



Planning & Building Department

3675 Mt. Diablo Boulevard, Suite 210

Lafayette, CA 94549-1968

Tel. (925) 284-1976

<http://www.ci.lafayette.ca.us>

HOW TO GET A BUILDING PERMIT IN LAFAYETTE

Applying for a building permit in the City of Lafayette is a four-step process. Lafayette contracts with the Contra Costa County Building Inspection Department (CCCBID) to perform building code plan-check and inspection services. The Central Contra Costa Sanitary District and the Contra Costa County Fire Protection District (CCCFPD) review plans to ensure their development standards are met. The location and contact information for each office is listed below and each step is detailed in the following pages. Please see the section titled *DO I NEED A BUILDING PERMIT?* for a list of projects that do not require a building permit.

Step 1: Lafayette Planning Department – Zoning Plan Check	
<p>Lafayette Planning Department 3675 Mt. Diablo Boulevard, Suite 210 Lafayette, CA 94549 Counter Hours 12:00 – 5:00 M-F Tel. (925) 284-1976, 8:00 – 5:00 M-F planner@lovelafayette.org</p>	
Step 2: Contra Costa County Fire Protection District	Step 3: Central Contra Costa Sanitary District
<p>Contra Costa County Fire Protection District 4005 Port Chicago Hwy, Suite #250 Concord, CA 94520 Permit Counter Hours: 8:00 – 11:45 M-TH Tel. (925) 941-3300</p>	<p>Central Contra Costa Sanitary District 5019 Imhoff Place Martinez, CA 94553 Permit Counter Hours: 8:00 – 5:00 M-F Tel. (925) 228-9500</p>
Step 4: Contra Costa County Building Inspection Department	
<p>Lamorinda Field Office 3685 Mt. Diablo Boulevard, Suite 120 Lafayette, CA 94549 Hours: 8:00 - 11:30 & 12:30 – 5:00 M-TH* 8:00 - 11:30 & 12:30 – 4:00 Fri* Tel. (925) 299-0263 • FAX (925) 299-0134 lamorinda@dcd.cccounty.us</p> <p><i>* Building Inspection will not issue permits after 4:30 p.m. Mon-Thurs or after 3:30 p.m. on Friday.</i></p>	<p>Main Office 30 Muir Road Martinez, CA 94553 Hours: 7:30 – 5:00 M-TH 7:30 – 4:00 Fri Tel. (855) 323-2626</p>

NOTE: Steps 1-3 can be done in any order, however all three must be completed before Step 4.

Step 1:**Lafayette Planning Department - Zoning Plan Check**

Most projects can be reviewed for zoning compliance over-the-counter, provided the project conforms to Lafayette’s zoning regulations and no discretionary review is required (e.g. land use permit, design review, variance, etc.). Bring **three (3)** sets of plans to the Planning Counter between 12:00 – 5:00 PM Monday – Friday. (Bring **four (4)** sets of plans for a grading permit or for a building permit following a discretionary review). The planner-on-duty will review your plans for compliance with all applicable zoning regulations. If the project complies, the planner will stamp all sets of plans and provide you with a signed *Application for Building Permit*. All sets will be returned to you for completion of Steps 2 through 4. Please see *Application for a Building Permit Submittal Guidelines* on the following page for information that should be included on plans submitted for a building or grading permit.

Projects adding 500 or more square feet of impervious surface cannot be reviewed over the counter. These projects are subject to the provisions of the National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES). The City Engineer reviews drainage plans to ensure implementation of the NPDES Best Management Practices (BMPs). A drainage plan is required to demonstrate how stormwater runoff from your site, including roof areas, patios, driveways etc. is handled. When a building addition is proposed the drainage plan shall show existing drainage system and how the addition will tie into or affect the existing system.

If your project involves commercial construction, a new residential building, residential demolition-only, or increase residential conditioned area, volume, or size, a Waste Management Plan (WMP) is required and you should review the [Waste Management Plan](#) packet for instructions and the WMP agreement form. The WMP and agreement form will be submitted to the City online using [Green Halo Systems](#).

Your project may be subject to fees at time of zoning plan-check. In addition to paying any outstanding balances, the Planning Department collects the following fees:

Additions & New Single-Family Residence	
Drainage Impact Fee *	\$0.55 per sq. ft. Impervious Surface
Park Fees Program Administration Fee	1% of Parkland Fee + 1% of Park Facilities Fee
Storm Water Quality Implementation	\$175.00
Waste Management Performance Security	Waived By City Council
Waste Management Review	\$80.00

Additions	
Parkland Fee	\$1.70 per sq. ft. Habitable Area
Park Facilities Fee	\$1.73 per sq. ft. Habitable Area

New Single-Family Residence	
Parkland Fee	\$7,480 per unit
Park Facilities Fee	\$7,575 per unit
Sub-Regional Transportation Fee	\$7,540.97 per unit
Walkway Fee*	\$1,130.03 per unit

Please refer to the [Planning & Development Fee Schedule](#) for a complete list of fees, as adopted by the City Council.

* Fees include a Program Administration Fee.

** Fees are subject to change without notification.

*** Additional fees may be collected by the Contra Costa County Building Inspection Department upon plan check and prior to issuance of permit.

**** While not required by the Lafayette Planning Department, information such as Title 24 energy compliance calculations and structural plans and details, may be required by Contra Costa County Building Inspection Department.

**APPLICATION FOR BUILDING PERMIT
SUBMITTAL GUIDELINES**

Applying for a building permit in the City of Lafayette is a four-step process. **Step 1** is Zoning Plan Check by the Lafayette Planning Department. In order for the planner-on-duty to review your project for zoning conformance your plans should include the following drawings showing the listed items. Good examples of plans can be found on the City of Lafayette’s website www.ci.lafayette.ca.us.

All Plans

- Property Owner(s) Assessor’s Parcel Number (APN) North Arrow
 Property Address Scale (Architect or Engineer Scale)

Site Plan*

- Zoning District in which the property is located (e.g. R-20)
- Location Map (map showing location within the city - an annotated Thomas Bros. map works)
- Context Map (showing relationship of proposed project/parcel with surrounding development)
- Entire subject property (show property lines as a double dashed line ——— - - ———)
- Property dimensions (metes & bounds)
- Setbacks (front, side yards and rear yard using a dashed line) - - - - -
- All existing structures & proposed structures, additions, areas of alterations (highlight new construction)
- Easements, topographical features (swales, steep slopes, retaining walls, etc.)
- Topography (existing as dashed line, proposed as solid line)
- Amount of cut, fill, import, and export (cu. yds.)
- Tree location, species and accurate dripline
- Current and proposed onsite drainage
- Projects adding 500 square feet or more of new impervious area must be reviewed by the City Engineer.

Plans shall identify the site planning and design measures proposed to minimize stormwater pollution potential. For additional information, see the separate handout “Stormwater Quality Control Guidelines” available from the Planning & Building Department or at www.lovelafayette.org/stormwater. For projects that create or replace 2,500 square feet or more of impervious surface, specified C.3 measures must be incorporated as indicated in the attached handout. If permanent stormwater facilities are required to be installed to minimize stormwater pollution potential, the property owner may be required to enter into a City of Lafayette Stormwater Facility Operation and Maintenance Agreement and submit a \$5,000 performance security.

Floor Plan

- Floor plan for the entirety of all structures
(show new walls as darkened; show existing walls to be removed with dashed lines)

Elevations

- Provide elevations labeled North, South, East and West
- Show existing (dashed line) and proposed (solid line) finished grades on each elevation

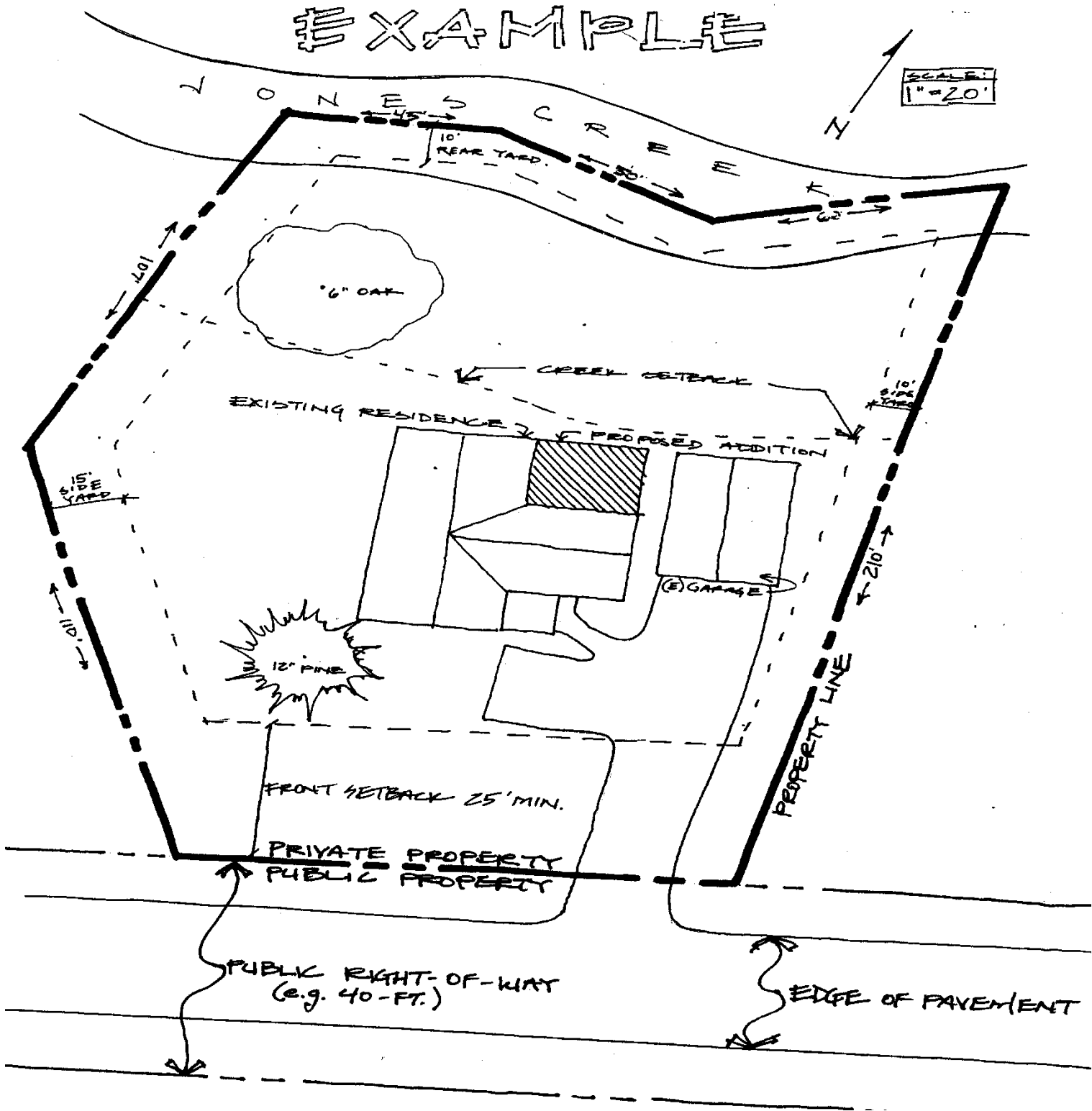
Square Footage Calculations

- Calculate area of existing & proposed living space, unconditioned space (garage, shed, etc.) and impervious surfaces (building footprint, pavement, etc.). See example chart below.

Floor Areas (sq.ft.)	Existing	New
First Floor		
Second Floor		
Garage		
Accessory Building(s)		
Other _____		
Total		

Impervious (sq.ft.)	Existing	New
Building Footprint		
Driveway		
Patio & Walkways		
Swimming Pool		
Other _____		
Total		

* **Note:** The City strongly recommends that you hire a California certified land surveyor to survey the property and base your plans on said survey. The Contra Costa County Building Inspection Department may require you to submit a certification letter, prepared by a California certified land surveyor or registered civil engineer, verifying that the building or structure is sited in the location as shown on the approved plans. Inaccurate plans may lead to costly delays.



Step 2: [Contra Costa County Fire Protection District - Building Plan Review](#)

Contra Costa County Fire Protection District (CCCFPD) will review all project plans to ensure fire safety standards are met. Have all sets of drawings stamped by the Fire District before Step 4.

The basic objectives of the CCCFPD building plan review are to protect the lives and property of Contra Costa County residents from fires, natural disasters and hazardous materials. In order to accomplish these objectives, the CCCFPD requires review of the following types of proposed construction activities in the district:

- Any new commercial or residential construction, including single family and duplex buildings.
- Any single family and duplex building additions or expansions that increase the existing fire area* by more than 50 percent and result in a total fire area exceeding 3,600 square feet.
- Any commercial additions or expansions that increase the existing fire area by more than 50 percent and result in a total fire area exceeding 5,000 square feet.
- Any changes in commercial occupancy classification to a higher hazard category from a lower hazard category.
- Commercial tenant improvements.
- Building additions that extend beyond the existing building foundation.

*“Fire Area” is defined by the California Fire Code as the aggregate floor area enclosed and bounded by firewalls, fire barriers, exterior walls or horizontal assemblies of a building. Areas of the building not provided with surrounding walls shall be included in the fire area if such areas are included within the horizontal projection of the roof or floor next above.

Step 3: [Central Contra Costa Sanitary District - Building Plan Review](#)

Central Contra Costa Sanitary District (Central-San) works to meet the wastewater collection and treatment needs of Contra Costa County through pollution prevention, safe disposal of toxics, encouraging the use of recycled water, and solving critical water pollution and water resource problems.

Central-San staff will review the project plans to ensure that there will be no adverse impacts on the sanitary sewer system and no encroachment into a sanitary sewer easement. Have all sets of drawings stamped by Central-San staff before Step 4. In order to accomplish these objectives, Central-San requires review of the following types of proposed construction activities in the county:

- Any new residential or commercial sewer connection.
- Septic system conversions and residential sewage pumping.
- Interior remodeling which requires modification/repairs to sewers outside the building walls.
- Building additions that extend beyond the existing building foundation.
- Any structure that would include excavation work, foundation or piers (such as pools, deck, fences and retaining walls) or which, upon completion, would prevent access to sanitary sewer facilities for routine maintenance and repairs (such as concrete patios).
- All non-residential tenant improvements, whether or not plumbing is being modified.

Note: Properties not served by a public sewer utilize a septic system for wastewater disposal. Additions on properties that contain a septic system must be reviewed by Contra Costa Environmental Health which will ensure the septic system is functioning properly.

Step 4: County Building Inspection Department - Plan Check & Permit Issuance

The County Building Inspection Department's (CCCBID) fundamental objective is to help customers achieve their construction goals through the application of building, health and safety standards. CCCBID achieves this through plan check, permit and inspection services, public information and housing improvement programs.

When plans have been reviewed and stamped by the Lafayette Planning Department, Contra Costa County Fire Protection District and the Central Contra Costa Sanitary District, take all sets of drawings and the signed *Application for Building Permit* to the nearest County Building Inspection Office.

Fire Suppression System: The 2013 California Residential Code Section R313.2 requires the installation of fire suppression systems in residences. There is an exception for additions and alterations. For purposes of this code section, when the scope of work for R-3, single-family dwelling, and U, garage or storage, occupancies involves the removal or replacement of 50-percent or greater of the linear length of the walls of the building (exterior plus interior) and 50-percent of the roof within a one-year period, the project shall not qualify for the exception stated in this section.

Revisions to Permitted Plans

Lafayette Planning Department then to County Building Inspection Department

No changes or alterations to permitted plans shall be made without the approval of the Lafayette Planning Department and Contra Costa County Building Inspection Department (Steps 1 & 4). When proposing revisions to permitted plans the applicant shall prepare three sets of revised plans and submit them along with the approved set of plans for review and approval by the Planning Department. Once the revisions are approved by Planning Department, the applicant shall submit the revised plans to the Contra Costa County Building Inspection Department for their review.

Building Permit Status & Records

The public can check on the status of permits by using the [Department of Conservation and Development's Building Permit Database](https://aaweb.cccounty.us/citizenaccess/)[†] and select the "Building" tab. Permits can be searched for by entering any of the following information:

- General Search
- Property Address
- Permit Information
- Licensed Contractor Information

[†] <https://aaweb.cccounty.us/citizenaccess/>

EXEMPT FROM A BUILDING PERMIT

Almost all construction and remodel projects require a building permit. It is safe to assume that a permit is required unless you are told by a building official that a permit is not required, or the project is exempt from the California Building & Residential Codes as listed below. If you have any questions as to whether your specific project requires a permit, please contact the Contra Costa County Building Inspection Department (CCCBID).

Excerpt from the 2010 California Building & Residential Codes (CBC & CRC)

Section 105 -- Permits

R105.2 Work exempt from permit. Permits shall not be required for the following. Exemption from permit requirements of this code shall not be deemed to grant authorization for any work to be done in any manner in violation of the provisions of this code or any other laws or ordinances of this jurisdiction.

California Building Code	California Residential Code
<p><u>Building:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. One-story detached accessory structures used as tool and storage sheds, playhouses and similar uses, provided the floor area does not exceed 120 sq. ft.2. Fences not over 6 ft. high.3. Oil derricks.4. Retaining walls that are not over 3 ft. in height measured from the top 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 on 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 in. 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 in. deep, do 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 supported by an exterior wall that do not project more than 54 in. from the exterior wall and do not require additional support of Groups R-3 and U occupancies.13. Nonfixed and movable fixtures, cases, racks, counters and partitions not over 5 ft. 9 in. in height.	<p><u>Building:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. One-story detached accessory structures used as tool and storage sheds, playhouses and similar uses, provided the floor area does not exceed 120 square feet (11.15 m²).2. Fences not over 6 feet (1829 mm) high.3. Retaining walls that are not over 3 feet (1219 mm) in height measured from the top of the footing to the top of the wall, unless supporting a surcharge.4. Water tanks supported directly upon grade if the capacity does not exceed 5,000 gallons (18 927 L) and the ratio of height to diameter or width does not exceed 2 to 1.5. Sidewalks and driveways.6. Painting, papering, tiling, carpeting, cabinets, counter tops and similar finish work.7. Prefabricated swimming pools that are less than 24 inches (610 mm) deep.8. Swings and other playground equipment.9. Window awnings supported by an exterior wall which do not project more than 54 inches (1372 mm) from the exterior wall and do not require additional support.10. Decks not exceeding 200 square feet (18.58 m²) in area, that are not more than 30 inches (762 mm) above grade at any point, are not attached to a dwelling and do not serve the exit door required by Section R311.4. <p><u>Electrical:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Listed cord-and-plug connected temporary decorative lighting.2. Reinstallation of attachment plug receptacles but not the outlets therefor.3. Replacement of branch circuit overcurrent devices of the required capacity in the same location.

Electrical:

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:

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

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 its approval or make it unsafe.
6. Portable evaporative cooler.
7. Self-contained refrigeration system containing 10 lbs. or less of refrigerant and actuated by motors of 1 horsepower or less.

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 the 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.

4. Electrical wiring, devices, appliances, apparatus or equipment operating at less than 25 volts and not capable of supplying more than 50 watts of energy.
5. Minor repair work, including the replacement of lamps or the connection of approved portable electrical equipment to approved permanently installed receptacles.

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 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 (4.54 kg) or less of refrigerant or that are actuated by motors of 1 horsepower (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, 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.

EXEMPT FROM ZONING PLAN CHECK

Applying for a building permit in the City of Lafayette is a four-step process. The following projects have been found to uniformly comply with the Zoning Code and therefore are exempt from Step 1. Lafayette Planning Department Zoning Plan Check. Therefore, you may proceed directly to the Contra Costa County Building Inspection Department to submit your application for building permit.

Exempt From Zoning Plan Check

1. Termite or dry-rot repair where there is no increase in square footage of the area replaced, and no increase in the number of plumbing fixtures (including roughing in or stubbing for future use).
2. Electrical or natural gas permits for repair or replacement where there is no increase in the number of meters.
3. Mechanical permits for installation, repair or replacement or of new HVAC equipment for single-family residential property.
4. Mechanical or plumbing permits for repair, replacement or installation of water heaters or pool or spa equipment for single-family residential property.
5. Foundation repair or seismic upgrade where there is no increase in the square footage or bulk of the structure.
6. Repairs to existing swimming pools and spas.
7. Bathroom or other interior remodels where there is no increase in conditioned space, except for kitchens. See below.
8. Fire damage: Interior repairs from fire damage would also be exempt if there is no increase in building size or the installation of a second kitchen that wasn't existing prior to the fire.
9. Window replacements in-kind (however new windows and skylights are not exempt).
10. Re-roof permits are exempt and do not require a Construction & Demolition Debris Recycling Waste Management Plan.
11. Small residential rooftop solar projects that are 10kW AC or 30 kW thermal or less, flush-mounted on the rooftop of a detached single-family dwelling or a duplex, and do not exceed the building height limit of the zoning district in which the project is located.

Not Exempt

Kitchen remodels: Kitchens or areas with “kitchen like” plumbing such as wet bars are not exempt because the number of kitchens is critical to the number of dwelling units in an area zoned single-family residential.

Please note that exempt projects are no longer considered exempt when a Waste Management Plan is required. Refer to Page 2 of this handout for additional information.