



WORK EXEMPT FROM PERMIT

Updated: 2/7/2023

CHECKLIST

The following types of projects are exempt from a building permit according to Santa Barbara Municipal Code Chapter 22.04. However, many of the items listed below may be regulated by other city divisions. Please contact the counter staff at the City's [Permit Center](#) for more information.

Building:

- 1. Accessory Structures.** One-story detached residential accessory structures used as tool and storage sheds, playhouses, portable and fixed playground equipment, bicycle or skateboard ramps and similar uses, provided the floor area does not exceed 120 square feet and the height does not exceed 10 feet at the highest point; and further provided the structure does not encroach into required setbacks or required open yards, does not obstruct required parking, and is not served by any utilities. The combined square footage of exempt accessory structures may not exceed 200 square feet on any single parcel.
- 2. Fences.** Residential fences and walls not over 3-½ feet high, as measured from the lowest adjacent grade within 3-½ feet of the fence.
- 3. Oil derricks.**
- 4. Walls.** Residential retaining walls, and non-retaining walls, including masonry and concrete walls, which are not over 4 feet in height as measured from the bottom of the footing to the top of the wall, unless supporting a surcharge or impounding flammable liquids, is installed on a slope 20% or greater.
- 5. Water Tanks.** 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 2:1.
- 6. Decks.** Uncovered residential platforms, decks, porches, walks, and similar structures not more than 10 inches above adjacent grade, not over any basement or story below, not part of an accessible route, and not part of the means of egress from a normally occupied space.
- 7. Interior Finishes.** Interior painting, papering, and similar finish work.
- 8. Movies.** Temporary motion picture, television, and theater stage sets and scenery.
- 9. Antennas.** Ground mounted radio, television and other masts or antenna or dish shaped communication reception or transmitting structures less than 3 feet in diameter, which do not extend more than 15 feet above grade and are not served by electrical circuits regulated under the National Electrical Code (NEC). Light-weight roof-mounted radio, television, and other masts or antenna or dish shaped communication reception or transmitting structures less than 2 feet in diameter, which do not extend more than 15 feet above the roof, are not served by electrical circuits regulated under the NEC, and which are not subject to design review by the Architectural Board of Review, Historic Landmarks Commission, or Single Family Design Board.
- 10. Partitions.** Freestanding or movable cases, counters, and interior partitions not over 5 feet 9 inches in height, and not containing or requiring connections to electrical power or plumbing systems.
- 11. Other.** Permit applications submitted for other miscellaneous and minor work may be exempted by the Chief Building Official from permits, fees, and inspections.

Electrical:

1. **Repairs and maintenance.** Minor repair work, including the replacement of lamps or the connection of approved portable electrical equipment to approved permanently installed receptacles.
2. **Radio and television transmitting stations.** The provisions of this code shall not apply to electrical equipment used for radio and televisions transmissions but do apply to equipment and wiring for power supply and installations of towers and antennas.
3. **Temporary testing systems.** A permit shall not be required for the installation of any temporary system required for the testing or servicing of electrical equipment or apparatus.

Gas:

1. Portable heating appliance.
2. Replacement of any minor part that does not alter approval of equipment or make such equipment unsafe.

Mechanical:

1. Portable heating appliance.
2. Portable ventilation equipment.
3. Portable cooling unit.
4. Steam, hot or chilled water piping within any heating or cooling equipment regulated by this code.
5. Replacement of any part that does not alter its approval or make it unsafe.
6. Portable evaporative cooler.
7. Self-contained refrigeration system containing 10 pounds (5 kg) or less of refrigerant and actuated by motors of 1 horsepower (746 W) or less.

Plumbing:

1. The stopping of leaks in drains, water, soil, waste or vent pipe, provided, however, that if any concealed trap, drainpipe, water, soil, waste or vent pipe becomes defective and it becomes necessary to remove and replace the same with the new material, such work shall be considered as new work and a permit shall be obtained and inspection made as provided in this code.
2. The clearing of stoppages or the repairing of leaks in pipes, valves or fixtures and the removal and reinstallation of water closets, provided such repairs do not involve or require the replacement or rearrangement of valves, pipes or fixtures.

Exemption from the permit requirements of this code shall not be deemed to grant authorization for any work to be done in any manner that is in violation of the provisions of this code or any other applicable laws or ordinances.