

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q. How long does it take to review building permit plans?

A. Plan review periods vary by project and valuation. Time limits for initial review for projects that qualify for the Automatic Approval process are as follows:

Category 1 Permits Single-family dwelling and two-family dwelling Structures accessory to residential dwellings Retaining walls	Two (2) full working days
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Category 2 Permits Projects with valuation below \$50,000	14 calendar days
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Category 3 Permits Projects with valuation between \$50,000 and \$999,999	28 calendar days
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Category 4 Permits Projects with valuation between \$1,000,000 and \$9,999,999	42 calendar days
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Category 5 Permits Projects with valuation above \$10,000,000	70 calendar days
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Q. What building codes have been adopted by the City?

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- Uniform Building Code, 1997 Edition with local amendments
- Housing Code of the City and County of Honolulu, Printed 1997
- Uniform Plumbing Code, 1997 Edition with local amendments
- National Electrical Code, 1999 Edition

Q. Do I need a building permit for a storage shed on a residential lot?

A. No, provided the storage shed is not more than 120 square feet in area. Building must be setback from property lines per zoning code.

Q. Are there any restrictions on owner-builder permits?

A. A decision to become an owner-builder will exempt you from the law requiring you to be a licensed contractor as long as the building is for your own personal use and occupancy. The building may not be built for sale or lease. Any person working on your building who is not licensed as a contractor must be your employee which means that you must deduct F.I.C.A. and withholding taxes and provide workers' compensation for that employee as prescribed by law. Electrical or plumbing work must be performed by contractors licensed in these specialties.

Q. What services are provided at the Building Permit Center at Kapolei Hale, City of Kapolei?

A. The Building Permit Center at Kapolei will process and issue permits for single family dwellings and other minor accessory structures as follows:

- New single family dwellings;
- Additions, alterations and repairs to existing dwellings;
- Fences and retaining walls;
- Electrical and plumbing only permits;
- Sidewalk and driveway permits;
- Temporary permits for tents or similar structures used for festivals, amusement and sideshows;
- Demolition permits;
- Swimming pool permits;
- Solar permits.

Commercial applications and plans may be dropped-off at Kapolei for internal routing to the One-Stop Permit Center at Honolulu Municipal Building for plans examining and approval.

Q. How is project valuation determined for building permit fee purposes?

A. The valuation to be used by the building official in computing the permit fees shall be the total value of all construction work for which the permit is issued, as well as all finish work, painting, roofing, electrical, plumbing, heating, air conditioning, elevators, fire extinguishing systems and any other permanent work or permanent equipment.

Q. When do construction or building plans have to be prepared and stamped by a licensed architect or engineer?

A. Under Chapter 464, Hawaii Revised Statutes, plans must be properly stamped and signed by an architect or structural engineer licensed in the State of Hawaii when (1) work on one-

storied buildings exceed \$40,000, (2) work on two-storied buildings exceed \$35,000, or (3) the principle structural members are of reinforced concrete or structural steel. Under Chapter 18, Revised Ordinance of Honolulu, all plans for retaining walls five (5) feet or more in height shall be prepared, designed or approved by a duly licensed architect or engineer in the structural or civil branches.

Q. Who do I contact when I am having problems with a contractor?

A. The state Regulated Industries Complaints Office (RICO) has jurisdiction over complaints relating to licensed or unlicensed contractors. Call the Consumer Resource Center at 587-3222 if you have a consumer complaint. To check if a contractor is licensed, contact the state Professional and Vocational Licensing Division at 586-3000.

Q. What is the City's position on surface drainage water from one property to another?

A. Property owners are not supposed to change the existing run-off pattern across their property. When the run-off pattern is changed and a building or grading permit is not required, a resultant drainage problem is a private civil matter between property owners.

Q. Who regulates septic systems and cesspools?

A. The Wastewater Branch of the State Department of Health evaluates all existing individual wastewater systems as well as approve all new septic tank or aerobic unit systems.

Q. Can a property owner do electrical or plumbing work?

A. No. All electrical and plumbing work must be performed by contractors licensed by the State of Hawaii under Chapters 444 and 448E, Hawaii Revised Statutes.

Q. What are the minimum requirements to make a swimming pool inaccessible to small children?

A. A property owner must erect a fence, wall or enclosure completely surrounding the pool. Such fence or enclosure shall be at least four and one-half (4 1/2) feet high. All gates or doors must be self-closing with a self-latching device capable of keeping such gate or door securely closed. The latch must be placed at least four (4) feet above ground or otherwise made inaccessible from the outside to small children.

- Q.** What is the law on electrical meter installation for dwelling units?
- A.** No more than one (1) electric watt-hour meter shall be installed per legal dwelling unit.
- Q.** What is the City's position on conformance with the accessibility requirements of the Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA)?
- A.** At the time of submittal of an application for a building permit, the applicant shall notify the Department of Planning and Permitting as to whether or not the project is subject to ADA requirements. Conformance with the design and construction requirements of the ADA's Accessibility Guidelines administered by the Department of Justice or the Fair Housing Act Accessibility Guidelines administered by the Department of Housing and Urban Development shall be equivalent to meeting the accessibility requirements of our building code.