

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 Plan Review
3rd floor, 703-222-0114
- ▶ Site Review
5th floor, 703-324-1720
- ▶ Zoning Review
2nd floor, 703-222-1082
- ▶ Residential Inspections
6th 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

V D O T

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

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 REQUIRED

You must obtain permits for the construction of a new home. Listed below are the types of permits required. Apply for permits at the addresses to the left.

- ▶ Building permit.
- ▶ Electrical permit.
- ▶ Mechanical permit.
- ▶ Plumbing Permit (includes gas installations).
- ▶ VDOT permit when your property is accessed from a state road.
- ▶ Health Department permit for properties with wells and/or septic systems.

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.

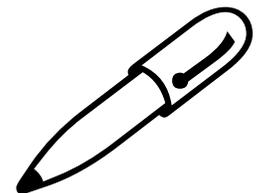
DOCUMENTS REQUIRED

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

- ▶ [Permit Application Form](#) and equipment worksheet.
- ▶ Building plans (see Page 2).
- ▶ Grading plan (see Page 3).
- ▶ [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).

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, 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:

- Completed Fairfax County [Townhouse and Single Family Dwelling Cover Sheet](#).
- Minimum scale of ¼ inch = 1 foot; fully dimensioned.
- Minimum sheet size: 11 x 17 inches; no pencil.
- Code year used for the design.
- Name, address and occupation of the designer.
- If prepared by a Virginia registered architect or professional engineer, the plans must bear the **original** signature, seal and date.
- List of materials used, including wood species and grade, and concrete and steel strength.
- Live load and dead load.
- Structural details of connections.
- Load calculations for all adjustable columns.
- Typical wall section to include sheathing thickness and type.
- Wall bracing. For more information, see our [wall bracing publications](#).
- Insulation R-values and U-factors. See [Energy Compliance](#) for specific requirements.
- Roof framing plan indicating the size and spacing of the following: trusses, rafters, ceiling joists/rafter ties, ridge board and/or ridge beam.
- Exterior elevations (front, side and rear) noting window and door dimensions and locations.
- Building cross sections with all posts, joists and beams labeled.
- Building height (see below).
- Jacuzzi/whirlpool tub manufacturer's information showing loading requirements must be attached to the plans.
- Location of safety glazing.
- Manufacturer's design specifications for pre-fabricated fireplaces must be attached to the plans.
- Garage separation requirements.
- Design of fire-resistance wall between townhouses.
- Sprinkler system design for four story townhouses.
- For masterfile houses, see Page 6 for more information, show the following:
 - ✓ Each design option.
 - ✓ Noise attenuation (for lots near

highways or Dulles Airport).

- ✓ Proffered or special architectural conditions.

Using a unique material or product?

You must reference its evaluation report from a nationally recognized listing agency, such as ICC-ES, ATI or UL, certifying it meets the requirements of the building code. This is required for products such as EIFS, adjustable columns and wood/plastic composites.

Local Design Criteria

- ▶ Snow load: 25 psf
- ▶ Wind speed: 90 mph
- ▶ Soil bearing capacity: 1,500 psf (maximum assumable)
- ▶ Lateral earth pressure: 60 pcf (minimum assumable)
- ▶ Frost depth: 24 inches

- Foundation plan and footing details.
- Basement wall design.
- Floor plans of all levels with all room functions labeled.
- Location of smoke and carbon monoxide alarms.
- Structural framing plans for each level identifying all members, sizes, span lengths and spacing.
- Manufacturer's name, series number, depth and spacing of all manufactured wood products.

Regulations...

Building Code & Ordinances

(see our [website](#) for the current editions)

- ▶ Virginia Residential Code (for houses under four stories)
- ▶ Virginia Construction Code (for houses four stories or more)
- ▶ Fairfax County Zoning Ordinance (for setbacks, height and size limitations)

Covenants

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



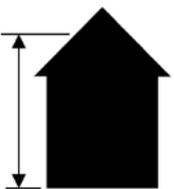
Roof or floor truss shop drawings are required to be submitted to Building Plan Review prior to erection. Submission may be in-person or via email at bprmail@fairfaxcounty.gov.

The submission must include:

- ✓ Two sets (when submitted in-person).
- ✓ [Truss Plan Cover Sheet](#), completed by the building designer.
- ✓ The original signature and seal of the truss designer (electronic signature when submitted via email).

How tall can I build?

In most cases the maximum height of a residential building is 35 feet measured from the average grade to the midpoint of the highest roof. Contact Zoning for more information.



GRADING PLAN CHECKLIST

When building a new home, you will disturb land. A grading plan is a drawing of your property which shows existing and new topography, erosion and sediment controls and other impacts of your project. Grading plans at a minimum must meet the requirements or show the items listed below. To learn more, refer to the companion guide [Site-Related Plans](#) or contact the Site Application Center. See the flowchart on Page 5 for the grading plan submission process and how it related to the building permit application process.

- Completed Fairfax County cover sheet.
- Minimum scale of 1 inch = 50 feet.
- Minimum plan size is 24 x 36 inches.
- Seal of a land surveyor, architect, landscape architect or professional civil engineer licensed in the commonwealth of Virginia.
- Magisterial district.
- Zoning district and any variance, special permit, special exception or proffered rezoning approvals.
- Owner information.
- Vicinity map.
- Location, address, tax map number.
- Lot dimensions and area.
- Lot lines including bearings and distances.
- The location, dimensions, and height of new buildings.
- Dimensions and height above grade for items such as eaves, uncovered stairs, chimneys or bay windows.
- The elevation of the first floor, basement and/or driveway profile.
- Tree cover calculations.
- Soil identification and/or soils map with soils certification.
- Soils report or approved soils waiver with foundation detail for sites with problem soils.
- Location of foundation drain outfall.
- Outfall analysis and pre-development conditions narrative.
- Siltation and erosion control measures.
- Easements (include deed book and page number)
- Location of any resource protection area (RPA). See right for more information.
- Mapped floodplain and floodplain easement with deed book and page number noted.
- Distance from the new construction (and any protrusions) to all lot lines, floodplains or RPAs.
- Calculation of proposed impervious area to show final area is less than 18 percent of the total lot.
- Name of affected watershed and disturbed area within it.
- Signed Wetlands Certification.
- Location of water and sewer lines, if served by public utilities, otherwise, location of septic system and well with associated lines.
- Sewer service area.
- Proposed construction entrance and access road.

Is your project in a flood plain?



If you live along a stream with a drainage area over 70 acres, your property may be in a floodplain. Restrictions for construction and added requirements may apply.

Not all floodplains are located and mapped. Therefore, studies may be necessary in unmapped areas to demonstrate compliance with floodplain regulations.

For more information go to our website and search on “floodplain” or contact the Site Application Center.

Resource Protection Areas

- ▶ A resource protection area (RPA) is environmentally sensitive land adjacent a stream which filters pollutants, reduces runoff, and prevents erosion.
- ▶ New homes cannot be constructed in an RPA.
- ▶ If an RPA boundary delineation study has been performed for your property and approved by the county, it must be shown on your grading plan.
- ▶ If a study has not been performed, you may use the county-designated boundary provided your grading plan is duly noted.
- ▶ Go to the county’s digital map viewer to see if there is an RPA on your property.
- ▶ To learn more about RPAs, go to our website and search on “resource protection areas” or call the Site Application Center.

Conservation Agreement

A conservation agreement and the associated deposit ensure that erosion and sediment controls are installed in accordance with the approved plan. After construction is complete and the lot is properly stabilized, the full deposit will be returned unless funds have been used to correct deficiencies. For more information contact the Site Application Center.

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 the building permit, bring the required documentation listed on Page 1 to the Information Center on the second floor of the Herrity Building. See the flowchart on the following page for a graphic representation of the process. Please note: the grading plan approval process and the building permit application process may take place independently and concurrently. Listed below are the approval agencies along the process of obtaining your permit.

- ▶ The **Permit Application Center** is your first stop in the building permit process. Staff will initiate the application and distribute your building plans to Building Plan Review. To save time, you may apply for building permits online at fairfaxcounty.gov/fido.
- ▶ The **Site Application Center** is the first stop in the grading plan approval process. Staff will distribute your grading plan to Site Review and receive your approved VDOT permit, if applicable.
- ▶ Code compliance of the building plans is verified by **Building Plan Review**. The status of your reviews and comments can be found online at fairfaxcounty.gov/fido. Final approval of your plans cannot be obtained until you have incorporated the approved grading with the building plan submission. When approved, pick up your drawings here and return to the Permit Application Center to receive your permit.
- ▶ Code compliance of the grading plan is verified by **Site Review**. The status of your reviews and comments can be found online at fairfaxcounty.gov/ldsnet. When

approved, your grading plan will

Expedited Building Plan Review

Priority processing is available when utilizing the Expedited Building Plan Review Program. Prior to submission, reviews are conducted by certified independent private sector peer reviewers at an additional cost.

Contact Building Plan Review for more information or go to fairfaxcounty.gov/dpwes/epr.

be available for pick up at the Site Application Center.

- ▶ **VDOT** will review your grading plan to ensure the construction entrance and permanent driveway are compliant with roadway standards. This review is not applicable if the entrances to your property are not from a state-maintained road.
- ▶ The **Health Department** reviews your building plans only if your property is served by a septic system or well. Staff will determine if size and location of these systems meet established safety guidelines.
- ▶ Residents of **Clifton and Vienna** require additional approval from

their respective towns prior to permit application at the county.

- ▶ **Trade permits** for mechanical, electrical and plumbing can be issued only after the building permit has been issued. Electrical and plumbing permits do not require a plan submission since code compliance is verified during inspections. You may apply and, in most cases, obtain your permits online at fairfaxcounty.gov/fido.
- ▶ Mechanical permits require the submission of a Residential Heat Loss and Heat Gain Certification and a Manual J calculation. To learn more, refer to the companion guide HVAC Certifications or contact Building Plan Review.

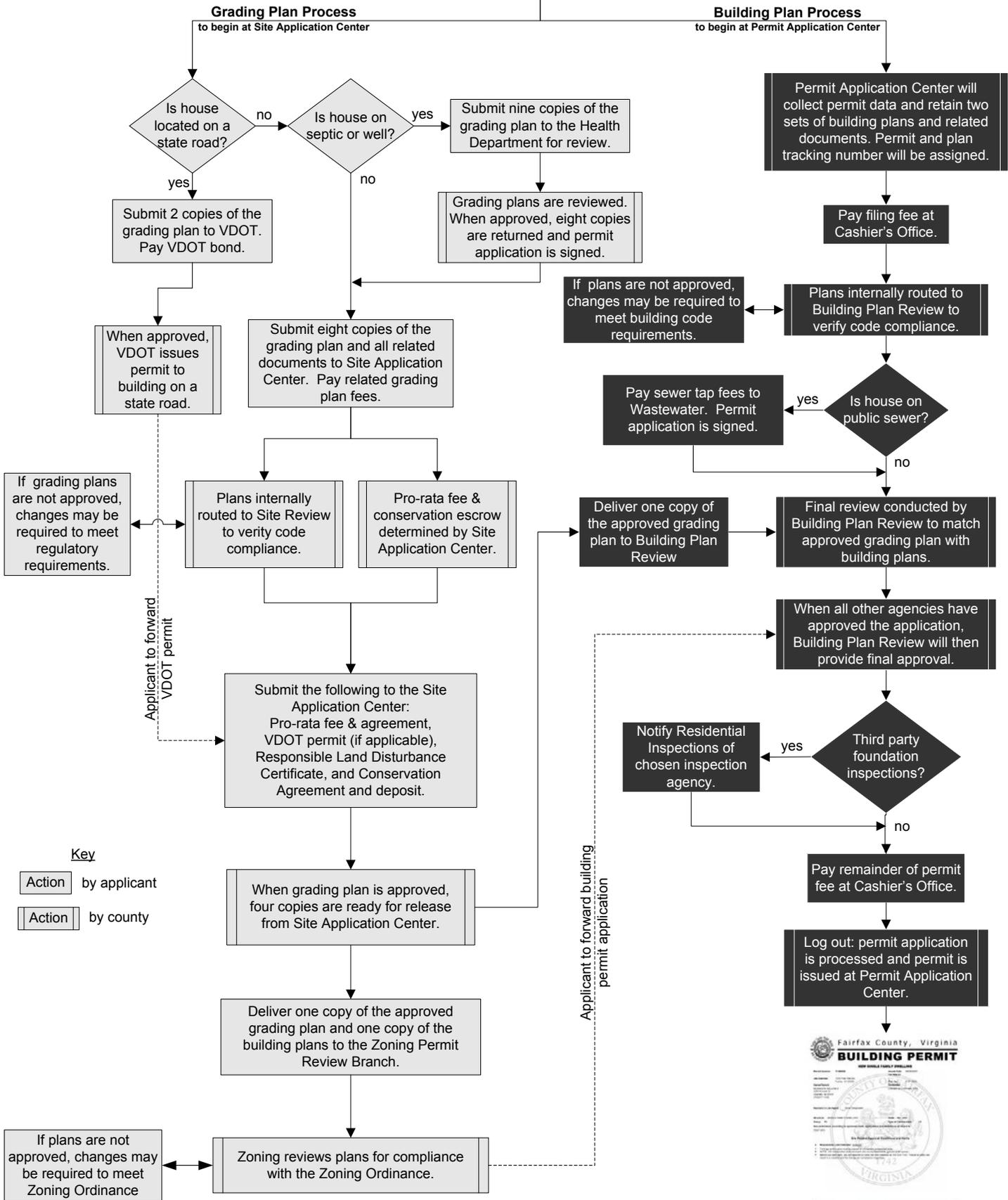
Disturbing more than one acre or land?

If the answer is “yes,” then you must obtain a Virginia Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permit to ensure your project limits pollutants from entering streams, rivers and bays.

To learn more, contact the Site Application Center or go to our website and search on “VPDES.”

PERMIT PROCESS

Log-in: Bring your building plans and grading plans to the Information Center, Herry Building, second floor. Complete a Building Permit Application.



Key

[Action] by applicant

[Action] by county

FEES, BONDS & DEPOSITS

Listed below are the potential fees and deposits and the corresponding responsible agency. For more information on fees, contact the agencies listed above or go to fairfaxcounty.gov/buildingpermits.

- ▶ Building permit fee for building plan and inspection services (Permit Application Center).
- ▶ Site fee for grading plan review and inspection services (Site Application Center).
- ▶ Pro-Rata Share Assessment for watershed improvements and maintenance which is based on the increase of impervious area (Site Application Center).
- ▶ Conservation Deposit associated with the conservation agreement (Site Application Center).
- ▶ Stormwater fees.
- ▶ VDOT Permit and Bond if you have a new entrance to a state maintained road.
- ▶ Health Department fees if your property is or will be served by a septic system or well.

MASTERFILE PROGRAM

The Countywide Masterfile Program allows one set of approved plans to be used throughout the county for each model house type. Transferring approved masterfile plans to new lots and subdivisions only requires a review for site specific conditions. Masterfile plans are valid until the code they were designed under goes out-of-date. Follow the steps below the initial and transfer process.

Initial Submission Requirements

1. Your initial submission begins at the Permit Application Center. Your submission must include the following:
 - ✓ Two completed permit applications, one for the masterfile permit and the other for the first address to be built (with options listed).
 - ✓ Two copies of the building plans, including the Townhouse and Detached Single Family Dwelling Cover Sheet.
 - ✓ On a separate sheet and in a table format, list all model options and page reference. Include a blank column for “area (sf)” to be completed by the county. You may also submit your options based on the [ANSI Square Footage Certification](#).
 - ✓ One copy of the subdivision plan or grading plan for an infill lot.
2. Staff calculates permit fees based on area of the house and its options.
3. The filing fee for the masterfile (50 percent of the permit fee) must be paid at the Cashier’s Office.

4. Once the fee has been paid, the plans are released for county review.
5. When approved, pick up your plans at Building Plan Review.
6. The balance of the permit fee must be paid at the Cashier’s Office.
7. The permit for both the masterfile and initial address are issued at the Permit Application Center.

Transferring a Masterfile

1. Submit the following to the Permit Application Center.
 - ✓ A completed permit application for the new address listing applicable masterfile options.
 - ✓ A copy of the previously approved building plans with original Townhouse and Detached Single Family Dwelling Cover Sheet attached.
 - ✓ A new cover sheet for the new subdivision/infill lot (soil properties and other conditions will change).
 - ✓ A copy of the subdivision or grading plan.
2. Pay the applicable filing fee at the Cashier’s Office.

3. Submit your building plan, cover sheet and subdivision or grading plan to Building Plan Review for a review for proffer compliance and site specific conditions.
4. After approval, pick up drawings at Building Plan Review.
5. Pay the remaining balance of the permit fee at the Cashier’s Office.
6. The permit is be issued at the Permit Application Center.

Building the same house in the same subdivision?

Once you have an approved masterfile plan in a specific subdivision, you can build that house type for any lot within that subdivision by following the steps.

1. Submit a permit application for the addresses and/or lot numbers at the Permit Application Center.
2. List all options applicable to each address.
3. Pay the permit fee(s) at the Cashier’s Office.
4. The permit(s) are issued at the Permit Application Center.

BUILDING INSPECTIONS

You are required to obtain inspections from the county for the construction of your new home. Please review the following when requesting an inspection.

- ▶ Combined inspections for building and trade permits are required as shown in the table on the following page.
- ▶ The county must be notified when the stages of construction are reached that require an inspection.
- ▶ The county approved grading plan, building plans, truss shop drawings and HVAC certification must be available on the jobsite. In the case of a masterfiles in a subdivision, copies, no smaller than 11x17, may be substituted to ensure plans are available at each location. Plans must be legible, protected from weather and available to the inspector during the construction process. Inspectors are authorized to fail an inspection when a complete set of plans are not available.
- ▶ Ladders, scaffolds and other equipment necessary to access construction must be provided to the inspector.
- ▶ If your house 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 on the following page to help determine work that must be completed for each inspection type.
- ▶ The rows of the table list the sequence of inspections required for a new home. Approval for an inspection must be attained prior to proceeding with the next inspection.
- ▶ Residential inspectors conduct building/structural, plumbing,



mechanical, electrical and gas inspections.

- ▶ Health Department inspectors conduct inspections of the septic system and well, if applicable.
- ▶ Site inspectors approve the occupancy permit by performing the inspection for the residential use permit (RUP).

Site Inspections

Once you have obtained your building permit, call **703-324-1720**, TTY 711 to schedule a pre-construction meeting with your site inspector. A minimum of two, unscheduled inspections will be conducted to ensure land disturbance and environmental controls are proceeding in accordance with the approved grading plan and corresponding laws and ordinances.

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.



Can I use my own building inspectors?

Yes, you must notify the county prior to permit issuance, and only pre-approved licensed professionals are permitted to conduct inspections for you. Contact Residential Inspections for more information.

Inspection Scheduling

Listed below are your options to schedule a building inspection.

- ▶ In-person during hours of operation, Herrity Building, Suite 634.
- ▶ Live, via telephone during hours of operation at **703-631-5101**, TTY 711.
- ▶ Online at fairfaxcounty.gov/fido (not available for RUP scheduling).
- ▶ On the Fairfax County smartphone app (not available for RUP scheduling). Go to your app store to download.

Inspection Timing Checklist

Inspection	Permit Type	Requirements
Footing	Building	✓ Footing trench/formwork ready for concrete; bottom of trench on solid soil.
Tap	Plumbing	✓ Piping in place; county inspector must witness the connection to the public sewer.
Combined inspection: ▶ Water service ▶ Sanitary sewer (well, septic must comply with Health Department inspection requirements)	Plumbing	✓ Sewer lateral installed. ✓ Sewer lateral piping flow tested; to be witnessed by county inspector. ✓ Water pipe installed. ✓ Water pipe pressure tested; to be witnessed by county inspector.
Residential wall (masonry or concrete foundation wall)	Building	✓ Forms ready for concrete with reinforcing steel in place. ✓ Masonry ready for grout with reinforcing steel in place.
Plumbing groundwork	Plumbing	✓ Under-slab sewer and water pipe in place.
Waterproofing	Building	✓ Parging and waterproofing installed.
Slab	Building	✓ Slab area prepared for concrete with gravel, vapor barrier and reinforcing steel in place. ✓ Drain tile in place, properly sloped and tied to proper outfall.
Fireplace hearth	Building	✓ Forms, reinforcing steel, flashing in-place.
Fireplace throat	Building	✓ Parging and waterproofing installed.
Temp to Perm	Electrical	✓ House weather-tight. ✓ Service accessible. ✓ Service entrance cable installed into panel. ✓ Service equipment properly grounded.
Combined inspection: ▶ Building framing ▶ Mechanical concealment ▶ Plumbing concealment ▶ Electrical concealment	Building Mechanical Plumbing Electrical	✓ Vents and gas, sewer and/or water pipe installed and pressure tested. ✓ Electrical wiring and boxes installed. ✓ Ductwork installed. ✓ Platform for HVAC equipment installed. ✓ Sill plates secured to the foundation. ✓ Stairways in place and secured. ✓ Sub-flooring installed. ✓ House weather-tight. ✓ Wall and roof sheathing installed. ✓ Windows and doors installed.
Insulation	Building	✓ Wall, ceiling and crawl space insulation in place.
Combined inspection: ▶ Building final ▶ Mechanical final ▶ Plumbing final ▶ Electrical final	Building Mechanical Plumbing Electrical	✓ Plumbing fixtures and piping installed. ✓ Roughed-in plumbing fixtures permanently capped. ✓ Health Department approval obtained for well, septic. ✓ Meter set by water authority. ✓ Appliances, fixtures, outlets, panels, switches, etc. installed. ✓ Panel box index completed. ✓ HVAC equipment operating properly. ✓ Compliant street address attached to house. ✓ Final site grading complete. ✓ Attic, basement and/or crawl space insulation in place. ✓ House is ready for occupancy and use.
Occupancy	Residential use permit (RUP)	✓ Sodding/seeding, landscaping and screening in place unless winter waiver has been granted. ✓ Street, curb/gutter, storm sewers, sidewalks and street signs installed, if applicable. ✓ Fire hydrant operational, if applicable. ✓ Geotechnical certifications available, if applicable. ✓ Applicable proffered conditions satisfied.