



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

HOW TO OBTAIN A PERMIT TO BUILD A

# Residential Addition/Alteration

CITY OF SAN DIEGO DEVELOPMENT SERVICES  
1222 FIRST AVENUE, MS 301 SAN DIEGO, CA 92101-4101  
CALL (619) 446-5300 FOR APPOINTMENTS AND (619) 446-5000 FOR INFORMATION

INFORMATION  
BULLETIN

# 140

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This Information Bulletin describes the permitting requirements for obtaining over-the-counter review for residential projects as described in Section II below. All other residential projects not meeting these requirements must be submitted into plan review. See the Land Development Manual, Project Submittal Requirements Section 2A for detailed project submittal information.

## I. WHEN IS A PERMIT REQUIRED?

All construction work in the City of San Diego requires a permit unless it is specifically exempted by the Municipal Code. To determine if your proposed project is exempt, consult Information Bulletin 115, "Permit Exemptions" and the zoning regulations for your site. If your project is not listed as exempt, it *does* require a permit.

## II. RESIDENTIAL PROJECTS THAT CAN BE REVIEWED BY APPOINTMENT

Appointments for plan review are required. Call (619) 446-5300 to schedule an appointment. Appointments are also recommended for obtaining information prior to plan preparation.

The following types of residential projects can be reviewed over-the-counter while the customer is present, by appointment only:

### A. Residential Addition/Alteration

Residential addition/alteration projects can be reviewed over-the-counter if they meet the following:

1. The plans conform to the conventional construction provisions of the 2007 California Building Code Section 2308; and
2. The residential addition less than 1,000 square feet in floor area to existing single-story dwelling unit or duplex; or
3. The existing First and second story alteration to an existing single dwelling unit or duplex.

If the structure has unusual design features or the design involves split levels or has framing irregularities, or has an unusual shape, size or weight, and if the structure deviates from conventional light-frame parameters, the structure shall be designed based on an engineered structure system. Plans shall be prepared by a registered design professional (an architect or engineer) in the State of California.

### B. Accessory Structures

Additions or alterations to accessory structures to an existing single-dwelling unit or

## Documents referenced in this Information Bulletin

- 2007 California Building Code, (CBC)
- San Diego Municipal Code, ([SDMC](#))
- Project Submittal Manual, [Section 2A](#)
- [Information Bulletin 112](#), Minimum Construction Specifications
- [Information Bulletin 115](#), Regulations Covering Permit Exemptions
- [Information Bulletin 117](#), Regulations Covering Permit Expiration and Extension
- [Information Bulletin 118](#), How to Process Changes to Approved Plans
- [Information Bulletin 119](#), Construction and demolition Debris
- [Information Bulletin 120](#), How to Obtain Project Inspections
- [Information Bulletin 122](#), How to Prepare a Single Dwelling Unit Site Plan and Vicinity Map
- [Information Bulletin 132](#), How to Prepare a Typical Single-Story Framing Section
- [Information Bulletin 133](#), Roof and Floor Framing Span Tables
- [Information Bulletin 142](#), Residential Garage Conversions
- [Information Bulletin 205](#), Specifications for Carports
- [Information Bulletin 206](#), Specifications for Patio Covers
- [Information Bulletin 211](#), How to Obtain a Permit for Residential Decks
- [Information Bulletin 580](#), Potential Historical Resource Review
- [Information Bulletin 581](#), Designated Historical Resource Review
- Water Meter Data Card, [DS-16](#)
- Storm Water Requirements Applicability Checklist, [DS-560](#)
- Circuit Card, [DS-1779](#)
- Inspection Record Card , [DS-1798](#)
- General Application, [DS-3032](#)
- Owner-Builder Verification , [DS-3042](#)
- California Code of Regulations, [Title 24 Part 6](#)

duplex can be reviewed over-the-counter if they meet the following criteria:

1. The structure is accessory to an existing single-dwelling unit or duplex (such as single-story garages, carports, decks, patio covers and patio enclosures).
2. The plans conform to the conventional construction provisions of the California Building Code.

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Upon request, this information is available in alternative formats for persons with disabilities.

### III. PLAN SPECIFICATIONS

Plans must be drawn to scale and must be of sufficient clarity to indicate the location, nature and extent of the proposed work. Be sure to clearly label all existing and proposed construction.

Plans must show, in detail that the proposed work will conform to the provisions of the 2007 California Building Code, Zoning Ordinances, and all other relevant laws, ordinances, rules, and regulations. Many of the California Building Code requirements are summarized in Information Bulletin 112, "Minimum Structural requirements for Single-Dwelling Unit or Duplex," and Information Bulletin 130, "Minimum Non-Structural requirements for Single-Dwelling Unit or Duplex."

Based on the project location, the following zoning regulations may apply to your project:

<b>Regulations</b>	<b>SDMC Section</b>
Parking Regulations	142.0501
Brush Management	142.0412
Environmentally Sensitive Lands Regulations	143.0101
Fence Regulations	142.0301
300 Buffer Zone	145.3801
Residential Base Zones	131.0401

Three sets of plans are required for "over-the-counter" plan review.

### IV. FORMS AND DOCUMENTS TO COMPLETE

#### A. Permit Application

A completed General Application, DS-3032, must be submitted with all projects at initial presentation for plan check. Instructions can be found on the reverse side of the application. If you intend to obtain your permit on the same day as plan review, the application must be fully completed.

**Note:** There are no exceptions to the Workers' Compensation Insurance requirements. If the property owner is doing the construction work or is hiring a number of different contractors, a separate Owner-Builder Verification form, DS-3042 must be signed by the owner at the Development Services Department before the permit can be issued.

#### B. Water Meter Data Card

A Water Meter Data Card must be completed if new plumbing fixtures are being added. This form is not required to replace or relocate fixtures, but replacement or relocation must be clearly labeled on the plans.

#### C. Title 24 Compliance

A Certificate of Compliance: Residential (CF-1R) form and a Mandatory Measures Checklist (MF-1R) must be submitted to demonstrate compliance with California State Energy Ef-

iciency Standards. See Section VI for more information.

#### D. Historical Review

If the structure is 45 years or older on any parcel affected by your project then it is subject to Potential Historical Review. If your project involves any parcel of land that includes a designated historical resource, or is located within the boundaries of an adopted historic district then it is subject to Designated Historical Review. Please refer to Information Bulletin 580, "Potential Historical Resource Review," and Information Bulletin 581, "Designated Historical Resource Review."

#### E. Storm Water Requirements Applicability Checklist

The Storm Water Requirements Applicability Checklist (DS-560) must be completed for all projects except interior alteration. The property owner must sign the "Owner's Certificate Standard Single-Family Residential Project for Post Construction BMPs" on the building construction plans. See Section X below for more information.

#### F. Construction and demolition debris:

Effective July 1, 2008, new construction, addition/alteration and demolition projects requiring building, combination and demolition permits are required to complete a Waste Management Form and pay a refundable recycling deposit at the time the permit is issued. Projects that do not meet the minimum square footage are not required to pay the recycling deposit. For more Information refer to Information Bulletin 119 "Construction and Demolition Debris."

### V. DRAWINGS TO INCLUDE

The following are the minimum plans and details that are required for review:

#### A. Site Plan and Vicinity Map

This drawing shows the general layout of the lot and must show the following information:

1. Property lines and dimensions.
2. The existing building footprint including dimensions and distances to adjacent property lines. Include items such as eave overhangs, bay windows and fireplaces.
3. The proposed construction, noting the dimension of the exterior walls and the distances to adjacent property lines.
4. Any accessory structures and dimensions and the distances from these structures to adjacent property lines and to adjoining structures.
5. If there is an existing pool or spa on site it must be shown.
6. If plumbing fixtures are being installed, show the location of water and sewer lines and the location of the water meter.

For additional information, refer to Information Bulletin 122, "How to Prepare a Single Dwelling Unit Site Plan and Vicinity Map."

### **B. Foundation Plan and Floor Framing Plan**

For slab on grade construction this drawing must show:

1. Size, depth, and location of footings.
2. Thickness of concrete slab.

For raised floor construction this drawing must show:

1. Location of continuous foundations and any pier footings.
2. Size and depth of footings.
3. Size of stem walls.
4. Size and spacing of girders.
5. Size and spacing of floor joists.
6. Location of crawl space access openings and vents.

To size floor joists, refer to Information Bulletin 133, "Roof and Floor Framing Span Tables."

### **C. Floor Plan**

For additions or alterations to existing buildings, identify proposed uses and uses in existing rooms. Include the following information:

1. Designate the use and dimensions of all rooms on all floors.
2. Size and type of all windows and doors.
3. Size of headers above wall openings.
4. Location and type of all plumbing fixtures.
5. Location and energy output (BTUs) of all heating equipment.
6. Location and type of any bathroom exhaust vent fan.
7. Location of smoke alarms.

### **D. Cross Section Views**

Information on preparing cross section views can be found in Information Bulletin 132, "How to Prepare a Typical Single-Story Framing Section." If you plan to construct exactly as shown in the Information Bulletin, you may include with your plans completed sheets from the bulletin in place of created drawings. Be sure to add to the sheets information on size and spacing of construction members and size of foundations.

### **E. Roof or Floor Framing Plans**

Sufficient information must be shown for both the existing structure and the addition/alteration for roof load to be determined. Please show the following information:

1. Show the size and spacing and full span supports for an existing roof framing impacted by the area of alteration.
2. Show the size and spacing of all new rafters and ceiling joists.
3. Show any special framing around roof open-

ings such as skylights and chimneys.

For information on sizing rafters and ceiling joists see Information Bulletin 133, "Roof and Floor Framing Span Tables."

### **F. Exterior Elevation Views**

This is a drawing of each exterior wall from the outside of the building showing each exterior wall or altered exterior walls and shall include the following:

1. Doors, windows and other openings.
2. Exterior finishes for the walls and roof.
3. Wall bracing or shear panel locations or other means of obtaining the required lateral bracing.
4. Pre-existing and finished grade with building height dimensioned to the most restrictive grade.

Information on preparing exterior elevation view can be found in Information Bulletin 132.

### **G. Connection Details**

Sufficient details must be shown to clearly explain the method of construction and means of connection. Suggested shear transfer details are shown in Information Bulletin 132.

### **H. Truss Calculations**

Whenever prefabricated trusses are included as part of the roof framing system, two sets of truss calculations, stamped by a professional architect or registered engineer, licensed in the State of California must be provided. The truss calculation identification number must identify each truss type on the roof framing plan.

### **I. Electrical/Plumbing Plans**

No electrical drawings are required for single family or duplex residential construction. Electrical requirements are checked by the Field Inspector. The only plumbing drawings required are the plumbing fixture locations shown on the floor plans and identification of the type of piping materials proposed.

Compliance with the City Water Utilities Retrofit Ordinance (SDMC 147.0403) must be shown for new plumbing fixtures on the plans as follows:

1. Ultra low flush toilets that use 1.6 gpf or less.
2. Maximum faucet flow, 2.2 gallons per minute.
3. Maximum shower head flow, 2.5 gallons per minute.

## **VI. TITLE 24 ENERGY DOCUMENTATION**

All single-family or duplex additions or alterations are required to comply with California Energy Efficiency Standards for Low-Rise Residen-

tial Buildings contained in the California Code of Regulations, Title 24, Part 1.

A number of compliance methods are described in a Residential Manual available from the California Energy Commission. Visit [www.energy.ca.gov](http://www.energy.ca.gov) or phone 1-800-772-3300.

**Table 1 - Title 24 Energy Requirements**  
(Climate Zone 7)

Floor Area	<100 sq ft.	<1000 sq ft.
<b>Insulation:</b>		
Ceiling	R-19	R-30
Wall	R-13	R-13
Floor	R-13	R-19
<b>Glass:</b>		
Type	Dual Pane	Dual Pane
Sq.Ft..	max. 50*	20% of FA* total 5% west

\*The area of any glass removed, as a direct result of the room addition, may be added to the 20%.

A. Minimum acceptable requirements for the simplest method of meeting the requirements are shown in Table 1. You may complete the required Certificate of Compliance: CF-1R form using the information shown in Table 1. You must also show the required insulation values and dual pane windows on your plans. Also complete a Mandatory Measures Checklist (MF-1R) form by checking all the items that apply to your project.

The CF-1R form and the Mandatory Measures Checklist MF-1R form are available at the Development Services Department.

**Note:** The information in Table 1 is for Climate Zone 7. Some areas of San Diego are in Climate Zone 10. At your plan review appointment you will be advised if you are located in Climate Zone 10 and will be advised of alternative shading devices that must be added to meet Climate Zone 10 requirements.

B. Insulation must be installed so as to provide a continuous heat loss barrier for ceilings, walls and floors. Details on plans shall indicate the required "R" factor; typically R-30 for ceilings in Climate Zone 7 and in Climate Zone 10. Raised floors R-19 and all exterior walls must have a minimum of R-13 insulation. Upon completion of the installation, an insulation inspection must be made by Development Services before the insulation is covered up (Title 24 table 151-C).

C. All manufactured doors and windows opening to the exterior, or to unconditioned areas such

as basements or garages, must be certified as meeting air leakage standards. Site-built doors and windows must be fully weather-stripped, gasketed or otherwise treated to limit loss of heat from occupied areas (Title 24 3.2.2)

D. Manufactured fenestration (glazing) products must be labeled with certified U-factor, SHGC and infiltration certification. The rough opening and U-factor of all windows and doors with glass must also be noted on the plans (Title 24 3.2.2)

E. At least half the installed wattage of luminaires in kitchens shall be high efficacy (table 6-1) and the ones that are not must be switched separately (Title 24 6.1.2).

**VII. VERY-HIGH FIRE HAZARD SEVERITY ZONE OR BRUSH MANAGEMENT ZONES,** Structures located in a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone or Brush Management Zones, governed by the City of San Diego's Brush Management Ordinance, may need to submit for landscape and structural review to meet additional fire protection requirements.

**VIII. ENVIRONMENTALLY SENSITIVE LANDS,** Structures located in Environmentally Sensitive Lands, regulated by the SDMC Chapter 14 Article 3 Division 1, may need to submit for landscape review to meet additional requirements.

For additional information contact zoning information at the Development Services Department, 1222 First Avenue, (619) 446-5000.

**IX. PARKING SPACES** Parking is regulated by Chapter 14, Article 2, Division 5 of the Land Development Code.

A. When there are no obstructions, the minimum size for a required standard parking space is 8 feet wide by 18 feet long (SDMC table 142-05J).

B. The maximum allowable slope for a parking space is 6 percent (SDMC 142.0560(h)(6)).

C. Parking spaces and drives must be paved with a minimum of 2 inches (51 mm) of asphalt concrete, 3 1/2 inches (89 mm) of portland cement concrete or the equivalent (SDMC 142.0560(h)(1)).

D. In campus impact areas, single dwelling unit development with five or more bedrooms shall provide a minimum of two parking spaces in a garage. Where an existing garage is proposed for conversion to habitable area, garage parking shall be replaced with an equivalent number of garage parking spaces on the premises (SDMC 142.0520).

For information on removal and replacement of existing curb, gutter and sidewalk, see Information Bulletin 165 “How to obtain a public right-of-way permit for Standard Public Improvements.”

#### **X. PRIVATE GRADING TO DWELLING SEPARATION:**

Private garages shall be separated from dwellings as follows:

- A. Private garages shall be separated from the dwelling unit and its attic areas by means of walls protected with a minimum 1/2 inch gypsum board applied to the wall on the garage side. Alternatively the wall can terminate at the garage ceiling if the ceiling is protected by 5/8 inch type X gypsum board or equivalent (CBC 406.1.4)
- B. Where habitable space occurs above garage, habitable rooms shall be separated from the garage below with not less than 5/8 inch gypsum board or equivalent applied on the garage side. (CBC 406.1.4)
- C. Door openings between a garage and a dwelling shall be protected by a minimum 1 3/8 inch thick, tight-fitting, self-closing solid core wood door or a 20 minute fire rated door assembly. (CBC 406.1.4 and 715.4.3)
- D. Openings from a private garage directly into a room used for sleeping purposes shall not be permitted. (CBC 406.1.4)
- E. Private garage floor surfaces shall be finished with concrete or similar noncombustible material. The automobile parking floor area shall be sloped to facilitate the movement of liquids to a drain or toward the main vehicle entry doorway. (CBC 406.1.3)
- F. Ducts in a private garage that penetrate walls or ceilings separating the dwelling unit from the garage shall be constructed of a minimum 0.019 inch sheet steel and shall have no opening into the garage other than directly into the equipment supplying the duct. (CBC 406.1.4)

#### **XI. GRADING AND STORM WATER QUALITY**

As part of the processing requirements for a single-dwelling unit residence development, a grading permit may be required, along with reports that analyze and propose mitigating measures for a development's impacts on drainage and storm water quality, both during construction and after construction activities have been completed.

Grading permits may be a requirement for the development of a single-dwelling unit residence if certain findings can be made based upon the

ordinances set forth within the SDMC Section 129.0601. The following are some examples of these findings:

- A. Excavation or fill that results in a slope with a gradient of 25 percent or greater (4 horizontal feet to 1 vertical foot) and for which the depth or height at any point is more than five feet measured vertically at the face of the slope from the top of the slope to the bottom of the slope;
- B. Excavation or fill for which the depth or height at any point from the lowest grade to the highest grade at any time during the proposed grading is more than five feet measured vertically;
- C. Grading that creates manufactured slopes at a gradient exceeding that specified in Section 142.0133;
- D. Grading for which the graded area is more than one acre.
- E. Grading that adversely affects the existing drainage pattern by altering the drainage pattern, concentrating runoff, increasing the quantity of runoff, or increasing the velocity of runoff to adjacent properties;

As a component of any grading permit and even some building permits, storm water quality must be considered as it relates to the impact of the development upon storm water quality within waters of the state, both during and after construction.

The level of consideration is dictated by form DS-560, Storm Water Requirements Applicability Checklist. Projects that are determined to qualify as “Priority,” based upon the correct application of this form, are considered to warrant the highest level of consideration.

Any project that proposes to disturb soil is required by the State of California Regional Water Quality Control Board, through a permit issued by the State to the City of San Diego as a co-permittee, as promulgated in the latest edition of the City of San Diego Municipal Code, Land Development Manual-Storm Water Standards, to mitigate for impacts to storm water quality.

If the disturbed area is greater than or equal to one acre, or if the project is part of a development that will disturb an area greater than one acre, a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) must be prepared after a Notice of Intent (NOI) has been filed with the State Water Resource Control Board (SWRCB). Storm water quality reports can be costly so they should be considered early when evaluating the viability of any project.

## **XII. THE PLAN REVIEW PROCESS**

Development Services will make every effort to approve the plans for the project during the first plan review. Questions may arise that cannot be answered immediately, or it may be necessary to refer you to other agencies for approval. A comment sheet will be prepared for you detailing what you are expected to do to complete the plan review process. If the permit cannot be issued at the initial appointment, plan check fees must be paid. (See Information bulletin 501).

Once all clearances are obtained and all questions are answered, schedule another appointment at (619) 446-5300 to complete the plan review process and receive your permit.

When requiring a permit issuance appointment you will be expected to present two sets of plans with all approval sign-offs from required review disciplines, copies of any calculations, and all completed forms. You will need to provide a third set of plans that shall include a site plan and floor plan for the County Assessor. This third set need not have approval signatures.

## **XIII. FEES**

**Please refer to Information Bulletin 501 for fees.**

If your room addition is more than 500 square feet in area, school fees will be due. Projects having a floor area of 500 square feet or less are exempt from paying school fees.

**Note:** Floor area used in determining whether school fees are due shall include the accumulated floor area of all additions within one year period.

If your project is in the San Diego Unified School District, you may pay school fees through the Development Services Department by a separate check made payable to the "San Diego Unified School District."

If your project is located in another school district, or if you wish to pay school fees by cash, you will be directed to the School's District Office to pay school fees. You must have documentation from the Development Services Department to take to the school district for fee calculation. For estimated fee amounts for San Diego Unified School District, call (858) 637-6202.

Occasionally, the addition of new plumbing fixtures may require an increase to the water meter size. If so, San Diego County Water Authority capacity fees will be due. These fees can be paid through the Development Services Department by separate check. An estimate of the fee amount will be provided when the required size of the meter is determined. Upgrading the water meter usually is not required when adding only one new bathroom.

Effective July 1, 2008, new construction, addition/alteration projects requiring building, combination permits are required to complete a Waste Management Form and pay a refundable recycling deposit at the time the permit is issued. Projects that do not meet the minimum square footage are not required to pay the recycling deposit. For more information refer to Information Bulletin 119 "Construction and Demolition Debris".

## **XIII. WHEN THE PERMIT IS ISSUED**

You will receive an Inspection Record card (DS-1798) and an Inspection Plan at permit issuance. The inspector will approve the pre determined portion of work on the inspection card. For required inspections see Information Bulletin 120, "How to Obtain Project Inspections." If the project includes electrical work, an Electric Circuit Card (DS-1779) will also be provided at permit time. The required Electric Circuit Card information shall be completed on the card prior to permit issuance.

At permit issuance a stamped, approved set of plans will be returned to you. The approved plan must be available at the project site for the Field Inspector. Your construction will be expected to conform to the approved plans. If it is necessary to change the plans during construction, changes must be approved at the Development Services Department. For information on processing changes see Information Bulletin 118, "How to Process Changes to Approved Plans."

The permit is active for 180 days after the date of issuance. Scheduling and passing an inspection will extend the permit for 180 days from the date the inspection passes. Additional information on permit expiration and extensions can be found in Information Bulletin 117, "Regulations Covering Permit Expiration and Extension."