

Building or Improving? Do It Right!



A City of Covina guide to the residential permitting process.
Business Hours: 7:00 am – 6:00 pm Monday through Thursday
Payment methods: check, cash, money order

Permits and inspections are required for a variety of reasons, all based on safety, stability, and some based on maintaining the aesthetics of our community.

This publication is intended as a first step for individuals seeking guidance on the process for building and/or improving property. The information provided in this publication provides general guidelines, but each project is unique and may require steps beyond those outlined here.

Although not required, to ensure the success of your project the City of Covina highly recommends the services of a licensed professional. For a list of contractors in the Los Angeles County vicinity please visit www.thebluebook.com. To see if a contractor has a current and active license, please visit the California State License Board at www.cslb.ca.gov or call the toll free automated line: (800) 321-CSLB (2752).

Whether a contractor is involved, or you are undertaking the project on your own, please read this information carefully, then schedule an appointment with the appropriate City of Covina professional staff to answer questions specific to your project.

Four City areas will provide services: Planning Division, Building, Engineering and Environmental Sections. The types of permits you may apply for are listed below:

Permit Types	Who Issues	Telephone
Site Plan Review, Landscaping, Variances, and Administrative Conditional Use Permits	Planning	(626) 384-5450
Building, Mechanical, Electrical, Plumbing, Room Additions, Remodels, Demolition, Swimming Pools, Grading, Patios, Porches, Decks, Fireplaces, Decks, Drywall, Stucco, Skylights, Block Walls, and Sheds	Building	General Information: (626) 384-5460 Inspection Requests: (626) 384-5461 Confirmation Line (626) 384-5000 Ext. 5907
Highway, Street, Road Closures Encroachment, New Sewer Connections Overload/Moving	Engineering	(626) 384-5490
Swimming Pool Drainage and Repair	Environmental	(626) 384-5480



City of Covina
125 E. College Street
Covina, CA 91723

www.covinaca.gov

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Planning Division Permits

Project Type	Permit Required?	Required Approvals
Artificial Turf	Yes	Planning
In Home Business License	Yes	Planning
Residential Day Care (More than eight kids)	Yes	Planning
Yard sale Permit	Yes	

PLANNING DIVISION

To ensure that your request is in compliance with zoning code regulations, and is consistent with the City General Plan, please visit the Planning Division prior to Building or Public Works. Planning will guide you through the steps you will have to take should you wish to alter or expand your residence. They will inform you about Site Plan Review and any other requirements. The number for obtaining Planning and zoning requirements is (626) 384-5450.

Site Plan Reviews:

Site Plan Review applications and plans are submitted by the applicant to the Planning Division so that they can be reviewed by applicable City and County Departments to check for code compliance and to determine if any further studies or submittals are necessary.

Variances:

Variance applications are applied for requests for exceptions to current zoning laws that do not compromise the public health, safety and welfare. Certain findings are required depending on the type of variance.

Council & Planning Commission:

The Planning Division will instruct if you need to obtain Planning Commission approval of your application. The Planning Commission meets on the second and fourth Tuesday of every month. Commission decisions may be appealed to the City Council for final consideration. The City Council meets on the first and third Tuesdays of every month. Both meet at 7:30 PM in the City Council Chambers.

Public Noticing Program:

The City of Covina has formally adopted a public noticing program for residential construction projects to provide the public with an opportunity to verify the validity of construction within their neighborhoods. This program requires the property owner and/or contractor to place a sign 14" high x 22" wide using a minimum black 24 point font (Arial) on a white background. The noticing sign must be suitable for outdoor use and placed within the front yard where it is clearly visible from the public right-of-way.

Residential noticing signs shall remain posted until approval at final inspection. Failure to maintain construction sign may delay scheduled inspections.

CITY OF COVINA
PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

PUBLIC NOTICE

THIS CONSTRUCTION PROJECT COMPLIES WITH THE CITY OF COVINA'S MUNICIPAL CODE, WHEREBY GRANTING PERMISSION FOR THE COMMENCEMENT OF WORK, AND REQUIRING INSPECTION APPROVAL BY THE BUILDING AND SAFETY SECTION.

PROJECT ADDRESS: _____

PROJECT TYPE: _____

CONTACT: _____ PHONE #: _____ LICENSE #: _____

PERMIT #: _____ ISSUANCE DATE: _____

THE CITY OF COVINA'S MUNICIPAL CODE PROHIBITS CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITY BETWEEN THE HOURS OF 8:00 PM AND 7:00 AM MONDAY THROUGH SATURDAY AND ALL DAY SUNDAYS AND HOLIDAYS.

BUILDING AND SAFETY SECTION (626) 384 5460

BUILDING AND SAFETY SECTION

Scheduling Building Inspections:

When requesting inspections please call the Building Section prior to 3:00 PM for an inspection on the next working day. Inspection requests will be scheduled for the following working day after they are received. If a Monday Inspection is desired, please call the inspection request line by 3:00 pm on the previous Thursday. The number for inspection requests is: (626) 384-5461. To confirm an inspection, please call (626) 384-5000 Ext. 5907 no sooner than the day before your requested inspection to hear a list of scheduled projects. By permit number.

Permit & Plan Check Expiration:

Plan checks are good for 180 days after they are approved. If permits are not pulled prior to that time, additional fees will be required to re-activate the plan check. Permits will expire if work is not commenced 180 days from the permit issuance date or if the project goes 180 days without passing inspection. To re-active expired permits renewal fees will be required.

Extensions must be applied for in writing prior to permit expiration and can result in a maximum of one 180-day extension. Extensions are subject to approval from the Building Official based on hardship.

The Building Section will inform you of any Los Angeles County Fire Department requirements that may pertain to your project. The number for Fire Department inquiries is: (626) 974-8335.

Engineering Requirements:

The Building Section will inform you if it is necessary to obtain the services of a licensed engineer for your project. Please note that changes to approved plans may require you to obtain new engineering calculations and pay additional City plan check fees.

Other Agency:

Altering or improving the external façade of your residence may require the approval of other outside agencies such as the South Coast Air Quality Management District (AQMD). The Building Division will inform you of this requirement. The number for AQMD is: (909) 396-2000.

Construction Hours:

Construction hours fall between 7:00 AM – 8:00 PM Monday through Saturday excluding Holidays.

Handouts: Additional informational packets, handouts, and permit forms are available online at www.covinaca.gov or upon request at the Building & Planning service counter.

What is an Owner-Builder?

An owner-builder is what the term indicates: the person owns the property and acts as their own general contractor on the job, and either does the work themselves or has employees (or licensed subcontractors) working on the project

Some homeowners believe they can save money by not hiring a licensed general contractor to oversee property improvements. Or, they try to save money by hiring unlicensed individuals and stating on the permit application that they, as homeowners, will do the work.

Unfortunately, most homeowners don't know they can face very serious legal and financial problems if they choose to be an owner-builder and don't follow the law.

Responsibilities of an Owner-Builder

When you sign a building permit application as an owner-builder, you assume full responsibility for all phases of your project and its integrity. You may be considered an employer if you hire unlicensed contractors to do the work. This could make you responsible for:

- Registering with the state and federal government as an employer
- Withholding state and federal income taxes, federal Social Security taxes, paying disability insurance, and making employment compensation contributions
- Providing workers' compensation insurance
- Supervising the job, including scheduling workers, obtaining building permits, and requesting inspections
- Correcting the work and getting it re-inspected if any of the construction doesn't pass building inspections
- Making sure all workers and material suppliers are paid, or face the possibility of mechanic's liens against their home or property
- Adhere to National standards known as Best Management Practices (BMP's) to retain materials, sediment, wastes wash water, spills, and residues onsite.
- Comply with the State and City waste diversion mandates by recycling, reclaiming, and reusing qualified materials then providing proof of diversionary methods through valid receipts and City provided ES-CD1 and ES-CDE2 forms.
- Utilize Athen's (888) 336-6100) or other City authorized services for any trash and recycling bins.

Qualifications for Owner-Builders

For home improvements

- The work site must be your principal place of residence that you have occupied for 12 months prior to completion of the work
- The work must be performed prior to the sale of the home
- You cannot take advantage of this exemption on more than two structures during any three year period

For construction of new single family residences

- You are limited to selling four or fewer residential structures in one calendar year
- The work necessary to complete the project must be performed by licensed subcontractors

This material is provided by the City of Covina to assist in determining the first steps in the residential permitting process. Appointments with professional staff are recommended.

Building Permits

Project Type	Permit Required?	Required Approvals
Windows & Sliding glass doors:		
New or replacement windows involving framing or when finishing material is broken (ie: stucco, drywall, etc.)	Yes	Planning, Building
Frame & pane only without breaking finishing materials	No	
Fences & Masonry block walls:		
Freestanding masonry walls 3' or less in height	No	
Freestanding masonry walls over 3' in height	Yes	Planning, Building, Environmental
Retaining walls	Yes	Planning, Building, Environmental
Non-masonry fences 6' or less in height	No	
Non-masonry fences over 6' in height	Yes	Planning, Building, Environmental
* Walls or fences adjacent to public right-of-way are subject to Engineering approval.		
Driveways:		
Repaving	No	
New, expanded or replacing driveway apron	Yes	Planning, Building, Environmental
Patios & Sheds:		
Freestanding & Attached patios	Yes	Planning, Building, Environmental
Sheds over 120 s.f.	Yes	Planning, Building, Environmental
Sheds 120 s.f. or less	No	
Re-Roofing:		
Tear off existing roofing material and re-roof	Yes	Planning, Building, Environmental
Roof over existing layer of roof	Yes	Planning, Building, Environmental
Repair of the lesser of 1 square or 10% of entire roof	No	
Swimming Pools & Spas:		
New swimming pool / spa	Yes	Planning, Building, Environmental
Re-surface existing pool	Yes	Environmental
Move or replace pool equipment	Yes	Planning, Building
Demolish pool	Yes	Building, Environmental
Room Additions & Garage Conversions:		
Room Additions < 500 s.f.	Yes	Planning, Building, Environmental
Room Additions > 500 s.f.	Yes	Planning, Building, Engineering, Environmental
Room Additions > 1000 s.f.	Yes	Planning, Building, Engineering, Fire, Environmental
* Applicant must make application to their corresponding school district for any room addition regardless of size.		
Remodels:		
Remodeling (Kitchen, Bath, Etc.)	Yes	Planning, Building
Siding:		
Stucco	Yes	Planning, Building
Drywall	Yes	Building
Brick Veneer	Yes	Planning, Building
Misc:		
Painting		
Attic, wall, floor insulation	No	
Security alarms	Yes	Police – (626) 384-5595

Plumbing Permits

Project Type	Permit Required?	Required Approvals
Water Heater		
Replacement in interior	Yes	Building, Planning
Replacement located in garage or outside	Yes	Building, Planning
Re-pipe:		
Re-pipe (copper, pex, etc.)	Yes	Building, Planning
Water service from meter to house	Yes	Building, Engineering
Sewer line re-pipe	Yes	Building
Install cleanout or backflow preventer	Yes	Building, Planning
* Any work done in the public right-of-way is also subject to Engineering permit and approval.		
Sewer:		
Connect to public sewer	Yes	Engineering, Building, Planning
Abandon septic tank	Yes	Building
Pump out septic tank	No	
* Any work done in the public right-of-way is also subject to Engineering permit and approval		
Fixtures: (Faucets, Sinks, Showers, Toilets, Tubs)		
New fixture	Yes	Building
Replace fixture excluding showers and tubs	No	Building
Replace shower or bathtub	Yes	Building
Gas:		
New or relocation of gas meter	Yes	Planning, Building
New or relocation of gas outlets	Yes	Building
* Any work done in the public right-of-way is also subject to Engineering permit and approval		
Misc:		
Solar water system	Yes	Planning, Building
Water softener	Yes	Planning, Building
Lawn sprinklers	No	

Mechanical Permits

Heating, Ventilation, & Air Conditioning:		
New, replacement, or relocation of air conditioning compressor	Yes	Building, Planning
New, replacement, or relocation of forced air unit	Yes	Building, Planning
New, replacement, or relocation of wall heaters	Yes	Building
New or replacement ducting	Yes	Building
Installation or replacement of vent fans	Yes	Building
Installation or replacement of exhaust hood	Yes	Building

Electrical Permits

Branch Circuits:		
Installation of new or re-wiring of circuits	Yes	Building
Installation or alteration of outlets, switches, or lighting	Yes	Building
Electrical panel upgrade*	Yes	Building
*For panel upgrades contact Southern California Edison for a meter spot prior to beginning work. (800) 655-4555		
Solar Photovoltaic Panels:		
Installation of solar panels*	Yes	Planning, Building
Installation of solar water systems	Yes	Planning, Building
* Solar photovoltaic panels require plan check submittal and have a 10-15 business day turnaround time.		