

Do you need a building permit?

Before you begin any building project, one of the first steps is to determine whether a building permit is required.

The spring weather often inspires the desire to soak up the sun on your new deck and Council's Manager Regulatory Services, Matthew Patterson, explained that many people were under the impression they would be exempt from a building permit if the cost of the project was less than \$5000.

"That building permit exemption was removed in 2005 and now the cost of work is not a consideration when determining if a building permit is required," he said. "There still are some exemptions but it is advisable to check with Council to avoid a possible penalty."

Building permits are issued by building surveyors and designed to protect property owners. Generally, all building works require building permits to be issued before the work can commence.

"Building permits ensure that building practitioners are registered, carry the required insurance and that adequate documentation and planning is prepared to construct the building or extension," Mr Patterson explained. "An independent review of the building documentation then takes place and key stages of the work are inspected."

A building permit is required for the construction of garages, carports, decks, farm sheds, re-blocking an existing house and retaining walls greater than one metre in height.

Exemptions for a building permit are:

- Construction of small sheds not more than 10 m² in floor area
- Demolition of sheds not more than 40 m² in floor area
- Repair work to a house providing the work is non-structural (bathroom/kitchen renovation)
- Unroofed pergolas not more than 20 m² in floor area and located at the rear or side of a house

A Magistrate can impose a fine of up to \$74,000 for individuals and \$370,000 for companies undertaking building work without a building permit.

If you are unsure about whether you require a building a permit, call Council's Building team on 5662 9200.

Caption: This stand-alone storage building requires a building permit.

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