

Exempt Building Works – Information Sheet

A building permit must be obtained before commencing building or demolition work unless the work is exempt. The information below outlines the types of buildings that are exempt and do not require a building or demolition permit.

Note: Exemption from requiring a building or demolition permit does not negate the need for other required approvals, such as Development Approval and Health Approval, or the need to comply with statutory requirements, such as the National Construction Code and State Planning Policy 7.3 - Residential Design Codes.

Patios, sheds and gazebos

Freestanding patios, sheds and gazebos that are no more than 10 square metres in area and 2.4 metres in height do not require a building permit.

Shade sails and pergolas

Shade sails and pergolas associated with a dwelling do not require a building permit if they are no more than 20 square metres in area and 2.4 metres in height. Shade sails and pergolas associated with any other type of building require a building permit regardless of size. The Town recommends that only engineer certified designs and materials be used for the construction of shade sails, regardless of whether a permit is required or not.

Note: A pergola is defined as an open structure that does not have a roof but may be covered with an open weave permeable material, such as shade cloth.

Swimming pools and spas

A building permit is required for a private swimming pool or spa capable of holding more than 30 centimetres of water. This includes any structure or excavation used primarily for swimming, wading, paddling or the like, and includes portable and inflatable pools. Pools and spas must also be secured in accordance with state legislation. For more information, refer to the Related Links below.

Fences and retaining walls

Non-Masonry fences do not require a building permit if they do not exceed 1.8 metres in height. Please note, fences located forward of the dwelling are subject to Planning requirements and may require approval. Any fence that forms part of a swimming pool security barrier requires a building permit, regardless of height or materials used.

Retaining walls do not require a building permit if they do not exceed 500mm in height and/or do not support another building/structure. For more information about exemptions for fences and retaining walls, including front fencing and pool security fencing, refer to the Related Links below.

Additions and alterations

Cosmetic renovations and improvements, such as cabinetry and non-structural repairs do not require a building permit. Some types of alterations may also be exempt, depending on the circumstances. Contact us for more information about these exemptions.

Solar panels, hot water systems and rainwater tanks

Solar panels and hot water systems attached to a dwelling or an associated outbuilding do not require a building permit. For installation on any other type of building a building permit is required before commencing work. Rainwater tanks with a capacity of no more than 5,000 litres do not require a building permit, regardless of the type of building they are associated with.

Note: These exemptions do not include support structures, such as stands or towers, or structural alterations to a building required to support the unit. A permit is required for these works.

Air conditioning units

A building permit may be required for a roof-mounted evaporative air conditioner if the building is located in a bushfire prone area. A permit is not required if the Bushfire Attack Level is BAL-Low, or if the Bushfire Attack Level is BAL-12.5 to BAL-29 and the unit is shown to comply with the requirements of AS3959 (Construction of buildings in bushfire prone areas). A permit is also not required if the unit is to be installed in a Class 4 to Class 9 building.

Masts, antennas and flag poles

A building permit is not required for a freestanding mast, antenna or similar structure if it is no more than 3 metres in height. If the structure is attached to a building, a permit is not required if it is no more than 2 metres in height above the highest point of attachment to the building and it will not affect the way the building complies with each applicable building standard.

Demolition work

A demolition permit may not be required for the demolition of a patio, shed, swimming pool or similar structure if the building is no more than 40 square metres in area. The demolition must not adversely affect the safety or health of the occupants, users or public (e.g. no asbestos) and the building must not be subject to an order, agreement or permit under the *Heritage of Western Australia Act 1990* (WA).