



Community Development  
Building and Inspection Services  
2100 Ridge Avenue  
Evanston, Illinois 60201-2798  
T 847.448.4311  
permitdesk@cityofevanston.org  
[www.cityofevanston.org](http://www.cityofevanston.org)

## **COMMERCIAL PROJECT INFORMATION**

The Community Development Department's Building and Inspection Services Division issues construction permits for remodeling, repairing, demolition and all new construction projects. This Division issues all building permits and inspects projects to make sure that they are constructed to the standards of our adopted building codes. We are a part of a team of City departments that is working to ensure that our citizens' health, safety and welfare are maintained.

This document will provide you with a general overview of the materials needed to apply for and obtain a permit and the necessary inspections required to complete your project.

**Our offices are located at:**      ***The Lorraine H. Morton Civic Center  
2100 Ridge Avenue, Evanston  
phone: (847) 448-4311  
[permitdesk@cityofevanston.org](mailto:permitdesk@cityofevanston.org)***

**Office hours:**                      ***Monday – Friday  
8:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. and 1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.***

**In-Person Permit Desk  
First Floor's Main Lobby:**      ***Walk-in – First Come, First Served  
Daily 9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. and 1:00 p.m.-4:00 p.m.***

**Virtual Appointments:**        ***Use the [Schedule Appointment](#) link on the  
Building & Inspection Services website page.***

**Allowable construction hours are:**  
***7:00 a.m. – 7:00 p.m. Monday - Friday  
8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. on Saturdays  
Work not allowed on Sundays\****

*\*Work on Sunday or outside permitted hours requires City Manager approval. Request can be submitted to Building & Inspection Services Division Manager at least 5 days prior to requested date. Permission would be based on demonstrated hardship and impact to surrounding properties.*

## **BUILDING PERMITS**

**General:** Many permits require the review and approval of multiple city departments and the length of time of the permit process will depend on the scope of the project. This guide does not provide a comprehensive list of projects that require a building permit. Please contact the Building Division to discuss the scope of your project if you have a question on whether a permit is required.

All applications and documents shall be submitted online using the Citizens Portal for Express Permits or the Building Permit Application for projects that need plan review. Paper application and documents are no longer accepted. A user account must be established to submit a permit application through the Citizens Portal.

Work shall not begin without obtaining a permit.  
For any permit, partial application packets will not be accepted.

**Design and Project Review Committee (DAPR):** All commercial or multi-unit residential projects that include exterior work must be reviewed by DAPR. Projects may be presented for a concept review prior to submitting for permit which is encouraged for a larger projects or significant changes to a property. Contact Zoning to schedule this review at (847) 448-4311.

**Zoning Review** is required for all projects that have exterior work (i.e. new construction, additions, porches, decks, fences, stairs, etc.). Zoning reviews projects for proper setbacks from lot lines, permitted use of the property, parking requirements, impervious surface calculations and general conformance with the currently adopted zoning ordinance.

**Preservation Review:** The Historic Preservation Ordinance of the City Code establishes the preservation review process to assist in shaping change that maintains and enhances the uniqueness of a historic district's assets and the integrity of a landmark, whether located within or outside of such a district. Any alteration where there is change in the exterior design, materials, or general appearance, addition or new construction, demolition or relocation of any landmark structure or of a property, structure, or site or object within a historic district receives a review by the Preservation Commission. A Certificate of Appropriateness is issued indicating review and authorization of the plans for the proposed project by the Commission. Routine types of work where there is no change in general appearance, materiality, or design, may be reviewed administratively by the City's Preservation Planner. Certificates of Appropriateness are required for exterior projects that can be seen from the public way (city street, alley, or public sidewalk). The Preservation Commission has no purview over interior projects except where the work may affect the exterior of the building.

Building permits are not issued unless a Certificate of Appropriateness is approved by the Commission in a formal review or by the Preservation Planner by administrative review. If a proposed project involves applications for a planned development, major zoning variances, and special uses that affect the exterior of designated landmarks structures and structures in historic districts visible from the public way, the Preservation Commission reviews and makes recommendations to the Land Use Commission and/or City Council. For more information on this process and how approval is obtained, please contact [preservation@cityofevanston.org](mailto:preservation@cityofevanston.org) or visit the Commissions website [www.cityofevanston.org/preservation](http://www.cityofevanston.org/preservation) for current applications and additional resources related to Certificate of Appropriateness standards, procedures, and a schedule of meeting dates and submission deadlines.

**ROW/Tree Preservation Review and Permits** are required for projects that have installation in or impact to a public sidewalk, parkway or street. Information on ROW and Tree Preservation permits can be found at permit counter desk or on city website.

**Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago (MWRD):**

For any new building, changes in building use, or a new parking area, a permit will be required from the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago.

Please contact the Public Works / City Engineer at (847) 448-4311.

For projects that require an MWRD permit, a building permit will not be issued until the MWRD permit is obtained

**Food Establishment:**

Restaurants and other food establishments require the approval of several City departments including: Building, Zoning, Fire and Health. A “Statement of Restaurant Use” must accompany the permit application.

Contact the Health Department (847) 448-4311 for the food service application process, submittal requirements, and fees.

**Expedited Review** is not currently available.

**SEPARATE PERMITS**

The following building systems/elements require separate permits and are not part of the general building permit:

- Demolition (apply to Building Division)

See the Demolition Permit Instruction guide. Demolitions require a Cook County Department of Environment and Sustainability demolition permit and separate utility disconnect permits

- Water and sewer connection to the City systems (apply to Building Division)

- Elevators and lifts (apply to Building Division)

- Automatic fire sprinkler systems (apply to Fire Administration)

An automatic fire sprinkler system is required in all residential construction except ADU construction where the existing, principle structure does not have a system.

- Fire alarm and detection systems (apply to Fire Administration)

- Exhaust hood fire suppression systems (apply to Fire Administration)

- Exterior signs/awnings; new, replacement or temporary (apply to Building Division)

- Temporary Construction Fences (apply to Building Division)

A Temporary Construction Fence required for all new construction, additions, building demolitions, and some remodeling. The fence must be permitted, installed & inspected prior to building permit issuance. See Construction Fence Worksheet

- Any work on the City right-of-way: Review and issuance of ROW permits are done by appointment. Contact 311 to schedule an appointment with the ROW Engineer.

## **EXPRESS PERMITS THAT DO NOT REQUIRE PLAN REVIEW**

- Roof/Roofing repairs
- Siding/Fascia/Soffit/Gutter
- Tuck-pointing/Masonry
- Window or Door Replacement
- Fence (requires Zoning Review)/Construction Fence
- Electrical/Electrical service/Temporary Electric (excluding Solar, Generators or EV-Chargers)
- Plumbing fixtures
- Water Heater/Boiler/Furnace (new or replacement)
- Air Conditioning Unit (replacement in existing location)
- Sewer and water service repairs (private property only; repairs impacting public right of way will require ROW and Tree Preservation permits)
- CCCD (excluding CCCD for fire sprinkler systems)
- Interior Drain Tile

### **To apply for these permits, the following shall be required:**

- A completed permit application using the [Citizens Portal](#) link on the Building & Inspection Services website page.
- Trade contractor and project worksheets (electrical, plumbing, mechanical, roof, window, etc.)
- Copy of the project contract that shows the construction valuation/project cost. Construction Valuation shall include material, labor, fixtures and equipment.
- Emergency Contact information
- All contractors must be registered with the City of Evanston - requirements vary by contractor type. (See below).

## **PROJECTS NEEDING PLAN REVIEW**

- New Construction
- Additions
- Tenant Improvements

For projects that require plan review, use the [Building Permit Application](#) link on the Building & Inspection Services website page. The following project lists are not inclusive. Please contact the permit desk with permitting questions about your proposed work.

### **To apply for these permits, the following shall be required:**

- Completed permit application
- Completed Zoning Analysis form
- For new construction, additions, projects where structural work is being performed or if the project's construction valuation in \$25,000 or more, submit architecturally signed and sealed construction drawings that show the proposed work. Drawing shall include a site plan if any new building or an addition is being proposed. The site plan must show the dimensions of all buildings/structures and of all impervious areas (walks, drives, patios, etc.) on the site. Indicate the elevation of existing grade at the front property line (if grade varies provide sufficient elevations to compute an

average grade) and show the elevation of the highest building elements (given to the same datum).

NOTE: We do not accept drawings larger than 30" x 42".

\*\*\*11"x17" for smaller projects or 24"x36" for larger projects preferred\*\*\*

- ❑ A copy of project manual and/or structural calculations, if applicable.
- ❑ Completed U.S. Department of Energy "COMcheck" form, or other approved demonstration of compliance with the *2018 Illinois Energy Conservation Code*.
- ❑ A copy of the Plat of Survey for the property that reflects the current and accurate site conditions and proposed improvements. Copy must be to scale.
- ❑ A topographic survey indicating existing and proposed grades of the property, (new construction, addition).
- ❑ Public sidewalks shall be installed where none exist or substandard sidewalk squares shall be replaced where sidewalks exist whenever new construction is erected. The Civil Plan Reviewer will determine substandard squares prior to permit issuance

**After all departmental reviews are approved**, the applicant will be notified. The following documents shall be completed by the applicant before permit issuance:

- ❑ Mechanical (HVAC), Electric and Plumbing worksheets
- ❑ Contractor List and General and Trade Contractor Registrations.  
(Please see *Contractor Registration Application*)
- ❑ Construction Valuation to include material, labor, fixtures and equipment and copy of contract to verify construction valuation.
- ❑ Emergency Contact information.

*Note: Project lists are not inclusive. Please contact the permit desk with permitting questions about your proposed work.*

### **CONTRACTOR REGISTRATION**

To obtain a building permit, the general contractor and all trade contractors working under the permit must be registered with the City. Contractor application, copy of certificate of insurance, trade license (if required) and payment (GC \$125/Trade \$100) are required for registration.

- **All Building Contractors** must be registered with the City of Evanston
- **Plumbing Contractors** must provide State license
- **Landscape Contractors** must provide sustainability management plan/vehicle list
- **Electrical Contractors** must provide license from a testing municipality
- **Cross Connection Control (C3) Contractors** must provide City C3 license
- **Architects** must be licensed by the State of Illinois (no registration required)

Contractors are required to provide the City with an original certificate of insurance or policy declaration documenting that the contractor carries general liability insurance with a minimum of three hundred thousand dollars (\$300,000.00) per occurrence, bodily injury insurance with a minimum of one hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000.00) per

occurrence, property damage insurance with a minimum of one hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000.00) per occurrence and workers' compensation insurance at the statutory minimum amounts.

### **PERMIT FEES**

Permit fees are based on construction valuation, plan review and mechanical, electrical and plumbing worksheets. The Permit Fee Schedule is posted on the city website: [www.cityofevanston.org](http://www.cityofevanston.org).

### **Penalty For Work Without A Permit:**

There is a significant penalty for doing work without a permit. A stop work will be posted on the property until the building permit is obtained. If coverings have been placed over installations that have not been inspected, the coverings must be removed for rough inspections. The greater of 75% of the permit fee or \$250 will be added to the permit fee for work done without permit.

### **INSPECTIONS**

Almost all projects require rough and final inspections. Contractors must be present at the job site for inspections.

One set of approved permit drawings must be at the job site for reference at all times.

### **REQUIRED INSPECTION TYPES:**

#### **STRUCTURAL ROUGH:**

**Prior** to the pouring of any concrete footing, pier or foundation, the city inspector shall observe and approve all work.

#### **ELECTRICAL ROUGH:**

The electrical inspector shall approve the installation of all electrical systems, including service panels, circuits, generators prior to the installation of wall, floor, or ceiling coverings.

#### **HVAC ROUGH:**

The inspector shall approve the installation of all mechanical equipment, pipe and duct work prior to the installation of wall, floor or ceiling coverings.

#### **PLUMBING ROUGH:**

All plumbing work must be accessible and visible for pressure testing and inspection.

#### **FRAMING ROUGH:**

All framing – new residential, addition, remodel, garages, porches, stairs and balconies, shall be inspected after the structure is framed, but before a wall covering is applied. **Plumbing, electric and HVAC rough inspections shall be completed prior to the framing inspection.**

**INSULATION INSPECTION**

After approval of plumbing, electrical, HVAC and framing rough inspections.

**HOUSEWRAP INSPECTION**

Prior to cover. Can be done at framing rough provided housewrap is visible.

**FINAL INSPECTIONS:**

Final inspections are required for all building trades prior to occupancy.

**FIRE DEPARTMENT**

The Fire Department must be contacted separately for all inspections of exits signs/lighting, fire alarm, exhaust hood and fire suppression systems.

**INSPECTION SCHEDULING**

Upon issuance of a building permit, it is the permit holders responsibility to contact 311 (847-448-4311 if outside Evanston) for scheduling all required inspections. Inspections are scheduled for either morning (8:30 a.m.-12:00 p.m.), or afternoon (1:00 p.m.-3:00 p.m.) time slots. Same day cancellation, missed inspection or failed inspection will result in a \$45 re-inspection fee for each inspection.

**PLEASE SCHEDULE AT LEAST 48 HOUR IN ADVANCE AS INSPECTIONS ARE SCHEDULED BASED ON AVAILABILITY**

**PLEASE HAVE YOUR PERMIT NUMBER, JOBSITE ADDRESS and CONTACT INFORMATION AVAILABLE**

**CALL 311 (847-448-4311 if outside Evanston)  
8:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. Monday - Friday**

**A CERTIFICATE OF OCCUPANCY WILL NOT BE ISSUED UNTIL ALL FINAL INSPECTIONS ARE APPROVED AND CONDITIONS OF OCCUPANCY ARE MET.**

**CITY OF EVANSTON ADOPTED BUILDING CODES**

**ICC/NEC CODES:**

- International Building Code (IBC), 2021 Edition
- International Residential Code for One and Two Family Dwellings (IRC), 2021 Edition
- NFPA National Electrical Code (NEC), 2020 Edition
- International Mechanical Code (IMC), 2021 Edition
- International Fuel Gas Code (IFGC), 2021 Edition
- International Fire Code (IFC), 2021 Edition
- NFPA Life Safety Code 101, 2021 Edition

**STATE CODES:**

- Illinois Plumbing Code, 2014 Edition
  - Illinois Accessibility Code, 2018 Edition
  - Illinois Energy Conservation Code (IECC), 2018 Edition\*
- \*2021 edition will be enforced once state review/approval is completed

Note: Amendments to the ICC/NEC and State Codes can be viewed on the Building & Inspection Services Division and City Code pages of the city website:

[www.cityofevanston.org](http://www.cityofevanston.org)

Amendments should be reviewed prior to application and construction document submittals.

**HELPFUL SITES & EMAILS:**

[www.cityofevanston.org/government/departments/community-development/building-inspection-services](http://www.cityofevanston.org/government/departments/community-development/building-inspection-services) - Building & Inspection Services Division website with permit, inspection and contractor information plus application links

[permitdesk@cityofevanston.org](mailto:permitdesk@cityofevanston.org) – General Inquiries

[permitrevisions@cityofevanston.org](mailto:permitrevisions@cityofevanston.org) – Submit revisions to reviewed plans

[certofoccupancy@cityofevanston.org](mailto:certofoccupancy@cityofevanston.org) – Submit Temporary (TCO) or Final (FCO) Certificate Occupancy requests