



Community Development Department

203 S. Pacific Avenue, PO Box 819 Kelso, WA 98626



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WHEN DO I NEED A BUILDING PERMIT?

Permits are required to:

- Construct, enlarge, alter, repair, move, or demolish a building or structure;
- Change the use of a building; or
- Erect, install, enlarge, alter, repair, remove, convert or replace any electrical, gas, mechanical or plumbing system.

A double permit fee will be charged for work started prior to obtaining a permit.

Work REQUIRING Permits:

EXAMPLES OF WORK REQUIRING PERMITS	
Building Demolition	Required.
Electrical	The City of Kelso does not issue electrical permits. For electrical permits and electrical inspections contact WA State Department of Labor and Industries. 360.575.6900 or www.lni.wa.gov/ .
Excavation & Fill	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Volume of combined cut and fill is from 50 to 500 cubic yards of material. Grading permit required.• State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) required if it involves more than 500 cubic yards of earth.
Fire Systems	Required for all fire sprinkler systems, fire alarm systems, fire suppression systems and hood and duct systems. A plan must be submitted for review and approval.
Foundation Repair/Replacement	Required.
In-ground fuel tanks.	Required for removing or abandonment of in-ground fuel tanks. Additional information is usually required.
Manufactured Homes	Required for the installation/placement of a manufactured home.
Mechanical	Required for all mechanical work including the replacement of a furnace, hot water heater or gas appliance, etc. Larger commercial projects may require a mechanical plan submittal and review.
Moving a building	Required.
Plumbing	Required for all work on plumbing systems other than minor repair. Larger commercial projects may require a plumbing plan submittal and review.
Reroof	Required for commercial and residential.
Signs	Required. No sign, including a copy change, or temporary sign, unless exempted by KMC Chapter 17.62, shall be constructed displayed or altered without a sign permit approved by the city. New sign installation will require a plan review.
Window New Installation Size Increase/Decrease	Required.
Wood Stoves and Fireplace Inserts	Required.
Work in the City Right-of-Way	All work in the city right-of-way requires a Civil Engineering Permit. Contact the Kelso Engineering Division at 360.423.6590, email engineering@kelso.gov , or visit us online at http://www.kelso.gov/departments-services/engineering-department .

Work EXEMPT from Permits:

A permit is not required for some work, listed below. Any work, whether or not it requires a permit, must meet the intent and provisions of the Kelso Municipal Code (KMC) and any other laws or ordinance of the City of Kelso.

EXAMPLES OF WORK EXEMPT FROM PERMITS	
Cosmetic Improvements	Painting, papering, tiling, carpeting, cabinets, counter tops and similar finish work. Siding.
Decks	Not exceeding 200 square feet in area, are not more than 30 inches above grade at any point, are not attached to a dwelling and not over any basement or story below.
Fences	Not over 7 feet high. Required to meet setback and height regulations per KMC Chapter 17.40.
Movable Cases, Counters, and Partitions	Not over 5 feet 9 inches in height.
One-Story Detached Accessory Structure	Used as tool and storage sheds, playhouses and similar uses, provided the floor area is not greater than 200 square feet (for residential) or 120 square feet (for commercial).
Prefabricated Residential Swimming Pools	Less than 24 inches deep, are not greater than 5,000 gallons and are installed entirely above ground.
Retaining Walls	That are not over 4 feet in height measured from the bottom of the footing to the top of the wall, unless supporting a surcharge (loads caused by backfilling of soil, proximity of foundations, parking, driveways, etc.).
Sidewalks and Driveways	Located on private property, not more than 30 inches above adjacent grade, and not over any basement or story below.
Siding Replacement	Permit not required.
Swings and other Playground Equipment	Accessory to detached one- and two-family dwellings.
Water Tanks	Supported directly upon grade if the capacity does not exceed 5,000 gallons and the ratio of height to diameter or width does not exceed 2 to 1.
Window Awnings	Supported by an exterior wall which do not project more than 54 inches from the exterior wall and do not require additional support.
Window Replacement	Replacement of the entire window like for like size.

Questions? Contact Community Development Building Division at 360.423.9922, email building@kelso.gov or visit us online at www.kelso.gov/departments-services/community-development/building-department.