

Building Permit Exemptions

It is usually easier to answer what does not require a building permit instead of listing what does require a building permit. Below is a list of work which does not require a permit per the Lynnwood Municipal Code and the applicable International Codes.

Please note that even if the work does not require a permit, there may be other regulations which apply. This list does not include exemptions for mechanical, electrical, or plumbing work.

SINGLE-FAMILY CONSTRUCTION

1. One-story detached accessory structures which are 120 sq. ft. or less and used as tool sheds, storage sheds, playhouses or similar uses. Setback requirements may still apply.
2. Fences 6 ft. or less in height. Fences must still meet the requirements of LMC 21.10.
3. Retaining walls 4 ft. or less in height, as measured from the bottom of the footing to the top of the wall. This exemption does not apply to retaining walls supporting a surcharge.
4. Water tanks supported directly upon grade if the capacity does not exceed 5,000 gallons and the ratio of height to diameter (width) does not exceed 2:1.
5. Sidewalks and driveways (may require a permit from Public Works).
6. Painting, papering, tiling, carpeting, cabinets, countertops, and similar finish work.
7. Prefabricated swimming pools that are less than 24 inches deep.
8. Swings and other playground equipment accessory to detached one- and two-family dwellings.
9. Window awnings supported by an exterior wall which do not project more than 4.5 ft. from the exterior wall and which do not require additional support.
10. Decks not exceeding 200 sq. ft. in area, that are not more than 30 inches above grade at any point, are not attached to the dwelling, and that do not serve an exit door which is required by the International Residential Code (IRC, Section R311.4).

COMMERCIAL AND MULTIPLE-FAMILY CONSTRUCTION

1. One-story detached accessory structures which are 120 sq. ft. or less and used as tool sheds, storage sheds, playhouses or similar uses. Setback requirements may still apply.
2. Fences 6 ft. or less in height. Fences must still meet the requirements of LMC 21.10.
3. Oil derricks.
4. Retaining walls 4 ft. or less in height, as measured from the bottom of the footing to the top of the wall. This exemption does not apply to retaining walls supporting a surcharge or impounding Class I, II, or IIIA liquids.
5. Water tanks supported directly upon grade if the capacity does not exceed 5,000 gallons and the ratio of height to diameter (width) does not exceed 2:1.
6. Sidewalks and driveways not more than 30 inches above the adjacent grade, not over any basement or story below, and not part of an ADA accessible route (may require a permit from Public Works).
7. Painting, papering, tiling, carpeting, cabinets, countertops, and similar finish work.
8. Temporary motion picture, television and theater stage sets and scenery.
9. Prefabricated swimming pools that are accessory to a Group R-3 occupancy that are less than 24 inches 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. Window awnings supported by an exterior wall which do not project more than 4.5 ft. from the exterior wall and which do not require additional support.
12. Non-fixed and movable fixtures, cases, racks, counters and partitions which are 5 ft. 9 inches or less in height.