

Building Permits and Project Permits

Date: January 5, 2015

Last Revised: January 2, 2023

Reason for Policy:

All renovation and construction work on University buildings and structures shall be done in accordance with the Virginia Uniform Statewide Building Code (VUSBC) and other applicable codes, directives, and standards. This policy describes the differences between *Building Permits*, *Project Permits*, and work requiring *No Permit*.

Note: this policy replaces Facilities Management Directive 562E dated April 5, 2006.

Policy Statement:

All University projects will be reviewed and building permits issued by the University Building Official in accordance with the VUSBC.

The Code of Virginia § 36-98.1 authorizes the University to designate its own Building Official. Projects other than those in the “*No Permit*” category listed below in Section 3 will require an individual *Building Permit* issued by the University Building Official or a *Project Permit* issued by a Designated Facilities Management Agency Representative.

Note that some of the work described under “Project Permits” is work that requires a building permit per the VUSBC but has been deemed minor in nature by the University Building Official in accordance with VUSBC Section 108. Such projects are thus delegated to the Agency Representatives as described for annual permits in the USBC and the procedures listed below.

Permits may be upgraded from a “No Permit” project to one requiring a “Project Permit”; “Project Permit” projects may similarly be upgraded to require a Building Permit. The final decision regarding permits and upgrades required will be made by permit signatories.

VUSBC Section 108 governs the type of work is required to have a building permit. The following may be used as guidance:

1. *Building Permits* are required for:
 - a. Capital projects
 - b. Construction or demolition of a building or structure.

- c. Site/foundation/utility preparation for factory built or prefabricated structures
- d. Change in building use or occupancy
- e. Removal or cutting out a section of a structural member
- f. New/relocated/replaced/altered elevators and any work other than repair
- g. Adding/removing HVAC, electrical, plumbing, gas, fire protection (sprinkler, suppression, alarm) systems
- h. Projects involving the following:
 - 1) Mechanical – alteration or relocation of the quantity or source of ventilation, exhaust, or combustion air; alteration or relocation of boilers, water heaters, pressure vessels, or refrigeration equipment; change in refrigerant classification for replacement in kind of refrigeration equipment
 - 2) Electrical – alteration or relocation of any 3-phase circuits, single phase 208 or 240 volt circuits greater than 50 amp, or single phase 277 volt circuits greater than 30 amp
 - 3) Plumbing – alteration or relocation of plumbing fixtures, water supply, water distribution, sanitary waste, special waste, or storm drainage
 - 4) Gas Piping – alteration or relocation of fuel gas or fuel oil piping systems
 - 5) Fire Sprinkler – alteration or relocation of water supply or equipment other than sprinkler heads; relocation of more than 10 percent of sprinkler heads per story
 - 6) Fire Suppression – alteration or relocation of suppression agent or equipment
 - 7) Fire Alarm – alteration of system logic; alteration or relocation of equipment other than alarm devices; relocation of more than 10 percent of alarm devices per story
- i. Installation or alterations involving:
 - 1) The removal or addition of any wall partition or portion thereof
 - 2) Any structural component
 - 3) Repair or replacement of any component of a fire or smoke rated assembly
 - 4) Any required means of egress system
 - 5) Any equipment regulated by the USBC
- j. Installation of temporary structures such as stages, platforms, and bleachers
- k. Movement of a lot line that increases the hazard to or decreases the level of safety of an existing building or structure in comparison to the building code under which such building or structure was constructed
- l. Utility structures
- m. Roof replacement projects where the work is the replacement of more than 100 square feet of an existing roof covering
- n. Adding/removing/altering parking lots and roads
- o. Fences and guardrails required for pedestrian safety, accessibility, safeguards during construction or protection of paths of egress

- p. Application for a permit may be required by the building official for the installation of replacement siding, roofing, and windows in buildings within a historic district
 - q. Any other work as required by the VUSBC.
2. *Project Permits* are required for:
- a. Removal or disturbing any lead paint or asbestos containing material
 - b. Installation of wiring and equipment that operates at less than 50 volts. However, a building permit is required where any such installations are located in a plenum, penetrate fire rated or smoke protected construction or a component of any of the following:
 - 1) Fire alarm system
 - 2) Fire detection system
 - 3) Fire suppression system
 - 4) Smoke control system
 - 5) Fire protection supervisory system
 - 6) Elevator fire safety control system
 - 7) Access or egress control system or delayed egress locking or latching system
 - 8) Fire damper
 - 9) Door control system
 - c. Flagpoles 30 feet or less in height
 - d. One story detached structures used as tool and storage sheds, playhouses, or similar uses, provided the building area does not exceed 256 square feet and the structures are not classified as a Group F-1 or H occupancy
 - e. Concrete or masonry walls, provided such walls do not exceed six feet in height above the finished grade
 - f. Fences of any height for which a building permit is not required
 - g. Ordinary repairs as defined in VUSBC 108.2 Item 14 or deemed by the building official to be minor which does not adversely affect public health or safety
3. *No Permit* is required for:
- a. Work not regulated by the VUSBC
 - b. Agency Representative approved preventive maintenance work orders
 - c. Agency Representative approved standing work orders
 - d. Repair/replacement in kind or with similar materials or equipment unless such existing materials or equipment have since been deemed to be a safety hazard.
 - e. Painting
 - f. Landscaping/grounds maintenance
 - g. Building services
 - h. Recycling
 - i. Installation or replacement of floor finishes
 - j. Plaster, tile, wall coverings, suspended ceiling and grid

- k. Keys and locks
- l. Portable fire extinguishers
- m. Brick, stone, or timber walls used for minor decorative landscaping that are not used as retaining walls
- n. Site improvements not regulated by the VUSBC
- o. Repair of sidewalks that are not part of an accessibility route or exterior path of egress
- p. Maintenance

For all work listed under Section 1 "*Building Permit*" above, the Building Permit application, properly annotated and signed by the University Building Official, serves as the building permit and shall be posted on site. For work listed under Section 2 "*Project Permit*" above, the Project Permit form, properly annotated and signed by a Designated Agency Representative (described below), serves as the Project Permit. The work order number will serve as the permit number.

The University Building Official shall be responsible for managing the building permit program to ensure the University's compliance with the VUSBC.

Designated Agency Representatives will issue Project Permits and are responsible for ensuring that work complies with the VUSBC and other applicable codes and standards. Agency Representatives shall sign the project permits to authorize the work and when the work is completed to indicate that appropriate inspections were completed, and the results were satisfactory. Each Agency Representative will maintain a file of project permits issued and will review the file with the University Building Official annually. A copy of the project permit will be issued to the permit applicant.

Designated Agency Representatives shall be approved by the University Building Official and are currently Mark Stanis, Rollie Zumbrunn, and Derek Wilson.

Facilities Management Directors and/or Department Heads are responsible for enforcement of the permit policy. Questions and concerns should be discussed with the Office of the University Building Official.