



Eric Garcetti, Mayor

Common

Permits

**Prepared by: Cost Recovery Section of the
Rent Stabilization Division,
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Common Permits

All Building and Mechanical Permits are issued by the Los Angeles Department of Building and Safety (LADBS). Individuals planning to do construction, rehabilitation or repair work on rental-income property at a cost of \$501 or more must verify with the LADBS if a building permit will be necessary for the type of work contemplated. A permit is not required where the work regulated by the City's building code is valued at \$500 or less, unless it affects the structural stability of a building, or public safety, or is done to make a building conform to the requirements of this code for change in use or occupancy. Permits for work to be done at a rental-income property must be obtained by an individual with a valid State of California Contractor's License. Both property owner and contractor must also have a current Business License on file with the City of Los Angeles, Office of the City Clerk, if required by the City of Los Angeles. All inspections, Correction Notices, and Final approvals of the work authorized by the permit, is done through the LADBS.

If an owner wishes to recover a portion of the cost of the improvements (that affect the tenant(s) directly), they may prepare and submit a rent adjustment application to the Housing & Community Investment Department (HCIDLA) in order to legally raise the affected tenants rent for a period of 72 months or more. After the authorized work is completed and approved by LADBS, copies of the Permits, inspection approvals, and other required documentation, are submitted to HCIDLA Cost Recovery staff to facilitate the processing and potential approval of their application.

The following list is NOT inclusive of every permit that might be required. It has been put together by Cost Recovery staff to assist applicants for Capital Improvement rent increases, based on staff experience reviewing capital improvement applications. Applicants must refer to the LADBS or other agencies that sign off on building permits for complete information relevant to their particular case.

AIR CONDITIONING

Air Conditioning appliances that impact a number of units, and/or are permanently installed, or are replacements for those units, and all rooftop A/C's require permits as would an air-conditioning system in a gym, recreation room, or other place of assembly.

Exception: An air conditioning unit that is installed in a window of an individual rental unit, and plugged into an existing receptacle, does not require a permit.

AWNING

A permit is required.

Exception: Attached awnings located outside of Fire District No. 1 extending no more than 4 feet from the exterior of the building.

BALCONY

A permit is required for a new balcony or structural repair to an existing one.

Exception: Replacement of a few of the guardrail uprights or recoating of the balcony surface does not require a permit.

BATHTUB

A plumbing permit is required for a bathtub installation and/or alterations to the plumbing system; and a building permit is also required if the floor, sub-floor, and/or wall(s) need to also be repaired or portions replaced due to dry-rot, structural, or termite damage.

Exception: Re-coating or repairing the surface of a bathtub does not require a permit.

BIRD SPIKES

Do not require a permit.

CABINETS

New cabinets installed in a Kitchen or Bathroom require a permit.

Exception: Repair/replacement of broken or missing drawers, doors, or shelving, or refinishing of the cabinet surface does not require a permit.

CARPETING

Does not require a permit.

CHILLER

Permit is required for installation, replacement or replacement of major components. A Chiller is a large piece of cooling equipment that removes heat from a liquid, such as water. It has four major components, the compressor, evaporator and condenser, and controller unit. It cools and dehumidifies air in mid- to large-size commercial and industrial facilities, and they are sometimes connected to outside cooling towers.

COUNTERTOPS

In the kitchen or bathroom, do not require a permit unless the work is part of a remodel, which requires specific clearances on all sides of an island and therefore requires a permit. (See Remodel)

DECORATIONS

On the walls or outside of the building do not require a permit.

DOORS

Permit required for any new doorway, or replacement/alteration of wall framing around doorway.

Exception: Door itself, unless it's a Fire Door.

DRAPES

Do not require a permit.

DRYWALL

Permit is required if sheets are installed; especially on the ceiling where the drywall can fall down. The \$500 rule applies.

ELECTRICAL

Permits are required for all new electrical work, including new receptacles, switches, outlet boxes for smoke detectors or light fixtures, exterior lighting exterior receptacles, appliances, sub-panels, and/or main panels, phone and communication wiring.

Exception: Replacement of receptacles, switches, light fixtures, or smoke detectors where there is existing, approved, electrical wiring.

Exception: Low Voltage wiring for intercom or alarm systems, speakers, TV cable & outside Low-Voltage lighting.

ELECTRIC METERS

Permits are required for the conversion of a “Master Metered” system to individual meters, (or the reverse).

ELEVATORS

Permits are required for various aspects of elevator repair, remodeling, alteration or modification, as well as, for the installation of new elevators. It’s best to check with a Building and Safety Elevator Inspector for a specific determination as to the need for a permit. Ancillary work, such as the installation of a phone and smoke detectors for elevators must be up to code for Inspectors to sign off on an elevator permit.

FANS

Portable fans or ceiling fans do not require a permit, if there is an existing electrical box,.

FASCIA WOOD

Replacement is a capital improvement. No permit needed if cost expended is less than \$501.

FENCES

All concrete block walls over 42" high and wood or metal fences over 10 feet high require a permit.

FIRE DOORS

The installation or replacement of any Fire doors requires a permit.

FIRE EXTINGUISHERS

Do not require a permit.

FIXTURES

Bathroom and kitchen fixtures, e.g. Shower heads, tub spouts, faucets, handles, and trim.

FLOORING

Requires a permit if sub-floor (wood planks or plywood over floor joists) is replaced, or any structural repair.

Exception: Installation of linoleum, tile, carpet, hardwood or other cosmetic floor covering material.

FOUNDATION

A new or replaced section of the foundation of a building or structural re-enforcement of the foundation of a building requires as permit.

GARBAGE DISPOSAL

Requires a Permit if replaced, however, if the same unit is reinstalled, no permit is required.

GARAGE

Permits are required for a new garage, an addition, structural alteration, a change in use (such as a change to a storage building), or demolition.

GARAGE DOOR MOTOR

Permit is required for motor and electrical work.

HEATER Floor, wall, attic, or ceiling heating appliances all require a permit for installation, or replacement of the control valve or venting system.

HOOD, STOVE

New with electrical wiring installed, requires a permit.

MAGNESITE

Requires a permit if the magnesite is removed for repairs to the sub-floor, walkway, landing or steps.

Exception: Re-coating of surface. Defined as: A floor coating, opaque, formulated for or applied to flooring; including but not limited to decks, porches, and steps; a clear coating formulated and applied to concrete flooring.

PAVING

New or replacement paving of a parking lot, with parking stripes, and wheel stops requires a permit. An "A" permit is required from the Department of Public Works if the sidewalk or driveway "apron" (the area between the street and private property line) is added or replaced.

Exception: "Flatwork", such as paving of an area, walkway, driveway, or installation, repair, or replacement of "black top" (asphalt material).

PLUMBING

Any installation, alteration, or replacement of plumbing appliances, fixtures, or piping (water, drain, venting, or gas). Any type of plumbing work valued at \$501 or more performed on the premises.

COPPER RE-PIPING: Valuation is based on number of fixtures in one-bathroom units and two-bathroom units; and common area (universal) fixtures (such as those for a Laundry Room), are paid by all tenants. This includes Vertical and Horizontal water lines and Shut-Off valves that are installed along with the new water lines. Plastering and patching drywall related to copper re-piping is a capital improvement;

MAIN LINE: The "Water Service" main line runs from the Water Meter, located in the parkway area, adjacent to the street; or from a water meter located adjacent to a rear alley, to the building. A trench is usually required to be dug between the Water Meter and the building. A permit is always required to install or replace a Water Service main line.

PLUMBING TRAP(S): The installation of a new trap, commonly found under the kitchen or bathroom sink, or under a shower, bathtub, or near a washing machine always require a permit.

SPRINKLERS: The installation or replacement of piping and/or fire sprinklers always requires a permit, as does the installation of a new sprinkler valve for yard watering. Except for the valves, yard-sprinkler piping does not require a permit.

VALVES: The installation or replacement of any Water (Angle stops, shower, and/or bathtub valves) or Gas valve requires a permit.

WATER HEATERS: The installation or replacement of any Water Heater or storage tank requires a permit. It usually requires strapping of the appliance to resist horizontal displacement during an earthquake.

YARD DRAINS: Drain piping voluntarily installed in order to drain water away from a building and to the street does not require a permit. If it is done involuntarily, this means that HCIDLA issued an Order. Based on the work completed it may require a permit.

POST

Installation or replacement of any post requires a permit if it is needed for structural support of any portion of the building, such as for the under floor framing or to support a section of roof located over the porch.

RAILINGS

Permit is required. Hand rails require a permit if there are more than three (3) steps.

Exception: Decorative railings that are for appearance only and will not have to support the weight of anyone leaning on it.

REMODELING

Permits are required for all aspects of the remodeling of a unit, bathroom, kitchen, common area or exterior of a building. Permits are also required for any installation, replacement, or substantial repair of the Building, Plumbing, Electrical, or Heating system of any building.

ROOFING

Any re-roof requires a permit, with the exception of repairs and patching.

SHOWER PAN

New installation or replacement requires a plumbing permit.

SMOKE DETECTOR

Permits are required for new smoke detectors installed with new electrical wiring.

STAIRS

New or replacement stairways, guardrails, or any structural repair, or steps to the roof require permits.

Exception: Replacement of a few stair treads, or guardrail uprights.

STEPS

Permit is required for concrete or wood steps that are installed, constructed or rebuilt, if over 3 steps are involved.

STUCCO

New installation, or removal & replacement (where the building framing is exposed) and/or when new plywood installed.

Exception: Repair to the surface, such as patching, sealing, or painting.

SWIMMING POOL

Requires a permit from the Los Angeles County Health Department. The lighting inside the pool, the depth-lines, and one-hand and/or two-hand rails must be inspected and approved.

SUB-FLOORING

Installation or replacement of any sub-floor, or the repair or re-enforcement of structural supports requires a permit.

TOILET

If a toilet is newly installed or replaced, or if the sub-floor under the toilet is replaced, then a permit is required.

Exception: If the same toilet is re-installed, no permit is required for the installation of the toilet.

Additional note: If the Landlord receives a rebate from a water conservation program, then subsidized amount is removed from the total cost of the capital improvement.

WALKWAY

Walkways not more than 30 inches above grade do not require a permit. (See Paving for additional information.)

WALLS

(See Fence.)

WATER HEATER

Permit required for the replacement and installation of a Water Heater (strapping for an earthquake is usually included). (See listing under Plumbing.)

WINDOW TREATMENTS

Do not require a permit.

WINDOWS

Permits are required for new window opening or replacement of any window frame that is attached to the wall. Pop-in windows also require a permit and are no longer an exception.