



**GOT PERMITS?**  
PROTECT YOUR HOME IMPROVEMENTS.

**DO YOU HAVE UNPERMITTED  
WORK ON YOUR HOUSE?**

**ARE YOU PLANNING ON  
RESELLING OR REFINANCING?**

**NO PENALTY FEES!**

**MARCH 1, 2019 - MARCH 31, 2019**

**TYPICAL PROJECTS THAT REQUIRE PERMITS INCLUDE:**

- Basement conversions and room additions
- Water heaters and water softeners
- Retaining walls over 48" in height
- Storage buildings and sheds larger than 120 square feet in area
- New electrical wiring for outlets and fixtures
- Gas lines for barbeques and other outdoor appliances; any gas appliance
- New plumbing lines (i.e. water, waste and vent)
- Remodels that include any mechanical, electrical, plumbing or new framing, insulation, windows
- Awnings and patio covers

**Protect Your Investment!**

Homeowners who take advantage of this temporary amnesty program will pay normal permit and applicable plan review fees to permit and legalize the unpermitted work. Investigative fees will not apply during this amnesty period. Please see the reverse of this handout or details.

For more information visit [www.cityofsanrafael.org/building](http://www.cityofsanrafael.org/building) or call (415) 485-3367

**City of San Rafael Building Division**  
[cityofsanrafael.org/building](http://cityofsanrafael.org/building) | (415) 485-3367

1400 Fifth Avenue, San Rafael CA  
City Hall, Third Floor  
Office Hours: Monday - Thursday 8:30 am to 4:30 pm

Department of Community Development is waiving penalties for homeowners who come forward from March 1, 2019 through March 31, 2019 to resolve any building, electrical, plumbing or mechanical construction or repair work done to their homes without permits.

Work done without obtaining permits and inspections is an unlawful act per Title 12 of the San Rafael Municipal Code. Failure to obtain permits may result in the recording of a notice against the property or citing the owner with a misdemeanor. Notices recorded against your property and/or California disclosure laws, requiring disclosure of unpermitted work, could impact refinancing or any future sale of your property. Additionally, insurance companies may not cover any claims that originate from illegal work.

## OVERVIEW

Work that was done without obtaining required permits is in violation of San Rafael's Building Code and is considered illegally constructed work. So why would you put yourself through the City review process? In addition to peace of mind there are distinct reasons to do so:

- Legalization of non-permitted construction will assure that the work was done safely and meets minimum code.
- Future sale of the property may be adversely impacted. California's disclosure laws require illegal work to be declared. See California Seller Real Property Disclosure Form.
- Increasingly banks and appraisers will not include non-permitted work for property value calculations.
- Projects not constructed to code can affect your home's insurability.
- San Rafael Code allows a notice to be recorded against your property and administrative fees to become a lien if not resolved. Work without a permit can also result in a misdemeanor citation.
- You will sleep better.

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### Q. What projects are covered by amnesty?

Currently this program is for residential homes only including single family, duplexes, triplexes, and townhomes. Multi-family and apartments over three units and commercial properties are not included in this program at this time.

### Q. Will my taxes increase if I permit this work?

The Marin County Tax Assessor generates their property valuations based on their own policy and procedures that include neighborhood reconnaissance and site evaluations of properties. San Rafael does share complaint and permit information with the Assessor to generate site inspections.

### Q. Where are you located?

Our office is in City Hall, third floor, at 1400 Fifth Avenue, San Rafael, CA 94901

## PROCEDURES

Application for a permit is identical to applying for new work with one important exception. Is the work concealed or is all the work visible?

**All work visible:** Small projects such as most simple electrical, plumbing or electrical permits, water heaters, fences and reroofs. Start the permit application process and obtain a permit.

**Work concealed:** There are two options when permitting work that is not visible for inspection. The first is to expose the work prior to the inspection. If this is not feasible or financially prohibitive, the work can be certified by a third party. A licensed design professional such as an engineer, architect, and residential designer or a contractor licensed in the correct discipline may provide the certification.

**Work Denied:** There may be some projects that will be unable to obtain a permit. Setback violations, location in drainage ways or adding a second non-conforming residence are some of the reasons that may deny the project. A demo permit would then be required to bring the property into compliance.

### Q. How do I obtain a permit?

Please check our web site <http://www.cityofsanrafael.org/building> for the appropriate handout and application. If you have any questions, please call (415) 485-3367 and our staff will be able to assist you through the submittal process. There is a flow chart attached to this document for a typical permit process for work done without a permit.

### Q. How long does it take to get a permit?

The time to get a permit issued varies. Some permits can be issued the same day, over the counter and others require that the plans be left for review.

### Q. What type of work needs a permit?

Our adopted ordinance states: "The provisions of this code shall apply to the construction, alteration, movement, enlargement, replacement, repair, equipment, use and occupancy, location, maintenance, removal and demolition of every building

or structure or any appurtenances connected or attached to such buildings or structures". Please see San Rafael's Title 12 for a list of work exempt from permits. See our FAQ on our web site at: <http://www.cityofsanrafael.org/building>

### Q. Who may obtain a permit?

Licensed contractors and qualified homeowners.

### Q. What happens if my improvement cannot be permitted?

In many cases, the work can be permitted, however there is a possibility that the work cannot be permitted because of workmanship, setback violations, location in drainage ways or adding a second non-conforming residence. In those cases, a demo permit would be required to remove the unpermitted work to bring the property into compliance.