



## Building & Safety Division

Community Development Department  
Hipolito Olmos, Building Official  
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Visit us: [www.cityofgilroy.org](http://www.cityofgilroy.org)

## Permitting, Plan Check & Inspections FAQ

### PERMITTING:

**Q: Where do I get a permit?**

**A:** Permits are issued by the Building & Safety Division at the Development Center which is located at City Hall, 7351 Rosanna Street. On some simple jobs, a permit can be obtained during the first visit. However, in most circumstances, more time will be needed to review the plans in detail prior to issuing any permits.

**Q: What happens if I build without a permit?**

**A:** If you begin construction without the required permit(s), a "Stop Work" will immediately be issued by an Inspector. You will be required to apply for the permit(s) and pay fees (up to double the amount of the original fee). After the permit has been properly issued, you will then be required to uncover any work which has been covered so that it may be inspected prior to the release of the Stop Work. In some cases, regulations or codes may not permit the type of construction that has been done. In this case, you may be required to replace or restore the area to its original condition prior to your construction.

**Q: What other information do I need to supply in order to apply for a permit?**

**A:** When applying for a permit, the following information is required to complete the permit submittal:

- Description of all the work to be done on the permit.
- Location of the project (address),
- Legal owner's name, address and phone number,
- Total valuation of the proposed work (Valuation includes all labor and materials, all construction, electrical, heating, water supply, plumbing, fire sprinklers, and elevator equipment) for which the permit is being issued. Valuation must be based on the actual improvement value of the work performed regardless if labor and or materials were donated.

**Q: Who can obtain a permit?**

**A:** Permits may be issued to:

- Property owners (for work on owner-occupied single-family or otherwise allowed by state law).
- Licensed contractors.
- Certified Agents with a Letter of Authorization signed by the owner.

When a permit is issued, the signature and identity of the applicant must be verified. A California Driver's License, State of California Identification Card, or other positive identification will meet this requirement. Contractors are required to have a current City of Gilroy Business License and current State of California Contractor's License. If employees are to be used, Workers' Compensation Insurance Company and policy number must be supplied.

**Q: How much will the permit cost?**

**A:** The cost of building permits is based upon the City's fee schedule. Payment of fees may be made in the form of cash, personal checks, money orders, or Visa and Master card. Contact the Development Center if you would like to have an estimate of the fees for your project.

**Q: What are your hours for issuing permits?**

**A:** Permits are usually issued between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m., Monday through Friday.

**Q: When don't I need a permit?**

**A:** Most major projects will require permits of some kind (building permits and/or planning permits). This is necessary to ensure that all buildings meet minimum standards which protect its occupants and neighbors in everyday living and in the case of emergencies or natural disasters. Some minor projects are allowed without obtaining building permits. However, depending upon the project, other permits (planning

permits, encroachment permits, special activities permits, etc.) may be required. In either case, the construction of such projects should be in conformance with all applicable codes. Some of the projects which do not require a building permit are:

- Retaining walls or planter boxes which are no more than 4' in height (measured from the bottom of the footing to the top of the wall) and do not support another structure, fence, or take on additional loads.
- Wood or chain link fences not greater than 6' high.
- Decks and platforms less than 30" above grade, and not attached to a structure.
- Exterior stairs that are within 30" of grade, have less than four risers (if residential) or less than two risers (if non-residential), and are not a part of an exiting system.
- Pools which are entirely above the adjacent grade and have a maximum capacity of 5,000 gallons.
- Single story detached buildings used as tool and storage sheds, playhouses, etc., as long as the floor area does not exceed 120 square feet and does not have plumbing, heating, or electricity.

Minor improvements typically not needing a permit:

- Interior or exterior painting,
- Installing draperies or blinds,
- Installing carpeting or resilient floor covering,
- Constructing store fixtures (display cases), and removable partitions under 5 feet-9 inches,
- Constructing uncovered concrete patios,
- Changing fixtures and utility outlets, such as lighting and light switches.

These examples are only some of the exempted projects which are listed in various code books. Not all exempted projects have been included. Contact the Building & Safety Division for additional information.

## PLAN CHECK:

### **Q: What are the submittal requirements for a residential project, or a commercial project?**

**A:** We do have submittal guideline for residential or commercial projects. Please contact the Building & Safety Division and we will happy to email you a copy. You can also visit our website to obtain these submittal requirements.

### **Q: What edition to the codes shall we design to?**

**A:** Editions of the following codes adopted by Ordinance 2016-11 and 2016-10, effective January 1, 2017.

On or after January 1, 2017, all buildings or structure shall be erected, constructed, enlarged, altered or repaired in accordance with the new codes.

- Gilroy City Code (**GCC**)
- 2016 California Building Code (**CBC**)
- 2016 California Residential Building Code (**CRC**)\*
- 2016 California Green Building Standards Code (**CALGREEN**)
- 2016 California Electrical Code (**CEC**)
- 2016 California Plumbing Code (**CPC**)
- 2016 California Historical Building Code (**CHBC**)
- 2016 California Fire Code (**CFC**)
- 2016 California Mechanical Code (**CMC**)
- 2015 International Property Maintenance Code (**IPMC**)
- 2016 California Energy Code (**CEnC**)
- 2016 California Existing Building Code (**CEBC**) and 2012 International Existing Building Code (**IEBC**) Appendix A1, A2, A3, A4, and A5

**Q: What other Ordinances affect construction in the City of Gilroy?**

- A:**
- [Shopping Cart Ordinance 2007-10](#)
  - [Construction and Demolition Ordinance 2007-20](#)
  - [Building Security Ordinance 85-17](#)
  - [Building Security Ordinance amended by 2002-19 to require - PUBLIC SAFETY RADIO SYSTEM to support the City's Public Safety Communications System in any structure over 10,000 square feet](#)
  - [Hours of Construction 2004-15](#)
  - [URM Ordinance 2007-06, 2006-19, 20](#)
  - [Wood Burning Appliances 2005-06](#)
  - [Repair Ordinance 2008-08](#)
  - [Fire Code Amendments](#)
  - [Building Code Amendments 2008-03](#)

**Q: What amendments has the City of Gilroy adopted to the codes?**

**A:** Amendments to the adopted codes can be found in Ordinance [2016-10](#) and [2016-11](#). It is currently available on our website. A copy can also be email to you if you wish. Please call (408)-846-0541.

**Q: What design criteria should I use for the City of Gilroy?**

- A:**
- **Seismic Design Category (SDC):** D (Section 1613, CBC)
  - **Wind Speed & Exposure:** 110 mph, Surface Roughness Category C, and Wind Exposure C
  - **Climate Zone:** 4 (Fig A101-A, CEnC)
  - **Soil Bearing Pressure:** 1500 pounds per square foot (psf) or in accordance with the soil report. Due to expansive soil conditions in Gilroy, a soil report is required for all new construction projects (Section 1803, CBC). Please contact the Building Division if you have any questions.
  - **Maximum Rainfall:** 1.5 inches per hour. (Table D-1, CPC)
  - **Climatic and Geographic Design Criteria (CRC Section 301.2)\*:**
  - **Ground Snow Load:** NA
  - **Wind Design Speed:** 110 mph (see exception)
  - **Seismic Design Category:** D2, CRC Section R301.2.2.1 for SDS=1.0 in the City of Gilroy
  - **Air Freezing Index:** See Table 403.3(2), CRC
  - **Mean Annual Temperature:** 59.7 degrees Fahrenheit
  - **Subject to Damage From:**
    - **Weathering:** No
    - **Frost Line Depth:** 12 inches
    - **Termite:** Very High
    - **Winter Design Temperature:** 32 degrees Fahrenheit
    - **Ice Barrier Underlayment Required:** No
    - **Flood Hazards:**
      - City of Gilroy has participated in the NFIP since 8/1/1980 (Ordinance 98-17 adopted 9/8/98)
      - Last Flood Insurance Study was completed on June 29, 2009
      - Map Number 06085CIND0A, C0619H, C0636H, C0637H, C0638H, C0639H, C0643H, C0752H, C0756H, C0757H of 830 (Effective Date May 18, 2009)

\*applicable only to one- and two-family dwellings

For additional information regarding your next project, please visit the Building & Safety Division at (408) 846-0451 or our website at: <http://www.cityofgilroy.org/209/Building-Safety-Division>

**Q: How many sets of plans to I need to submit?**

**A: Plans:**

- **New Commercial & Industrial:** 5 of which 2 sets shall be wet stamped and signed by the design professional in charge of the project.
- **New Residential:** 4 (5 if Hillside Construction) of which 2 sets shall be wet stamped and signed
  - Model plans must include reverse plans for foundation, floor plans and building sections.
  - For subdivisions, submit an 8" x 11" plot plan, including address, tract number, lot number, setbacks, lot drainage, utilities and street furniture.
- **Tenant Improvements:** 4 of which 2 sets shall be wet stamped and signed
- **Residential Alterations:** 4 of which 2 sets shall be wet stamped and signed

**Calculation and Soil Reports:**

**T24 Energy Calculation** - 2 sets

**Structural Calculations** - 2 sets shall be wet stamped and signed

**Soil Report** - 2 sets

The final, approved plans for Commercial, Industrial, Dwellings - 3 or more stories in height, and Condo projects must also be submitted in digital format before permit issuance.

As-built plans for Commercial and Industrial projects must be submitted in digital format before issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy.

**Q: What is the turnaround time for my project?**

**A:** The turnaround time depends on the size of the project. It can range from over-the-counter to a maximum turnaround time of 6 to 10 weeks. Some projects, such as re-roofs, water heaters, window replacements, termite repair work, etc., can be fully permitted over-the-counter, meaning a return trip won't be needed. Please visit the Building & Safety Division at 7351 Rosanna St. Gilroy, CA.

**Q: When do I need to submit for plan review at the Health Department?**

**A:** Plans for restaurants, bars, grocery stores and other food type occupancies shall also be submitted to the County Health Department.

3 sets of plans must be submitted to:

Santa Clara County Environmental Health  
Consumer Protection

1555 Berger Drive, Suite 300

San Jose, CA 95112-2716

Environmental Health questions? Call: (408) 918-3400

Fax: (408) 258-5891

## **INSPECTION:**

**Q: Can I do the work myself or do I have to hire a contractor?**

**A:** Property owners may do work on their own property, but certain regulations must be followed. Among them: Workers' Compensation: If the property owner hires anyone other than a State Licensed contractor they need to purchase Workers' Compensation Insurance. Proof of this insurance will need to be provided to the Building Division. The property owner will also need to fill out an "Owner-Builder" statement prior to the issuance of a permit.

**Q: How do I verify if a contractor is licensed?**

**A:** Contractors are required by the State of California to be licensed by the [California State Contractors' License Board \(CSLB\)](#). You can verify a contractors' license information by telephoning the CSLB at 1-800-321-CSLB (2752).

**Q: What if I have a permit but never called for inspections?**

**A:** Generally, permits expire after 180 days if no inspections have been made. In order for the project to be complete, it must pass final inspection. If a permit expires before final inspection, the project is in violation of City codes. If this is the case, telephone (408) 846-0451. We'll help you to reactivate the permit or apply for a new permit with as little inconvenience as possible.

**Q: What about inspections?**

**A:** It is property owner's responsibility to call us for inspections at specific times during construction. The property owner may have the contractor make the call, but it is still the property owner's responsibility, as the property owner, to make sure the inspections are made. During the construction phase, inspections by City Staff are required prior to covering any concealed areas. Inspections also are required prior to:

- Placing concrete or grout;
- Covering electrical, plumbing, or mechanical work;
- Covering floor framing;
- Covering interior sides of wall framing;
- Taping gypsum wallboard;
- Applying stucco;
- Covering fire sprinkler systems;
- Covering penetrations of fire-rated portions or floors.

Inspections are also required prior to connecting to, or the hook-up of:

- Gas lines;
- Electrical service; and/or
- Water and sewer services.

These inspections are required to insure that the construction is proceeding according to the approved plans and project conditions-of-approval, and/or that all current code standards are being met. In turn, this will help to insure your personal safety and to secure the value of the improvement. It is your responsibility to schedule all inspections. An appointment must be made at least one working day in advance. During busy construction months, you may have to schedule several days in advance. Periodic inspections must be scheduled until the project is completed and final approval is given by the City. After the job has received a final inspection, the building permit will be kept on file with the City of Gilroy as proof of the work which was completed.