



DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AND
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
BUILDING DIVISION

REQUIRED PERMITS & WORK EXEMPT FROM PERMIT for Commercial Building, Plumbing, Electrical, & Mechanical

Permits Required. 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, install, enlarge, alter, repair, remove, convert or replace any electrical, gas, mechanical or plumbing system, the installation of which is regulated by this code, 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. Exemptions from permit requirements of the 2025 California Building Code shall not be deemed to grant authorization for any work to be done in any manner in violation of the provision of the code or any other laws or ordinances of the City of South San Francisco.

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

BUILDING PERMITS: A building permit shall not be required for the following:

1. One-story detached accessory structures used as tool and storage sheds, playhouses and similar uses, provided the floor area is not greater than 120 square feet.
2. Fences, other than swimming pool barrier, not over 7 feet high.
3. Oil derricks.
4. Retaining walls that are not over 4 feet in height measured from the bottom of the footing to the top of the wall, unless supporting a surcharge or impounding Class I, II or IIIA liquids.
5. 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. Sidewalks and driveways not more than 30 inches above adjacent grade, and not over any basement or story below and are not part of an accessible route.
7. Painting, papering, tiling, carpeting, cabinets, counter tops and similar finish work.
8. Temporary motion picture, television and theater stage sets and scenery.
9. Prefabricated swimming pools accessory to a Group R-3 occupancy that are less than 24 inches deep, are not exceed 5,000 gallons and are installed entirely above ground.
10. Shade cloth structures constructed for nursery or agricultural purposes, not including service systems.
11. Swings and other playground equipment accessory to detached one- and two-family dwellings.

12. Window awnings in Group R-3 and U occupancies, supported by an exterior wall that do not project more than 54 inches from the exterior wall and do not require additional support.

13. Nonfixed and movable fixtures, cases, racks, counters and partitions not over 5 feet 9 inches in height.

Unless specifically exempted below, separate plumbing, electrical and mechanical permits will be required for the above exempted items.

ELECTRICAL PERMITS: An electrical permit shall not be required for the following:

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 television transmissions, but do apply to equipment and wiring for a power supply and the 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 PERMITS: A gas permit shall not be required for the following:

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

MECHANICAL PERMITS: A mechanical permit shall not be required for the following:

1. Portable heating appliances.
2. Portable ventilation appliances.
3. Portable cooling units.
4. Steam, hot or chilled water piping within any heating or cooling equipment regulated by this code.
5. Replacement of any minor part that does not alter approval of equipment or make such equipment unsafe.
6. Portable evaporative coolers.
7. Self-contained refrigeration systems containing 10 pounds or less of refrigerant or that are actuated by motors of 1 horsepower (746 W) or less.

PLUMBING PERMITS: A plumbing permit shall not be required for the following:

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 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.