

# A Guide to Residential Additions



When planning to construct an addition such as a sunroom or added living space, this guide will assist you, the homeowner, in determining when a Building Permit is necessary and what is required for the building permit application, including zoning regulations and other legislated constraints that govern the construction of these structures.

## When And Why a Permit Is Required

In general, a building permit is required for all building additions regardless of size. Building permits are necessary to ensure compliance with the Ontario Building Code for structural and safety standards, adherence to zoning requirements and other applicable Provincial and Municipal regulations.

It is the responsibility of the homeowner to ensure a permit is obtained prior to any construction.

Constructing or altering a building/structure without a permit can result in numerous problems including:

- **Complaints from neighbours**
- **Not conforming with the Building Code**
- **Difficulty selling the property**
- **Incurring liability should an injury occur to someone (visiting your property) as a result of a structure not conforming to the Building Code**
- **Extra cost in having to reconstruct the structure according to zoning By-law and Building Code**
- **Possible demolition of structure.**

## City Of St. Catharines Zoning By-Law

The City of St. Catharines Zoning By-law contains regulations governing the size, height, location and use of buildings. Based on the zoning of the property the proposed addition must comply with these requirements as far as lot coverage, yard requirements (minimum building setbacks from property lines) and the proposed use of the addition.

## Building By-Law 2011-334

A copy of Building By-law 2011-334 is available at the City of St. Catharines, Legal and Clerks Services or downloaded at the City of St. Catharines website [www.stcatharines.ca](http://www.stcatharines.ca) or <https://stcatharines.civicweb.net/filepro/documents/784/>

## Applying For a Permit

Applications for a building permit are available at the City of St. Catharines, Planning and Building Services (PBS) Department or downloaded at the City of St. Catharines website [www.stcatharines.ca](http://www.stcatharines.ca) (<https://www.stcatharines.ca/en/building-and-renovating/applying-for-a-building-permit.aspx>).

With the submission of an application, you will be required to submit two (2) copies of detailed construction drawings, a site plan, the required building permit application fees and damage deposit (if applicable). If you require assistance to develop these drawings, sample and standard drawings are available for your use (as a reference only) along with the current fee schedules at the City of St. Catharines PBS Department. Building permit applications for additions must also include a completed energy efficiency design summary form.

Building permits may be applied for by a property owner, or by an agent on behalf of the owner, such as the contractor or designer. The Schedule 1 portion of the application must be filled out with every submission not involving an architect or engineer. The owner of a single or two-unit dwelling may produce the drawings, otherwise a qualified designer must prepare and take responsibility for the designs.

## Required Drawings

Two (2) complete copies of detailed drawings are required with the submission of an application.

A complete detailed site plan showing the following:

- **North arrow**
- **Scale**
- **Legal description, (lot and plan numbers)**
- **Street name(s)**
- **Lot dimensions**
- **Setbacks to all property lines for the existing dwelling and the proposed addition**
- **Information for all existing buildings and structure such as size and location**
- **Location of easement(s)**

### Detailed construction drawings showing:

- Floor to ceiling height
- Location and size of all door and window openings
- Materials used along with size and spacing
- Size and spacing of studs, beams, posts, roof trusses/rafters
- Floor framing details
- Plumbing and heating location and details and proposed alterations
- Insulation, vapour and air barrier details
- Anchoring and fastening details
- Footing and foundation details, (size, thickness and reinforcement)
- Normally construction drawings for additions will include (as a minimum), a foundation basement plan, floor plan(s), three building elevations, at least one cross section, plumbing and heating locations and details.

Pre-Engineered floor and/or truss drawings must be provided with application for permit or prior to framing inspections.

No glazed openings such as windows or doors are permitted in any exterior wall less than 1.2 m (3'-11") from any property line.

**New Materials/Systems:** Additional information such as manufacturers specifications or engineering details may be required for materials/systems which are not specifically described In the Ontario Building Code for normal review.

The original drawings must be submitted to scale and fully dimensioned in either metric or imperial units with the appropriate information shown as noted above.

### Standard Drawings

City of St. Catharines standard drawing entitled "Site Plan" is available at the PBS Department or downloaded at the City of St. Catharines website. You may mark up the plot plan prior to submission. Other standard drawings are available at the PBS Department upon request and after discussion with staff concerning the scope of your proposed addition.

### What to Do When Waiting For the Permit to Be Issued

Once you have submitted your application, we will review your submission as quickly as we can. We are aware of the importance to you in obtaining the permit quickly. Please make yourself available at the telephone number you provided at the time of application to ensure we can contact you should we require any clarification of your submission.

### What to do When the Permit Has Been Issued

Once you receive your permit, please read the approved permit plans and documents thoroughly before commencing construction. The construction must be in accordance with the approved plans and documents issued with your permit. Any changes made before or during construction must be submitted to the building section and additional fees may be applicable.

Inspections must be conducted at legislated stages of construction to ensure that all work is done in accordance with the approved plans. Building Inspectors must inspect the following:

- **Prior to pouring any concrete for piers or footings**
- **Prior to foundation wall backfilling**
- **Structural framing**
- **HVAC rough-in**
- **Plumbing rough-in**
- **Insulation inspection**
- **Final (HVAC, Plumbing and Building)**

It is the responsibility of the owner to ensure that either you or the contractor contact the City of St. Catharines, PBS Department to request an inspection before proceeding to the next phase of construction. All required inspections are listed on the permit.

Failure to schedule will result in not being allowed to occupy or use the addition and may also result in uncovering the work. To schedule your inspections, call 905-688-5601, ext.1660. Please have your permit number ready when scheduling an inspection.

**Note:** The Building Permit must be posted on the property in a conspicuous location and the approved permit documents must be kept on site and available during inspections.

If you have any further questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact the City of St. Catharines PBS Department between the hours of 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. at 905-688-5601, ext. 1660.