvements and water quality controls are not required.

If you do not meet the above conditions, you must submit a grading plan.

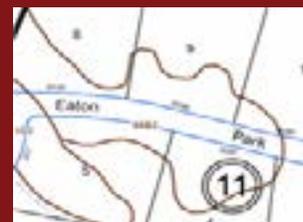
3 A Grading Plan is a drawing of your site which shows topography, new construction and improvements and is required when...

- ✓ construction disturbs more than 2,500 square feet,
- ✓ construction blocks existing drainage patterns or
- ✓ soil is to be cut or filled more than 18 inches.

Additional submissions, fees and deposits may apply.

Problem Soils

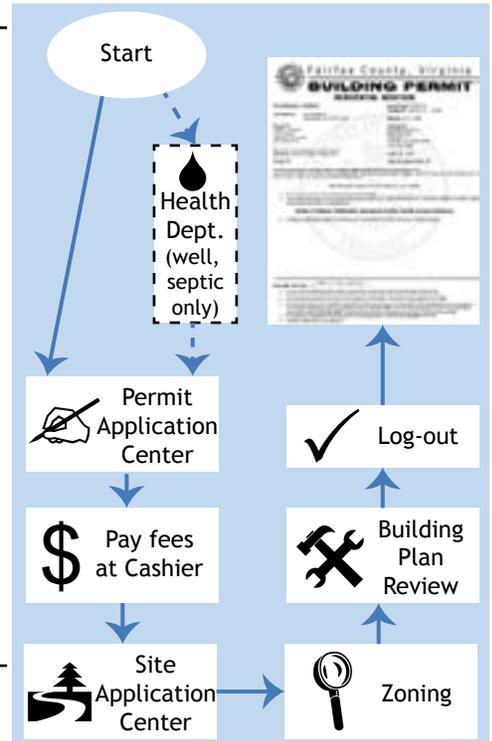
Soil types with high water table, expansive clays or other behavioral issues are considered problem soils. If your project is to be constructed on a problem soil, you may need to have your foundation designed by an engineer and inspected by a county-approved licensed professional. To learn more, go to our [website](#) and search on "soils." To determine if you have problem soils on your property, contact the Site Application Center.



PERMIT PROCESS

When applying for your permits, bring the required documentation listed on Page 1 to the Permit Application Center or you may bring your process online at fairfaxcounty.gov/fido. See below for more information.

- ▶ When you arrive at the county, staff will direct you through the multiple-agency review process. Use the chart to the right to help guide you.
- ▶ Permits can usually be obtained in one day.
- ▶ If your property contains a well or septic system, you must begin your process at the Health Department.
- ▶ Vienna and Clifton residents require additional approval from their respective towns.
- ▶ **Trade permits:** permits for mechanical, electrical and plumbing can be pulled only after the building permit has been issued. No plans are required as code compliance is verified during inspections. You may apply in-person or online at fairfaxcounty.gov/fido.



INSPECTIONS

You are required to obtain inspections from the county for your pool, spa or hot tub. Please review the following when requesting an inspection.

- ▶ The county approved site-related plan and building plans must be available on the jobsite.
- ▶ Combined inspections for building and trade permits are required as shown in the table below.
- ▶ 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.
- ▶ If your pool is constructed in a problem soil, you may need to hire a county-approved licensed professional to perform the foundation inspections. Contact Residential Inspections for more information.
- ▶ Use the table below to help determine work that must be completed for each inspection type.
- ▶ The rows of the table below list the sequence of inspections required for a pool. Approval for an inspection must be attained prior to proceeding with the next inspection.

Inspection Timing Checklist

Inspection	Permit Type	Requirements
Combined inspection: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Building structural steel ▶ Mechanical first-gas ▶ Plumbing first-gas ▶ Electrical concealment 	All	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Footing trench/formwork ready for concrete; bottom of trench on solid soil. ✓ Reinforcing steel in place ✓ Metallic elements of pool in place. ✓ Trenches and conduits in place and uncovered. ✓ Heater and gas piping in place.
Combined inspection: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Building final ▶ Mechanical final ▶ Plumbing final ▶ Electrical final 	All	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Appliances, fixtures, outlets, panels, switches, etc. installed. ✓ Pumps, filters and heaters installed and operational. ✓ Propane tank in place, if applicable. ✓ Final grading complete.

Miss Utility

Before you begin excavating for your project, you must first call Miss Utility at 811, TTY 711. Miss Utility is a free service that marks underground utilities.



Inspection Scheduling

Listed below are your options to schedule an inspection.

- ▶ In-person during hours of operation, Herrity Building, 3rd Floor.
- ▶ Live, via telephone during hours of operation at 703-631-5101, TTY 711.
- ▶ Online at fairfaxcounty.gov/fido.
- ▶ On the Fairfax County smartphone app. Go to your app store to download.