



2880 International Circle Colorado Springs, CO 80910

Building a Better Community  
Thru Education and Enforcement



# “CAN WE TALK”

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“I didn’t realize a permit was required to do that” and “My handyman told me we didn’t need a permit to do this job.” I’ve lost count of how many times I’ve heard excuses of this type when we issue a Stop Work Order for work performed without required permits. I have been preaching the need to check our website before starting a project for some time in this column . . . to no avail. So this time, to make it even easier for you I’ve attached two important parts of the Regional Building Code as a quick reference guide. I recommend you save this information for future use.

This is the time of year many folks want to make improvements that they have been putting off. The goal of RBD is not to sell as many permits as possible, but to provide the expertise we have starting with the plan review process and field inspections to help you perform work that meets the current codes and is safe for your family and any future owners of the property.

I receive calls daily from homeowners and realtors that are trying to sell a property. Many times the Certified Home Inspector finds that work has been performed without any record of permits and inspections. In some cases the work can be permitted and inspected after the fact. However, there are some cases where the work will never pass the requirements of the code and will have to be removed and redone. This can kill a sale in many instances.

I, personally, don’t like intrusion from big brother any more than the next guy. But when it comes to life safety we are, obviously, a necessary evil. There have been many cases where a renter has become sick, and in some cases died, from work performed improperly by an unlicensed person that didn’t know how to do the job properly, didn’t obtain the required permits or have the required inspections performed. I hope the information below will be helpful to you before you start your summer projects. Be smart, be careful, be safe and protect your investment.

**RBC105.1 PERMITS REQUIRED.** Except as specified in Section RBC105.2 of this Code, no building or structure regulated by this Code shall be erected, constructed, enlarged, altered, repaired, moved, improved, removed, changed in occupancy, or demolished unless a separate permit for each building or structure has first been obtained from the Building Official. A permit is also required to install or replace any electrical, gas, mechanical or plumbing systems regulated by this code.

**WORK EXEMPT FROM PERMITS.**

**RBC105.2.1 Construction and Installations.** Permits shall not be required for the following:

1. One-story, detached, enclosed, unheated buildings not more than one hundred-twenty (120) square feet in floor area accessory to a one- or two- family dwelling.
2. Fences not more than six (6) feet in height.
3. Oil derricks.
4. Retaining walls not more than four (4) feet in height measured from the lower grade to the upper grade, unless supporting a surcharge from a structure or a grade slope greater than two (2) units horizontal to one (1) vertical or impounding Class I, II, or III-A liquids.
5. Water tanks supported directly upon grade if the capacity does not exceed five thousand (5,000) gallons and the ratio of height to diameter or width does not exceed two (2) to one (1).
6. Water tanks of any size and any accessory equipment under the direct control of a utility purveyor located completely below grade.
7. Private sidewalks, driveways, and platforms supported directly upon grade. Any steps created must comply with the applicable provisions of the Building Code.
8. Replacement of any windows or fixed glazing in Group R-2, R-3 and U occupancies unless the opening is being enlarged. Replacement of any window required as an emergency escape and rescue opening and safety glazing required due to a hazardous location must comply with the applicable provisions of the Building Code.
9. Painting, papering, tiling, carpeting, cabinets, counter tops and similar finish work.
10. Swimming pools accessory to one- and two-family dwellings and not regulated by this Code.
11. Repairs to roofing when the repair constitutes less than one hundred (100) square feet.
12. Swings and other playground equipment.
13. Window awnings supported by an exterior wall which do not project more than fifty-four (54) inches from the exterior wall and do not require additional support of one- and two- family dwellings and accessory structures.
14. Movable cases, counters, and partitions not over five (5) feet nine (9) inches in height.
15. Hydraulic flood-control structures.
16. Pedestrian and vehicular bridges not directly serving or constructed as part of a building.
17. The removal and reinstallation of plumbing fixtures provided the work does not involve the replacement or rearrangement of drain, waste, vent or water pipes;
18. Portable heating, ventilating or cooling units;
19. Ice makers and humidifiers;
20. Evaporative coolers in connection with one- and two-family dwellings, where no structural elements or components are modified.
21. Agricultural buildings and agricultural structures located in the County, as defined by the El Paso County Land Development Code.
22. Non-public, non-residential buildings located in the A-35 District in the County, as defined by the El Paso County Land Development Code.

All of my previous columns are available on our website [www.pprbd.org](http://www.pprbd.org)  
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