



---

BUILDING DEPARTMENT INFORMATIONAL HANDOUT

Revised 12-10-20

---

**WORK EXEMPT FROM PERMITS**

California State Building Code exempts certain types of work from permit requirements. Exemptions from permit requirements shall not be deemed to grant authorization for any work to be done in any manner in violation of the provisions of the code or any other laws or ordinances of this jurisdiction. Permits shall not be required for the following:

**Building:**

1. One-story detached accessory buildings used as tool and storage sheds, playhouses, and similar uses, provided the floor area does not exceed 120 square feet(11m). The height of the one-story accessory building shall not exceed 12 feet (3.6m) at any point or as specified by local zoning ordinance.
2. Fences not over 7 feet (2134) in height.
3. Oil derricks.
4. Retaining walls that are not over four feet (1219 mm) in height, measured from the bottom of the footing to the top of the wall, unless supporting a surcharge of Class I, II, or III-A liquids.
5. Water tanks supported directly upon grade if the capacity does not exceed 5000 gallons and the ratio of height to diameter or which is not greater than 2:1.
6. Sidewalks and driveways not more than 30 inches (762mm) above adjacent grade, and not over any basement or story below and are not part of an accessible route.
7. Painting, papering, tiling, carpeting, cabinets, counter tops and similar finish work.
8. Temporary motion picture, television and theater stage sets and scenery.
9. Prefabricated swimming pools accessory to a Group R, Division 3 Occupancy (SFD) that are less than 24 inches (610mm) deep do not exceed 5,000 gallons and are installed entirely above ground.
10. Shade cloth structures constructed for nursery or agricultural purposes, not including service systems.
11. Swings and other playground equipment accessory to detached one- and two- family dwellings.
12. Window awnings in Group R-3 and U, supported by an exterior wall that do not project more than 54 inches (1372 mm) from the exterior wall and do not require additional support.
13. Non-fixed and moveable fixtures, cases, racks, counters, and partitions not over 5 feet 9 inches (1753mm) in height.

**Electrical:**

1. **Repairs and maintenance:** Minor repair work, including the replacement of lamps or the connection of approved portable electrical equipment to approved permanently installed receptacles.
2. **Radio and television transmitting stations:** The provisions of this code shall not apply to electrical equipment used for radio and television transmission, but do apply to equipment and wiring for a power supply and the installations of towers and antennas.

3. **Temporary testing systems:** A permit shall not be required for the installation of any temporary system required for the testing or servicing of electrical equipment or apparatus.

**Gas:**

1. Portable heating appliance.
2. Replacement of any minor part that does not alter approval or equipment or make such equipment unsafe.

**Mechanical:**

1. Portable heating appliance.
2. Portable ventilation equipment.
3. Portable cooling unit.
4. Steam, hot or chilled water piping within any heating or cooling equipment regulated by this code.
5. Replacement of any part that does not alter its approval or make it unsafe.
6. Portable evaporative cooler.
7. Self-contained refrigeration system containing 10 pounds (5 kg) or less of refrigerant and actuated by motors of 1 horsepower (746 W) or less.

**Plumbing:**

1. The stopping of leaks in drains, water, soil, waste or vent pipe, provided, however, that if any concealed trap, drain pipe, water, soil, waste, or vent pipe becomes defective and it becomes necessary to remove and replace that same with the new material, such work shall be considered as new work and a permit shall be obtained and inspection made as provided in this code.
2. The clearing of stoppages or the repairing of leaks in pipes, valves or fixtures and the removal and reinstallation of water closets, provided such repairs do not involve or require the replacement or rearrangement of valves, pipes, or fixtures.