

Frequently Asked Questions- Residential Permits

1. How long will it take to get approval of my permit.

Every effort is made by division staff to do at least a cursory review of submitted plans within a day or two of submittal. Division policy is to complete plan review or prepare a correction letter with two weeks of the submittal of complete plans. Except during the busiest times of year, review is completed much more quickly. The most frequent cause for delay in approval of plans is incomplete or incorrect information. The list of required items on the Plan Review Application is the list of information needed by the plans examiner to know a project complies with applicable codes. If the information is not submitted there can be no approval. In other words, the division cannot approve what it does not know.

It is important that the applicant review the plans before submitting them to make sure they show specifically what he intends to build and how he intends to have it built.

During busy periods plan review proceeds as quickly as possible, but the volume of work can cause delays in approval.

The best way to avoid unnecessary delays is to make sure your plans are clear, complete and correct.

2. Why can't I submit my plans without all the required information? I'd like to 'get in line' for plan review and submit the items that aren't ready later.

As stated in #1, plan review cannot happen without all of the information on the list of required items, so there is no benefit to submitting partial plans. As for holding a place in line for plan review, to do so would be unfair to the person next on the list who planned ahead and took the time to compile a complete application. The division does not have the space nor the responsibility to provide storage for plans that are not ready to be reviewed. The exception to the rule regarding complete applications is the requirement for roof and floor framing plans. Roof and floor framing plans may be a delayed submittal, but must be submitted before plans are approved.

3. Can I get my foundation permit first so I can get started while I gather the required information?

Paraphrased from the Minnesota State Building Code, Section 1300.0130 Subpart 8:

*The building official **may** issue a permit for the construction of foundations before the construction documents for the whole building have been submitted, provided that adequate information has been filed complying with pertinent requirements of the code. The holder of the permit for the foundation or other parts of a building or structure shall proceed at the holder's own risk and without assurance that a permit for the entire structure will be granted.*

This means that, **at a minimum**, before a foundation permit is issued, a site plan, foundation/basement plan, structural plans, wall-section with detailed specification for the foundation and erosion control permit application must be submitted, reviewed and approved. The risk of proceeding before the entire project has been reviewed and approved and permits issued lies solely with the permit holder.

4. How much will my permit cost?

Permit fees are based on the valuation of the work. For new construction and additions, the valuation of projects is done during plan review. The area of each use is determined and a fixed value is applied per square foot for each use are (i.e.: garage, living area, deck). The valuation of remodeling projects is provided by the applicant. Valuation and permit fee schedules are available at the Building Safety office or on www.duluthmn.gov/construction-services-inspections/.

5. What inspections do I need?

An excerpt from the State Building Code regarding required inspections can be found on the reverse side of this page. A list of names and phone numbers is available at the Building Safety office or on www.duluthmn.gov/construction-services-inspections/. Allow 24 hours notice for inspections.

From 2015 Minnesota State Building Code

Subp. 6. Required inspections. The building official, upon notification, shall make the inspections in this part. In addition to the inspections identified in this subpart, see applicable rule chapters in part 1300.0050 for specific inspection and testing requirements.

- A. Footing inspections shall be made after excavations for footings are complete and any required reinforcing steel is in place. Materials for the foundation shall be on the job, except that concrete need not be on the job if the concrete is ready mixed according to approved nationally recognized standards.
- B. Foundations:
 - (1) Foundation inspections for poured walls shall be made after all forms are in place with any required reinforcing steel and bracing in place, and prior to pouring concrete.
 - (2) All foundation walls shall be inspected prior to backfill for specific code requirements.
 - (3) The foundation inspection shall include excavations for thickened slabs intended for the support of bearing walls, partitions, structural supports, or equipment.
- C. Concrete slab and under-floor inspections shall be made after in-slab or under-floor reinforcing steel and building service equipment, conduit, piping accessories, and other ancillary equipment items are in place, but before any concrete is placed or floor sheathing installed, including the subfloor.
- D. Rough-in inspections of plumbing, mechanical, gas, sprinklers, alarms, and electrical systems shall be made before covering or concealment, before fixtures or appliances are set or installed, and before framing inspection.
- E. Inspection of framing and masonry construction shall be made after the roof, masonry, framing, firestopping, draftstopping, and bracing are in place and after the plumbing, mechanical, and electrical rough inspections are approved.
- F. Energy efficiency inspections shall be made to determine compliance with Minnesota Energy Code requirements.
- G. Lath and gypsum board inspections shall be made after lathing and gypsum board, interior and exterior, are in place, but before any plastering is applied or before gypsum board joints and fasteners are taped and finished.
 - Exception:** Gypsum board that is not part of a fire-resistive assembly or a shear assembly.
- H. Protection of joints and penetrations in fire-resistance-rated or smoke-resistance-rated assemblies shall not be concealed from view until inspected and approved.
- I. Installation of manufactured homes (mobile homes) shall be made after the installation of the support systems and all utility service connections are in place, but before any covering material or skirting is in place. Evaluation of an approved anchoring system is part of the installation inspection.
- J. Fireplaces must be inspected for compliance with applicable requirements of the code and the manufacturer's installation instructions.
- K. A final inspection shall be made for all work for which a permit is issued.
- L. Special inspections shall be as required by the code.
- M. In addition to the inspections in items A to K, the building official is authorized to make or require other inspections of any construction work to ascertain compliance with the code and other laws that are enforced by the Department of Building Safety.