



Planning & Building Department

3675 Mt. Diablo Boulevard, Suite 210

Lafayette, CA 94549-1968

Tel. (925) 284-1976

<http://www.ci.lafayette.ca.us>

HOW TO GET A BUILDING PERMIT IN LAFAYETTE

- Please see the following page for a list of projects that do not require a building permit or City review.
- Applying for a building permit in the City of Lafayette can include up to four review steps.
 - Review the following pages to understand which projects require review by the Lafayette Planning Department, Central Contra Costa Sanitary District (CCCCSD), and the Contra Costa County Fire Protection District (CCCFPD).
 - Steps 1-3 can be completed in any order, though review by the Planning Department first is recommended. All applicable approvals (Steps 1-3) must be received before the permit goes to the County building department (Step 4).

Step 1:	Lafayette Planning Department – Zoning Plan Check
<p>www.LoveLafayette.org/Planning Tel. (925) 284-1968 planner@lovelafayette.org 3675 Mt. Diablo Boulevard, Suite 210, Lafayette, CA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Digitally submit plans to https://lovelafayette.geocivix.com/ • Visit www.LoveLafayette.org/planning to find out how to contact a planner 	

Step 2:	Contra Costa County Fire Protection District	Step 3:	Central Contra Costa Sanitary District
<p>www.CCCFPD.org Tel. (925) 941-3300 info@cccfpd.org 4005 Port Chicago Hwy, Suite #250, Concord, CA</p>		<p>www.CentralSan.org Tel. (925) 228-9500 permits@centralsan.org 5019 Imhoff Place, Martinez, CA</p>	

Step 4:	Contra Costa County Building Inspection Department
<p><i>Lafayette contracts with the Contra Costa County Building Inspection Department (CCCBID) to perform building code plan-check and inspection services.</i></p> <p>www.contracosta.ca.gov 30 Muir Road, Martinez, CA Tel. (925) 655-2700</p>	

PROJECTS EXEMPT FROM ZONING PLAN CHECK* AND A BUILDING PERMIT (LAFAYETTE PLANNING DEPARTMENT & CONTRA COSTA COUNTY DCD)

Almost all construction and remodel projects require a building permit. It is safe to assume that a permit is required unless you are told by a building official that a permit is not required or the project is exempt from the California Building & Residential Codes as listed below. If you have any questions as to whether your specific project requires a permit, please contact the Contra Costa County Building Inspection Department (CCCBID). **Exempt projects are no longer considered exempt when a Waste Management Plan is required based on the criteria on the following pages.*

Excerpt from the 2022 California Building & Residential Codes (CBC & CRC)

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

Section 105.2 Work exempt from permit	Section R105.2 Work exempt from permit
<p>California Building Code</p> <p><u>Building:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. One-story detached accessory structures used as tool and storage sheds, playhouses and similar uses, provided the floor area does not exceed 120 sq. ft. It is permissible that these structures still be regulated by Section 710A, despite exemption from permit. 2. Fences not over 7 ft. high. <i>(Lafayette limits fence height to 6 ft within property setbacks)</i> 3. Oil derricks. 4. Retaining walls that are not more than 3 feet in height measured from the top of the footing to the top of the wall and that have a downward ground slope at the bottom of the retaining wall not exceeding 1(vertical):10(horizontal), unless supporting a surcharge or ground slope exceeding 1(vertical):2(horizontal) or impounding Class I, II, or III-a liquids. 5. Water tanks supported directly on grade if the capacity does not exceed 5,000 gallons and the ratio of height to diameter or width does not exceed 2:1. 6. Sidewalks and driveways not more than 30 in. 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-3 occupancy that are less than 24 in. 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. 	<p>California Residential Code</p> <p><u>Building:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Other than storm shelters, one-story detached accessory structures, provided that the floor area does not exceed 120 square feet (11.15 m²). It is permissible that these structures still be regulated by Section 710A, despite exception from permit. 2. Fences not over 7 feet (1829 mm) high. <i>(Lafayette limits fence height to 6 ft within property setbacks)</i> 3. Retaining walls that are not more than 3 feet in height measured from the top of the footing to the top of the wall and that have a downward ground slope at the bottom of the retaining wall not exceeding 1(vertical):10(horizontal), unless supporting a surcharge or ground slope exceeding 1(vertical):2(horizontal) or impounding Class I, II, or III-a liquids 4. Water tanks supported directly upon grade if the capacity does not exceed 5,000 gallons (18 927 L) and the ratio of height to diameter or width does not exceed 2 to 1. 5. Sidewalks and driveways. 6. Painting, papering, tiling, carpeting, cabinets, counter tops and similar finish work. 7. Prefabricated swimming pools that are less than 24 inches (610 mm) deep. 8. Swings and other playground equipment. 9. Window awnings supported by an exterior wall which do not project more than 54 inches (1372 mm) from the exterior wall and do not require additional support. 10. Decks not exceeding 200 square feet (18.58 m²) in area, that are not more than 30 inches (762 mm) above grade at any point, are not attached to a dwelling and do not serve the exit door required by Section R311.4.

Building, cont'd

11. Swings and other playground equipment accessory to detached one- and two-family dwellings.
12. Window awnings in Group R-3 and U occupancies, supported by an exterior wall that do not project more than 54 inches from the exterior wall and do not require additional support
13. Nonfixed and movable fixtures, cases, racks, counters and partitions not over 5 ft. 9 in. 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 transmissions, but do apply to equipment and wiring for a power supply and 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 of 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 lbs. or less of refrigerant and actuated by motors of 1 horsepower 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 the 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.

Electrical:

1. Listed cord-and-plug connected temporary decorative lighting.
2. Reinstallation of attachment plug receptacles, but not the outlets therefor.
3. Replacement of branch circuit overcurrent devices of the required capacity in the same location.
4. Electrical wiring, devices, appliances, apparatus or equipment operating at less than 25 volts and not capable of supplying more than 50 watts of energy.
5. Minor repair work, including the replacement of lamps or the connection of approved portable electrical equipment to approved permanently installed receptacles.

Gas:

1. Portable heating, cooking or clothes drying appliances.
2. Replacement of any minor part that does not alter approval of equipment or make such equipment unsafe.
3. Portable-fuel-cell appliances that are not connected to a fixed piping system and are not interconnected to a power grid.

Mechanical:

1. Portable heating appliances.
2. Portable ventilation appliances.
3. Portable cooling units.
4. Steam, hot- or chilled-water piping within any heating or cooling equipment regulated by this code.
5. Replacement of any minor part that does not alter approval of equipment or make such equipment unsafe.
6. Portable evaporative coolers.
7. Self-contained refrigeration systems containing 10 pounds (4.54 kg) or less of refrigerant or that are actuated by motors of 1 horsepower (746 W) or less.
8. Portable-fuel-cell appliances that are not connected to a fixed piping system and are not interconnected to a power grid.

Plumbing:

1. The stopping of leaks in drains, water, soil, waste or vent pipe; provided, however, that if any concealed trap, drainpipe, water, soil, waste or vent pipe becomes defective and it becomes necessary to remove and replace the same with 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.

PROJECTS EXEMPT FROM ZONING PLAN CHECK* (LAFAYETTE PLANNING DEPARTMENT – STEP 1)

The following projects may proceed directly to the Contra Costa County Building Inspection Department to submit your application for building permit. These projects are exempt from Zoning Plan Check as they have been found to uniformly comply with the Zoning Code.

1. **Termite or dry-rot repair** where there is no increase in square footage, and no increase in the number of plumbing fixtures (including roughing in or stubbing for future use).
2. **Kitchen remodel**, except when a second kitchen facility is being added.
3. **Electrical or natural gas permits** for repair or replacement where there is no increase in the number of meters.
4. Mechanical permits for installation, repair, or replacement of new **HVAC equipment for single-family residential** property.
5. Mechanical or plumbing permits for repair, replacement or installation of **water heaters or pool or spa equipment** for single-family residential property.
6. **Foundation repair or seismic upgrade** where there is no increase in the square footage or bulk of the structure.
7. **Repairs to existing swimming pools** and spas.
8. Bathroom or other **interior remodels** where there is no increase in conditioned space.
9. **Fire damage repair**: if there is no increase in building size or the installation of a second kitchen that was not existing prior to the fire.
10. **Window replacements in-kind** in the existing rough-framed openings, new skylights, or removal of windows. New windows requiring new openings to be framed do require City review.
11. **Residential re-roofs** under 5,000 sq. ft. (50 roofing squares) are exempt and do not require a Construction & Demolition Debris Recycling Waste Management Plan.
12. **Rooftop solar projects** that are flush mounted on a detached single-family dwelling or a duplex, and do not exceed the building height limit of the zoning district in which the project is located.
13. Residential or commercial **electric vehicle charging stations** located on private property.
14. **Decks** being demolished, repaired in-kind, or the addition of cross bracing. New or enlarged decks require City planning review.
15. **Siding repair or replacement** if the color and material are like-for-like.
16. **Retaining walls** under 4 ft. in height.

**Exempt projects are no longer considered exempt when a Waste Management Plan is required based on the criteria below.*

- *Residential: All newly constructed buildings, all demolition-only projects, all projects that increase conditioned area, volume, or size, all projects where the addition or alteration is 1,000 sq. ft. or larger, and/or all projects where the project valuation is \$50,000 or greater, with the exception of reroof-only projects.*
- *Non-Residential: All projects.*

Step 1:**Lafayette Planning Department - Zoning Plan Check**

To submit an application on the City's electronic review portal, visit lovelafayette.geocivix.com to register for an account and submit your application.

Required application submittals for zoning plan set:

1. Complete digital set of architectural plans. Please see *Application for a Building Permit Submittal Guidelines* on the following page for information that should be included on plans submitted for a building or grading permit.
 - a. **Projects adding 500 or more square feet of impervious surface** are subject to the provisions of the National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES). A drainage plan is required to demonstrate how stormwater runoff from your site, including roof areas, patios, driveways etc. is handled. The City Engineer reviews drainage plans to ensure implementation of the NPDES Best Management Practices (BMPs). When a building addition is proposed, the drainage plan shall show existing drainage system and how the project will tie into or affect the existing system.
2. Completed [Contra Costa County Application for a Building Permit](#).

The planner-on-duty will review your plans for compliance with all applicable zoning regulations. If the project complies, you will receive a link via email to access stamped plans and a signed *Application for Building Permit* to complete Steps 2 through 4.

Common Building Permit Holds

<u>Waste Management Plans</u>	Required if your project involves commercial construction, a new residential building, residential demolition-only, or increase residential conditioned area, volume, or size . Waste Management Plans (WMP) are submitted to the City online using Green Halo Systems . Approval of a WMP is a hold on building permit issuance and completion of the WMP is a hold on final inspection.
<u>USA North 811</u>	Every digging project requires a call to USA North 811. You are required to call two full days before you dig to request a ticket number. Assigned ticket number documentation from USA North 811 must be provided to the City of Lafayette for confirmation. The City of Lafayette will put a hold on issuance until you have called/requested a ticket from USA North 811.
<u>Planning Department fees</u>	Your project may be subject to fees at time of zoning plan check, in addition to paying any outstanding balances. These fees are charged separately from the County's building permit fees.

Revisions to Permitted Plans

First reviewed by Lafayette Planning Department then County Building Department

No changes or alterations to permitted plans shall be made without the approval of the Lafayette Planning Department and Contra Costa County Building Inspection Department (Steps 1 & 4). When proposing revisions to permitted plans the applicant shall prepare revised plans and submit them to the online portal for review and approval by the Planning Department. Once the revisions are approved by the Planning Department, the applicant shall submit the revised plans to the Contra Costa County Building Inspection Department for their review.

APPLICATION FOR ZONING PLAN CHECK SUBMITTAL GUIDELINES

For Zoning Plan Check by the Lafayette Planning Department, your plans should include the following:

All Plans

- Property Owner(s) Assessor's Parcel Number (APN) North Arrow
 Property Address Scale (Architect or Engineer Scale)

1. Site Plan**

- Zoning District in which the property is located (e.g. R-20)
- Location Map (map showing location within the city)
- Context Map (showing relationship of proposed project/parcel with surrounding development)
- Entire subject property (show property lines as a double dashed line) _____ - - _____
- Property dimensions (metes & bounds)
- Setbacks (front, side yards and rear yard using a dashed line) - - - - -
- All existing structures & proposed structures, additions, areas of alterations (highlight new construction)
- Easements, topographical features (swales, steep slopes, retaining walls, etc.)
- Topography (existing as dashed line, proposed as solid line)
- Amount of cut, fill, import, and export (cu. yds.)
- Tree location, species, and accurate dripline
- Current and proposed onsite drainage
- Projects adding 500 square feet or more of new impervious area must be reviewed by the City Engineer. Plans shall identify the site planning and design measures proposed to minimize stormwater pollution potential. For additional information, see the separate handout "Stormwater Quality Control Guidelines" available from the Planning & Building Department or at www.lovelafayette.org/stormwater.
- For projects that create or replace 2,500 square feet or more of impervious surface: If permanent stormwater facilities are required to be installed to minimize stormwater pollution potential, the property owner may be required to enter into a City of Lafayette Stormwater Facility Operation and Maintenance Agreement and submit a \$5,000 performance security.

2. Floor Plan

- Floor plan for the entirety of all structures
(show new walls as darkened; show existing walls to be removed with dashed lines)

3. Elevations

- Provide elevations labeled North, South, East and West
- Show existing and proposed finished grades on each elevation

4. Square Footage Calculations

- Calculate area of existing & proposed living space, unconditioned space (garage, shed, etc.).
- Impervious surfaces (building footprint, pavement, etc.): Pre-project total, replaced impervious surface, new impervious surface, post-project total, pervious surfaces.

Floor Areas (sq. ft.)	Existing	New
First Floor		
Second Floor		
Garage		
Accessory Building(s)		
Other _____		
Total		

Impervious (sq. ft.)	Existing	New
Building Footprint		
Driveway		
Patio & Walkways		
Swimming Pool		
Other _____		
Total		

**** Note:** The City strongly recommends that you hire a California certified land surveyor to survey the property and base your plans on said survey. The Contra Costa County Building Inspection Department may require you to submit a certification letter, prepared by a California certified land surveyor or registered civil engineer, verifying that the building or structure is sited in the location as shown on the approved plans. Inaccurate plans may lead to costly delays.

Step 2: [Contra Costa County Fire Protection District](#) - Building Plan Review (if applicable)

Contra Costa County Fire Protection District (CCCFPD) will review all project plans to ensure fire safety standards are met. The basic objectives of the CCCFPD building plan review are to protect the lives and property of Contra Costa County residents from fires, natural disasters and hazardous materials.

CCCFPD requires review of the following projects:

- Any new commercial or residential construction, including single family and duplex buildings.
- Any single family and duplex building additions or expansions that increase the existing fire area* by more than 50 percent and result in a total fire area exceeding 3,600 square feet.
- Any commercial additions or expansions that increase the existing fire area by more than 50 percent and result in a total fire area exceeding 5,000 square feet.
- Any changes in commercial occupancy classification to a higher hazard category from a lower hazard category.
- Commercial tenant improvements.
- Building additions that extend beyond the existing building foundation.

*“Fire Area” is defined by the California Fire Code as the aggregate floor area enclosed and bounded by firewalls, fire barriers, exterior walls or horizontal assemblies of a building. Areas of the building not provided with surrounding walls shall be included in the fire area if such areas are included within the horizontal projection of the roof or floor next above.

Step 3: [Central Contra Costa Sanitary District](#) - Building Plan Review (if applicable)

Central Contra Costa Sanitary District (Central-San) works to meet the wastewater collection and treatment needs of Contra Costa County through pollution prevention, safe disposal of toxics, encouraging the use of recycled water, and solving critical water pollution and water resource problems. Central-San staff will review the project plans to ensure that there will be no adverse impacts on the sanitary sewer system and no encroachment into a sanitary sewer easement.

Central-San requires review of the following projects:

- Any new residential or commercial sewer connection.
- Septic system conversions and residential sewage pumping.
- Interior remodeling which requires modification/repairs to sewers outside the building walls.
- Building additions that extend beyond the existing building foundation.
- Any structure that would include excavation work, foundation, or piers (such as pools, deck, fences and retaining walls) or which, upon completion, would prevent access to sanitary sewer facilities for routine maintenance and repairs (such as concrete patios).
- All non-residential tenant improvements, whether or not plumbing is being modified.

Note: Properties not served by a public sewer utilize a septic system for wastewater disposal. Additions on properties that contain a septic system must be reviewed by Contra Costa Environmental Health which will ensure the septic system is functioning properly.

Step 4: County Building Inspection Department - Plan Check & Permit Issuance

The City of Lafayette contracts with the County Building Inspection Department's (CCCBID) to provide building services, including reviewing plans for compliance with building codes, permit issuance, and inspections. CCCBID's fundamental objective is to help customers achieve their construction goals through the application of building, health, and safety standards. CCCBID achieves this through plan check, permit and inspection services, public information, and housing improvement programs.

Once plans have been reviewed and stamped by the Lafayette Planning Department, Contra Costa County Fire Protection District and the Central Contra Costa Sanitary District, submit all sets of stamped drawings to the County Building Department to the County's e-permit center: <https://www.contracosta.ca.gov/7863/Applying-for-a-Building-or-Grading-Permi>.

Building Permit Status & Records

Applicants and the public can check on the status of permits by using the Department of Conservation and Development's Building Permit Database (<https://aaweb.cccounty.us/citizenaccess/>) and select the "Building" tab.

Permits can be searched for by entering any of the following information:

- General Search
- Property Address
- Permit Number
- Licensed Contractor Information