



TOWN OF SOUTHBOROUGH

BUILDING DEPARTMENT

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Doing Work Without a Permit – Read Before You Proceed!

- First and foremost; a permit *must* be obtained to ensure the work performed, or installation of a product, is done in accordance with the MA Building Codes and local regulations. The Building Department ensures work is done properly to protect the safety of the occupants of the structure. As the homeowner, **you** are ultimately responsible for all improvements on your property.
- Your insurance company can refuse to pay for claims for water, wind, fire, or vandalism damage or a personal injury claim that involves unpermitted improvements, i.e. new structures such as additions, decks, and swimming pools, just to name a few.
- You could be in violation of the building code; this can lead to fines and a potentially expensive path to rectify the violations. These violations could include flood zone regulations as well.
- There are no tax savings as you will be assessed on the improvements during a re-evaluation from the Assessors.
- In the event you sell your home, the banks will become aware of the unpermitted work and will then require the proper documentation to be filed, and inspections performed. This could delay the sale of your home significantly.
- If the work involves an addition or deck that constitutes a zoning violation, it could require a variance from the Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA). Failure to obtain approval from the ZBA could result in the removal of any work that violates the zoning bylaws.
- If you bought your house with unpermitted work, it is considered “buyer beware” and your real estate agent should have done their homework – you may want to call them to see if they could obtain any records from the previous owners – the paperwork may help!
- The permit fee will be tripled for work that is performed without the necessary permits. These fees could be very costly.
- Lastly, the Building Department will try to assist you in any way they can, but please note that **we are not considering this urgent or an emergency**; we address everything in the order in which it was received.