

FENCES

Unless a fence protects a swimming pool, no permit is required. Instead, use the “Application for Fences and Sheds” form. Complete the form and submit it along with a plat highlighting the location and height(s) of the fence.

Fences protecting a swimming pool require a Building Permit Application and would need three complete sets of plans showing complete construction details.

Fences are limited to a height of 3.5’ on front yards and 7’ on side/rear yards. Corner lots are considered to have two front and two side yards. Heights may be reduced if there is a visibility obstruction at an intersection.

SHEDS

Sheds under 256 s.f. and used for storage, playhouse or similar uses, do not require a building permit. Submit an “Application for Fences and Sheds”, a plat showing the location of the shed, and a description including type, size and height. Larger sheds, or those with more elaborate uses, must follow the full building-permit process.

Sheds must be 5’ from the property line and 10’ from the house. They can be no taller than 12’ to the midpoint of the roof.

If your house is in the resource protection area (RPA) or floodplain, or your proposed location encroaches on an easement, additional requirements may apply.

RESIDENTIAL GENERATORS

Backup electric generators for residences have very specific requirements. In order to process and review a generator, *all* of the following must be submitted:

1. Application for electrical permit
2. Electric hookup diagram
3. Application for gas permit
4. Gas riser diagram
5. Plat showing generator location
6. Land disturbance addendum
7. Information sheets on the generator and transfer switch

Until all of these have been submitted, no reviews will begin.

OTHER HANDOUTS

In addition to this brochure, also look for:

1. Building Permit Fees and Process Summary
3. Plan Submission Requirements

These and other information, along with all necessary forms, are available at the Development Services Counter, located on the first floor of the east wing of City Hall. The same information and forms are available on the City of Falls Church web site, <http://www.fallschurchva.gov>.

The City of Falls Church is committed to the letter and spirit of the Americans with Disabilities Act. This document will be made available in alternate format upon request. Call 703-248-5080 (TTY 711)

REQUIREMENTS FOR APPLICATION FOR A PERMIT

City of Falls Church, Virginia



Informational Brochure #2 of 3

Department of Community Planning and
Economic Development Services
Building Safety Division
300 Park Avenue, 103E
Falls Church, VA 22046
703-248-5080 (TTY 711)

permits@fallschurchva.gov

APPLICANT

The applicant for a permit can either be a licensed contractor or, in certain circumstances, the property owner or business tenant. The City of Falls Church recommends owners only obtain permits if they will do the work themselves. If a contractor is to be used, have the permit issued to the contractor. If the contractor is not known at the time of application, it can be left blank and filled in later, before the permit is issued.

To obtain a permit, a contractor must provide the following:

1. A copy of the original Virginia State Contractor's License. Printouts of the State web site are not acceptable as a substitute
2. A form processed by the Commissioner of the Revenue, either for an application for a business license, or a waiver saying no business license is necessary.

APPLICATION FORMS

All permits require an application form. Forms are available at the Development Services Counter. They may also be downloaded from the City's web site (www.fallschurchva.gov/form). Please use only the most recent application form when applying for a permit. If you use an older form, you may be asked to fill out a new one before your application will be accepted.

Please fill out the application completely.

ADDITIONAL FORMS

Several permit applications require additional forms:

1. "Addendum to Building Permit Application for Exterior Work" is required for all projects with exterior work, unless the project has a Grading Plan or Site Plan
2. "Asbestos Certification" is required for all commercial jobs and must be signed by the building owner
3. "Accessibility Compliance Form" is required for all commercial jobs

OVER-THE-COUNTER PERMITS

Some types of permits can be issued immediately, without need of plan review:

1. Replacement of an appliance, such as a furnace or A/C with an equivalent new appliance.
2. Simple work that can be verified at inspection, such as an electric service heavy-up or simple lighting addition.
3. Trade work where a building permit has already been reviewed and approved and included plans for the specific trade..

PLAN SETS

Most jobs require plans to be submitted and reviewed. All such jobs require at least two sets of plans, one to be at the job site and one to be retained by the City.

A third set of plans is required if there is any exterior work. A very large commercial job may require an additional plan set (i.e., three set for interior, four sets for exterior work).

When there is exterior work, a plat should be attached to each plan set.

SPECIFIC CASES

Certain project types arise frequently enough for us to provide detailed requirements.

FUEL-GAS PERMITS

Any work with gas requires a permit, even a direct replacement of a furnace or stove. Any project that involves changing or adding piping must submit a gas-riser diagram for review.

DECKS

Deck plans must show:

1. A framing plan showing
 - a. Spans and sizes of all joists and beams
 - b. Post and footing sizes and spacing
 - c. All ledgers with their attachment detailed
 - d. Guard rail post attachment detail
2. A survey plat showing the deck location, drawn to scale
3. For certain townhouses, a site plan amendment must be processed through the Planning Department prior to approval of a building permit for a deck.

The American Wood Council has an excellent reference of decks. You can download it at

<https://www.awc.org/pdf/codes-standards/publications/dca/AWC-DCA62012-DeckGuide-1405.pdf>