



## TOWN OF WARRENTON

Department of Community Development

PO BOX 341  
WARRENTON, VIRGINIA 20188  
<http://www.warrentonva.gov>  
TELEPHONE (540) 347-1101  
FAX (540) 349-2414

### Do I Need a Permit?

**PLEASE NOTE:** You will need the Town Manager's permission to work on the weekends and after hours. The below applies to Residential projects only. Residential projects are one-family and two-family dwellings and townhouses. Apartment buildings, condos, and similar buildings are considered to be Commercial projects. For questions about Commercial projects, consult a Licensed Design Professional, or contact Community Development at 540-347-2405 [permittedtech@warrentonva.gov](mailto:permittedtech@warrentonva.gov).

**Restrictive Covenants** – Check with your homeowners' association (HOA) to determine whether your community has restrictive covenants which would require HOA approval on any improvements or maintenance to the exterior of your house, including roofing, siding, painting, additions of decks or garages, and landscaping or privacy fences.

**Zoning Approval** – Exterior projects may require approval from the Town of Warrenton Zoning Department, whether or not a Building Permit is required. Zoning approval is always required for construction of principal buildings and accessory structures/buildings such as decks, additions, garages, carports, retaining walls, fences, hot tubs and swimming pools. Zoning approval is also required for some accessory uses and / or Town Council approval, such as a secondary food preparation area (i.e. a wet bar and/or food warming kitchen) in a basement accessory dwelling unit. You are urged to contact the Zoning Department at 540-347-2405.

**Building Code** – All jurisdictions in Virginia are required to use the Uniform Statewide Building Code (VUSBC). The state adopts the national model codes, with amendments, for use statewide so that everyone is subject to the same regulations. The applicable codes that are used for home improvement projects can be found on the [www.dhcd.virginia.gov/virginia-uniform-statewide-building-code-usbc](http://www.dhcd.virginia.gov/virginia-uniform-statewide-building-code-usbc)

**Building and Zoning Permits Always Required** – A permit is always required for any of the following work:

- Porches or decks where the floor is 30" inches or more above the finished grade or steps four or more risers.
- Replacing deck guard railing and any structural framing and post.
- Accessibility Upgrades (i.e., temporary ramps, permanent ramps, grab bars, widening doors and existing interior openings, wheelchair lifts)
- Additions\*
- Garages or carports\*
- Finishing your basement. Zoning is required when adding an areaway or egress window.



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- Secondary food preparation area - wet bar and/or food warming kitchen.
- Residential accessory buildings (sheds) greater than 256 square feet in area.
- Any barrier/fence used for pedestrian safety or for a swimming pool.
- All retaining walls supporting more than four feet of unbalanced fill.
- Retaining wall of any height that supports a surge from a structure above (walls, roads, driveways, sidewalks, etc.)
- In-ground or above-ground swimming pools or spas impounding more than two feet of water, greater than 150 square feet, and greater than 5,000 gallons.
- Removing or altering any structural (support) members and any work involving alterations to the house plumbing, electrical, or heating and air conditioning (mechanical) systems. Zoning is not required for interior work.
- Installing a lawn irrigation system (permit required for backflow device) - see the Lawn Irrigation System Requirements see Town Public Works Facility manual for more information. Call Public Works 540-347-1858.
- Installing a prefabricated fireplace, insert, or wood stove. Zoning is not required for interior work.
- Installation or replacement of doors and/or windows when structural alterations are made or required. Zoning is not required for interior work.
- Replacing gas or oil furnaces, gas logs, or appliances (water heater, range, etc.) Zoning is not required for interior work.
- Installing a new electrical circuit, fixture, or receptacle (see low voltage exception below) Zoning not required for interior work.
- New appliances in a new location and upgraded appliances requiring electrical, plumbing, or mechanical systems upgrades. Zoning is not required for interior work.
- Replacing water and sewer laterals from the street. Provide cleanout per Town Facility Manual. Call Public Works 540-347-1858.

**Permits Not Required** – Remember that although the work is not subject to permit requirements, the work must be performed in a manner meeting code requirements. The following work does not require permits, or is classified by the code as "ordinary repair" and not subject to permit requirements:

- Replacing deck board on walking surfaces.
- Residential accessory buildings (storage sheds) one story and 256 square feet or less in area\* Will need a Zoning permit.
- Fences (unless required as a swimming pool barrier) \* Will need a Zoning permit.
- Retaining walls used for landscaping purposes that are less than four feet in height and do not support a surge from any roadways or structures above (Note: Retaining wall systems composed of several tiers of individual retaining walls will require a permit if the upper wall is within two times the height of the lower wall and the overall height of the tiered retaining wall system is at least four feet.) \*
- Concrete or masonry walls provided such walls do not exceed six feet in height\* Will need a Zoning permit.



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- Re-roofing or new siding repairs (residential only)
- Replacement of 256 square feet or less of roof decking (Note: Permits are required where the decking to be replaced was required at the time of original construction to be fire retardant-treated or protected in some other way to form a fire-rated wall termination. This case is mostly applicable to townhouses.)
- Concrete (patio) slabs on grade that are not designed to support a future building addition\* or no more than 30" above grade. Will need a Zoning permit.
- Temporary ramps where the height of the entrance served by the ramp is no more than 30 inches above grade\* Will need a Zoning permit.
- Replacing windows and doors with windows and doors of similar operating and opening dimensions that do not require changes to the existing framed opening.
- Re-glazing (glass replacement in the existing windows).
- Installation or replacement of cabinetry or trim.
- Installation or replacement of floor finishes
- Painting (interior or exterior) and wallpapering.
- Replacing gutters or downspouts
- Flagpoles 30 feet or less in height\*
- Replacing existing plumbing fixtures (water closets, tubs, sinks, garbage disposals, etc.) where no alteration to the supply or drain/waste/vent systems are involved.
- Installation of low-voltage wiring (under 50 volts - door bell or security system)
- Replacing existing light fixtures.
- Replacing existing electrical appliances when replaced in the same location with units of similar capacity where no alteration to the electrical circuit is involved.
- Replacing an electrical water heater with the same size heater in the same location.
- Replacing an electric furnace, heat pump, or air conditioning condensing unit with the same type unit in the same location.
- Repairing air-conditioners or furnaces by installing replacement parts.

\*Zoning and/or Erosion and Sediment approval may be required.