



Work Exempt from Building Permit

Bulletin #8

For 2018 International Codes

This bulletin covers items exempt from permit in the International Residential Code, International Building Code, International Mechanical Code, and the Uniform Plumbing Code as adopted by Pierce County. These exemptions do not apply to manufactured homes. Although exempt from permit requirements, all work must meet the applicable codes.

International Residential Code (Single Family, Duplex, and Townhouses)

[Pierce County Code Title 17C.30.040](#)

Permits shall not be required for the following:

1. **One-story detached accessory structures** used as tool and storage sheds, playhouses, and similar uses, provided the floor area does not exceed 200 square feet, at least 5 feet from other structures and meets property line setbacks per Pierce County Planning Division. See Bulletin 70 for more details.
2. **Fences** not over 6 feet high, measured from grade.
3. **Retaining walls** not over 4 feet in height measured from the bottom of the footing to the top of the wall, unless supporting a surcharge. See Bulletin 78 for details.
4. **Water tanks** supported directly upon grade if the capacity does not exceed 5,000 gallons and the ratio of height to diameter or width does not exceed 2 to 1.
5. **Decks, sidewalks, and driveways** not more than 30 inches above grade at any point and not over any story or basement below.
6. **Finish work**, including painting, papering, tiling, carpeting, cabinets, counter tops, and similar.
7. **Prefabricated swimming pools** to serve a single-family residence, less than 24 inches deep.
8. **Self-contained spas** and hot tubs installed entirely above ground and not connected to the potable water system nor to a drain into a septic or sewer system.
9. **Swings** and other playground equipment accessory to a single residence.
10. **Window awnings** supported by an exterior wall which do not project more than 54 inches from the exterior wall and do not require additional support and retractable window awnings, motorized or manual pull out, supported by an exterior wall that do not exceed 200 square feet.
11. **Re-roofing**. The re-roofing of Group R, Division 3 One and Two-Family Dwellings and Group U, private garages, carports and accessory structures having a roof slope greater than 2" in 12", when the total load of all roof coverings does not exceed 7.5 pounds per square foot. This exemption does not apply to vegetated roofs. This exemption does not apply to the replacement of roof sheathing.
12. **Replacement of siding**. All material must be installed per manufacturer's specifications. This exemption does not include any base layers of structural sheathing, plywood, OSB or gypsum wall board.
13. **Membrane-covered (canvas or similar) accessory structure** where the floor area does not exceed 576 square feet in area and the structure is assembled and anchored per manufacturer's recommendations.
14. **Agricultural, single story, detached accessory structure** up to 600 square feet in floor area, no more than 14 feet in total height and meets the criteria under **Agriculture Structure Exemption** (Ordinance No. 2014-665)

International Building Code (Commercial and Multifamily)

[Pierce County Code 17C.20.060](#)

Permits shall not be required for the following:

1. **One-story detached structures** not exceeding 120 square feet in floor area and used for tool and storage sheds, playhouses and similar uses. This includes unoccupied structures used by utility companies or districts to protect equipment cabinets, switch gear, pumps, and similar equipment.
2. **Fences** not over 6 feet high.
3. **Oil derricks**
4. **Retaining walls** which are not over 4 feet in height measured from the bottom of the footing to the top of the wall, unless supporting a surcharge or impounding Class I, II or IIIA 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 inches above adjacent grade and not over any basement or story below, and which are not part of an accessible route.
7. **Finish work** including, painting, papering, tiling, carpeting, cabinets, counter tops and similar.
8. **Temporary motion picture**, television and theater stage sets and scenery.
9. **Prefabricated swimming pools** accessory to a Group R- 3 occupancy, which are less than 24 inches deep, are not greater than 5,000 gallons and are installed entirely above ground.
10. **Shade cloth structures** constructed for nursery or agricultural purposes and not including service systems.
11. **Swings** and other playground equipment accessory to 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. **Non-fixed and movable fixtures, cases, racks, counters and partitions** not over 5 feet 9 inches in height.

IRC and International Mechanical Code (Commercial & All Residential)

Permits shall not be required for the following:

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

International Fuel Gas Code (Commercial and Multi-family)

Permits shall not be required for the following:

1. Any portable heating appliance. IRC only- Includes cooking or clothes dryers.
2. Replacement of any minor component of an appliance or equipment that does not alter approval of such appliance or equipment or make such appliance or equipment unsafe.
3. **IRC only:** Portable-fuel-cell appliances that are not connected to a fixed piping system and are not interconnected to a power grid.

Uniform Plumbing Code (Commercial & all Residential)

Permits shall not be required for the following:

1. The stopping of leaks in drains, water, soil, waste or vent pipe. However, if any concealed element becomes defective and it becomes necessary to remove and replace the same with new material, a permit and inspection is required.
2. The clearing of stoppages or the repairing of leaks in pipes, valves or fixtures, and the removal and reinstallation of toilets, provided such repairs do not require the replacement or rearrangement of valves, pipes or fixtures.

Electrical Work

Contact Labor and Industries at (253) 596-3800 Ext 2, or if served by Tacoma Power, call (253) 502-8277.