

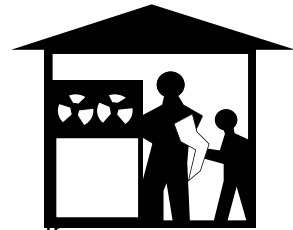


TOWN OF ACTON
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Building Department

BUILDING PERMITS FOR FINISHING BASEMENT SPACES

A Building Permit is required to finish basements into storage areas, recreation rooms and habitable spaces. The basement must comply with minimum standards for building code compliance. It must also comply with Board of Health regulations. The following are requirements for a typical basement project, there could be other regulations which are not addressed or are specific to your project which might apply. The greater the detail that is on the plans, the easier it will be to help you comply with applicable regulations. Recreation rooms and habitable rooms require glazing not less than 8% of the floor area. One-half of the required area of glazing shall be operable. Artificial lighting (standard electrical lighting) and mechanical ventilation (system to provide fresh air into space which doesn't differentiate more than 10 degrees from the conditioned space) can be used to meet this requirement. Energy conservation regulations require insulation for heated or cooled spaces. **Minimum** finish ceiling height for a habitable space in a basement is 7 feet, storage areas are exempt. Habitable basements must have an emergency escape and rescue opening. Rooms that contain fuel burning appliances (furnaces) must supply sufficient combustion air to appliances. If room is not large enough vents can be added in walls to supplement. If combination of spaces is not enough, outside air will be required.



Applications can be obtained at the Building Department. Please read and complete all applicable sections. Information required for review must include:

- *Completed application form, if contractor, they must sign as applicant with homeowner's signature or a copy of the signed contract and copy of licenses.
- * All applications require the workers comp insurance affidavit to be filled out by the applicant.
- *Homeowners must complete an application and an affidavit exempting them from the home improvement contractor law. Owners pulling their own permit or dealing with unregistered contractors for applicable home improvement work do not have access to the arbitration program or guaranty fund under MGL c. 142A.

Change Submit Three sets of plans indicating material used in the construction, floor plan indicating room sizes, doorways, stairways, finish ceiling height, insulation, location and Btu rating of furnace, location of smoke detectors, indicate pressure treated wood where in contact with concrete, sizes of glazing and percentage that open to exterior. Combustion air vents and mechanical ventilation if required

If all the information submitted is sufficient, the reviewing process usually takes 14 to 21 days, this time frame varies depending on season. (Spring and fall are our busy seasons) Upon approval you will receive an approved set of plans and a building permit card that should be made visible from street. Separate permits are required for electrical and plumbing work, if applicable. We require three inspections, framing (after electrical and plumbing roughs are signed, if applicable) insulation, and at the finish to assure compliance with plans (after electrical and plumbing finals are signed, if applicable). If plumbing and electrical work is minor we will do the framing and insulation at the same time, however electrical and plumbing inspections (if applicable) must be signed prior to insulating. If you insulate prior to their inspection you will be required to remove the insulation. Inspection request are required a minimum of 24 hrs prior to inspection. Most inspections can be done the next business day after the request. Information required for request must include street address, permit number and type of inspection. The approved plans are required on site for all inspections. If you have any questions or have a specific situation that is not typical you can contact the Building Department at 978-929-6633.