

Top 5 FAQ's of new homeowners on city bylaws and enforcement.

1. **Q. Who is responsible for shoveling the snow on my sidewalk?**
 - A. Property owners are responsible for clearing all ice and snow from the sidewalks adjacent to their property, within 24 hours of the end of a snowfall.
2. **Q. What is the standard that I must comply with for maintaining my lawn?**
 - A. All long grass and weeds are to be maintained at a height no higher than 20 centimetres (8 inches).
3. **Q. Can I park a car on my front lawn?**
 - A. **No.** You are only permitted to park vehicles on a properly constructed hard-surfaced driveway.
4. **Q. If I want to widen my driveway, how wide can it be?**
 - A. The maximum allowable width of your driveway will depend on the type of property you own. Please contact the city's zoning division at 519-741-2317 for specific information before undertaking any driveway work.
5. **Q. When can I park on the street?**
 - A. There are a variety of parking regulations that may apply to parking on your street. Contact By-law Enforcement at 519-741-2330 or visit www.kitchener.ca and query "parking regulations".

If you require further clarification on the above please contact the city's bylaw enforcement division by calling 519-741-2330 or emailing bylaw@kitchener.ca

As a new homeowner, you likely have a long list of questions relating to your home and property. Some may have to do with work you're planning to do on the home itself; while others may seek clarification on what you're responsible for as a homeowner where property standards and maintenance are concerned.

The City of Kitchener's building and enforcement staff has compiled a list of the top 15 questions they often receive from homeowners, relating to municipal regulations and city bylaws; as well as clear and concise responses to each inquiry.

More information on each item is available by contacting:

Building division - 519-741-2433;
Enforcement division - 519-741-2330;
Zoning division - 519-741-2317; or
www.kitchener.ca



The know-how on
your home
Answers to common questions
facing new homeowners



Top 10 FAQ's of new homeowners on building rules and requirements.

1. Q. Do I need a permit to build a fence?

A. No. However, there are regulations for height and location on your property. Please contact the city's zoning division at 519-741-2317 or visit http://www.kitchener.ca/pdf/fence_brochure.pdf to view the brochure containing fence regulations.

2. Q. Do I need a permit to build a shed?

A. Yes. However, sheds less than 10 square metres (108 square feet) in area do not require permits. There are regulations for location and height for any size shed. Please contact the city's zoning division at 519-741-2317 for all regulations governing accessory structures.

3. Q. Do I need a permit for my deck?

A. Yes. A permit is required for all decks that are more than 0.6 metres (24 inches) above the finished ground, measured at any point or are covered by a roof. Decks and roofs have specific location regulations. Please contact zoning at 519-741-2317 for the requirements.

4. Q. Do I need a permit to install an above-ground pool in my backyard?

A. Yes. A permit is required for all types of pools (in-ground, on-ground, above-ground and temporary) that have a water depth greater than 0.91 metres (35 inches). Permission will also be required if you plan to cross over city parkland to install your swimming pool. Please contact the city's parks operations division at 519-741-2557 for more information on vehicle over parkland permits.

5. Q. Do I need a permit to build a carport or garage attached to my house?

A. Yes. All carports and garages require a building permit. A permit is also required to enclose an existing carport. These structures have specific location regulations. Please contact zoning at 519-741-2317 for the requirements.

6. Q. Do I need a permit to finish my basement?

A. Yes. If you are finishing an unfinished area, a permit is required – especially if it contains a bedroom. Permits are also required if you're adding a bedroom to a previously finished basement.

7. Q. Do I need a permit to replace my kitchen cupboards or carpet in the living room with hardwood flooring?

A. No. Permits are not required for cosmetic type changes including removing non-load bearing walls.

8. Q. Will it take months to get my permit?

A. No. Residential permits take a maximum of 10 business days to review. Once we have completed the review, you will receive a phone call to advise your permit is now ready to be picked up. After you pick up the permit and review the permit package, construction can begin.

9. Q. Do I need to pay for each inspection that I require on my project?

A. No. The cost of the permit includes the on-site inspections.

10. Q. Do I need to hire an architect to do the drawings to obtain my permit?

A. No. As the homeowner, you may complete your own drawings; otherwise, you must hire a qualified* designer, architect or engineer.

*qualified means a person who has completed the required Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing examinations and carries the required insurance.

If you require further clarification on the above information or have other permit questions, please contact the city's building division by calling 519-741-2433 or visiting <http://www.kitchener.ca/building.htm>

