



WORK EXEMPT FROM PERMITS

(Building, Plumbing, Electrical and Mechanical)

WORK THAT REQUIRES A PERMIT: Any owner or authorized agent who intends to construct, enlarge, alter, repair, move, demolish, or change the occupancy of a building or structure, or to erect or install, enlarge, alter, repair, remove, convert or replace any electrical, gas, mechanical or plumbing system, the installation of which is regulated by the California Code of Regulations, or to cause any such work to be done, shall first make application to the Building Official and obtain the required permit.

WORK EXEMPT FROM PERMIT: A permit shall not be required for the types of work in each of the separate classes of permits listed below. Please Note: Exception from the permit requirements of the California Code of Regulations shall not be deemed to grant authorization for any work to be done in any manner in violation of the provisions of the codes or any other laws or ordinances of the City of San Rafael.

Note: although a Building Permit may not be required for work listed below, there may be conditions or restrictions on such work by the Planning Division, Fire Prevention Bureau or the Public Works Department. You must review your project with these departments in order to determine if it is permissible.

CA Building Code:

1. Nonhabitable one-story detached accessory structures on residentially zoned property or on a lot with an established principal residential use, used as tool and storage sheds, gazebos, playhouses, or similar uses, provided the floor area does not exceed one hundred twenty (120) square feet and height does not exceed fifteen (15) feet and does not include electrical, mechanical, or plumbing; and meets required setbacks for a structure as defined in [Title 14](#).
2. Residential fences not over seven (7) feet high or masonry fenced walls not over thirty-six (36) inches when outside the front yard or street yard and not used as swimming pools barriers. When in front yard or street yard must comply with requirements of [Title 14](#).
3. Oil derricks.
4. Retaining walls or rockery walls that are not over 4 foot (forty-eight (48) inches) in height measured from the bottom of the footing to the top of the wall. Walls must not support a surcharge or impound Class I, II or IIIA liquids.
5. Water tanks supported directly on grade if the capacity does not exceed five thousand (5,000) gallons and the ratio of height to diameter or width does not exceed two (2) to one (1).
6. Patios, sidewalks and driveways not more than thirty (30) inches above adjacent grade, without foundations, and not over any septic system, basement or story below, and not part of an accessible route or means of egress.
7. Painting, papering, flooring, carpeting, counter tops and similar finish work. ****Striping or re-striping of parking lots shall require a permit.****
8. Temporary (not to exceed one hundred eighty (180) days) motion picture, television and theater stage sets and scenery.
9. Prefabricated swimming pools accessory to a Group R-3 occupancy that are less than twenty-four (24) inches deep, do not exceed five thousand (5,000) gallons and are installed entirely above ground.
10. Shade cloth structures constructed for nursery or agricultural purposes, with no associated electrical, plumbing, or mechanical and comply with [Title 14](#).

11. Swings and other playground equipment accessory to detached one- and two-family dwellings.
12. Window awnings supported by an exterior wall that do not project more than fifty-four (54) inches from the exterior wall and do not project more than twenty-four (24) inches into any setback and do not require additional support; Group R-3 and U occupancies only.
13. Nonfixed and movable fixtures, cases, racks, counters and partitions not over five (5) feet nine (9) inches in height.
14. Roofing repair if the roof is less than one hundred (100) square feet (9.29 m²) or still under its one (1) year warranty.
15. Replacement of doors when the opening, location, and casement remain the same, meets the adopted energy code requirements, meets the current safety glazing requirements, and has the same fire rating and closer requirements as the door being replaced.
16. Repair or replacement of garage doors when the opening size and location remain the same, no new electrical, meets the current safety glazing requirements, and installed per manufacturer's recommendations.
17. Decks not exceeding two hundred (200) square feet in area, that are not more than thirty (30) inches above grade at any point **and** not more than 30 inches above grade extending 36 inches out from edge of deck and are not attached to a building, are not part of any path of egress and meets required setbacks as defined in [Title 14](#).
18. Replacement of glazing or replacement of glazing in hazardous locations with tempered glazing.
19. Grading under fifty (50) cubic yards (38.23 m³) pursuant to [Title 14](#).

Electrical:

Electrical Repairs and maintenance:

1. Minor repair work, including the replacement of lamps or the connection of approved portable electrical equipment to approved permanently installed receptacles.
2. Reinstallation of attachment plug receptacles, but not the outlets therefore.
3. Replacement of branch circuit over-current devices of the required capacity in the same location.
4. Repair or replacement of current carrying parts of any switch, contactor or control device.
5. Repair or replacement of electrodes or transformers of the same size and capacity for signs or gas tube systems.
6. Repair or replacement of fixed motors, transformers or fixed approved appliances of the same type and rating in the same location.
7. Removal of electrical wire, coax or communication wire.
8. Replacement of light fixtures in single family and accessory structures.

Temporary electrical uses:

9. Listed cord-and-plug connected temporary decorative lighting.
10. Listed temporary construction lighting or wiring.
11. Carnivals and circuses.
12. Installation of any temporary system required for the testing or servicing of electrical equipment or apparatus.
13. Temporary wiring for experimental purposes in suitable experimental laboratories.
14. Electrical wiring, devices and appliances: Electrical wiring, devices, appliances, apparatus or equipment operating at less than twenty-five (25) volts and not capable of supplying more than fifty (50) watts of energy.
15. Radio and television transmitting stations: The provisions of this code shall not apply to electrical equipment used for radio and television transmissions but do apply to equipment and wiring for a power supply and the installations of towers and antennas.

Gas:

1. Portable heating, cooking or clothes drying appliances.
2. Replacement of any minor part that does not alter approval of equipment or make such equipment unsafe.
3. Portable fuel cell appliances that are not connected to a fixed piping system and are not interconnected to a power grid.

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 approval of equipment or make such equipment unsafe.
6. Portable evaporative cooler.
7. Self-contained refrigeration system containing ten (10) pounds (4.54 kg) or less of refrigerant and actuated by motors of one (1) horsepower (seven hundred forty-six (746) W) or less.
8. Portable fuel cell appliances that are not connected to a fixed piping system and are not interconnected to a power grid.

Plumbing:

1. The stopping of leaks in drains, water, soil, waste or vent pipe: provided, however, that if any concealed trap, drain pipe, water, soil, waste or vent pipe becomes defective and it becomes necessary to remove and replace the same with 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.
3. The repair or replacement of residential sinks, lavatories, or water closets and their associated valves and traps provided such do not require the modification, replacement or rearrangement of the water, waste, or vent pipes or require an electrical connection.

Repairs. Application or notice to the building official is not required for ordinary repairs to structures, replacement of lamps or the connection of approved portable electrical equipment to approved permanently installed receptacles. Such repairs shall not include the cutting away of any wall, partition or portion thereof, the removal or cutting of any structural beam or load-bearing support, or the removal or change of any required means of egress, or rearrangement of parts of a structure affecting the egress requirements; nor shall ordinary repairs include addition to, alteration of, replacement or relocation of any standpipe, water supply, sewer, drainage, drain leader, gas, soil, waste, vent or similar piping, electric wiring or mechanical or other work affecting public health or general safety.

Public service agencies. A permit shall not be required for installation, alteration, or repair of generation, transmission, distribution or metering or other related equipment that is under the ownership and control of public service agencies by established right.