



Building & By-law Frequently Asked Questions

Projects that require a building permit:

Under the Ontario Building Code Act, a building permit is required to construct, demolish, renovate, alter, install or change the use of a building. The following is a list of typical projects or situations that require the issuance of a building permit prior to construction:

- New buildings or structures greater than 14 square metres (160 ft²) in area, measured by the outside dimensions. This includes sheds, sleeping cabins or other accessory buildings or structures, including sheds and shed packages purchased from a store.
- Additions to existing buildings or structures.
- Renovations that involve structural framing.
- New or replacement decks or stairs.
- Wood burning appliances, including new or replacement of existing components.
- Replacement of windows or doors if the rough opening size is enlarged
- Relocation or addition of plumbing fixtures.
- Replacement of water supply or drainpipes.
- Installation of photovoltaic (PV) panels mounted on buildings. Note: an electrical permit may also be required - check with an electrician or the Electrical Safety Authority.
- Wind turbines that generate more than 3 kW of electricity.
- Greenhouses, if it is to be a permanent structure.
- Quonset huts and pre-engineered metal buildings.
- Replacement of piers under buildings.

Building permit applications can be found on the Township's website at www.hortontownship.ca.

Projects that do not require a building permit:

It is not necessary to obtain building permits to perform the following work. However, you must still comply with the requirements of the Township of Horton Zoning By-law 2010-14 and if applicable, the Ontario Building Code.

- Accessory buildings with a floor area of 10 square metres (108 ft²) or less. Note: Zoning By-law requirements must be followed.
- Fences.
- Hot tubs unless the hot tub is being placed on a deck.
- Replacement of plumbing fixtures (toilet, sink, bathtub, shower, hot water tank) in their original location.
- Replacement of windows or doors provided the rough opening size does not change.



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2253 Johnston Rd. Renfrew, ON K7V 3Z8
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(f) 613-432-7298
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- Replacement of shingles or other roofing material. However, if you are replacing or adding new roof trusses or rafters, a building permit is required.
- Floating or pole docks.
- Wind turbines that generate 3 kW or less of electricity. Note: Zoning By-law requirements must be followed.
- If the above lists do not include specifics of your project or you are not sure if a permit will be required, please contact the Chief Building Official at 613-432-6271.

The following information is provided for convenience purposes only. Consult the Township of Horton Zoning By-law 2010-14 for verification and additional information.

BUILDING FAQ'S

ONTARIO BUILDING CODE

Q: Where can I obtain a copy of the Ontario Building Code?

A: Building code products can be purchased from Service Ontario either online at <http://www.publications.serviceontario.ca>

or by phone:

(416) 326-5300

(416) 325-3408 TTY

1-800-668-9938 Toll-free within Canada

1-800-268-7095 TTY Toll-free within Ontario

The electronic version of the Ontario Building Code can be found at <https://www.ontario.ca/laws/regulation/120332>

BUILDING PERMIT PLANS

Q: I would like to purchase a set of house plans that I saw in a magazine or on the internet. Would these be acceptable to submit with my building permit application?

A: Under the new Ontario Building Code requirements, all plans, drawings and specifications submitted for building permit approval must be prepared by a certified designer registered with the Ontario Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing. A certified designer will have a Building Code Identification Number (BCIN).



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Q: How can I check if my designer has a BCIN or is qualified under the Building Code?

A: The qualification and registration status of a designer may be verified through the Ontario Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing's public registry, accessible online through their Qualification and Registration Tracking System (QuARTS). To search the Public Register, visit <https://csconramp.mah.gov.on.ca/onmah/preLogin.do>, click on Search Public Register, and enter the designer's surname or business name.

Q: Can I do the drawings for my own house or addition?

A: The Ontario Building Code allows a property-owner to prepare and submit their own building plans provided that the plans are legible, drawn at an appropriate scale, and contain all the required information (see Information to accompany a building permit application form).

Q: My brother-in-law knows AutoCAD and has offered to do my house plans for me. Is this, okay?

A: If your brother-in-law is a certified designer and has a registered BCIN number with the Ontario Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, his drawings would be acceptable for submission with your building permit application. He would need to fill out and sign the Schedule 1: Designer Information sheet, included with your building permit application form.

GARAGES, SHEDS, & OTHER ACCESSORY BUILDINGS

Q: Can I erect a utility or storage shed on my vacant property?

A: No. These types of structures are considered "accessory" to the principal building, such as your home or cottage. They are not permitted as the principal building.

Q: Are there restrictions as to where I can put a shed or other accessory building on my property?

A: Yes. The Zoning By-law has a number of regulations concerning accessory buildings, including setbacks from property lines, the high-water mark, and your home or cottage. This includes small buildings 10 square metres (108 ft²) or less, even if a building permit is not required.



REQUIRED SETBACKS

- Q: Can I tear down my existing house or cottage and rebuild a new one, or build an addition onto my house or cottage if it doesn't meet the current setback requirements?
- A: Maybe. A building or structure that does not meet current requirements is considered "non-complying". There are many variables that determine whether you can re-build or build an addition onto a non-complying structure. For more information refer to the Zoning By-law or contact the Planning or Building Department.
- Q: Where is the required setback measured to on a building?
- A: The setback is measured from the respective property line to the closest outside wall.
- Q: There is a power line running through my property. Can I put a building or structure underneath it?
- A: No. Hydro One requires a minimum 15 ft. separation between hydro lines and any construction. For more information or to schedule an on-site assessment, contact Hydro One at (888)- 871-3514.
- Q: How do I determine the location of the high-water mark?
- A: The high-water mark is usually taken to be the line where the land-based vegetation ends. If in doubt, we recommend contracting a registered Ontario Land Surveyor (OLS) to determine accurate setbacks.

MINIMUM DWELLING SIZE

- Q: What is the smallest size house or cottage that I am allowed on my property?
- A: It depends on the zoning of your property, but generally the minimum size is 65 square metres (700 ft²).
- Check the Zoning By-law to be sure.

SEPTIC SYSTEM APPROVAL

- Q: When does a building permit application require a septic system approval?



A: A septic approval from the Building Department is required prior to applying for a building permit if you are (1) constructing a new building; (2) adding a bedroom or washroom; (3) increasing the number of fixture units (sink, toilet, bathtub, shower, laundry, dishwasher, etc.); or (4) increasing the total floor area of the building by 15 percent or more.

Q: I need to replace my existing septic system - do I need a permit and where do I get it?

A: Yes, you do need to get approval prior to installing any new septic system or replacing an old one. This includes greywater leaching pits, leaching pits for overflow from composting toilets (known as a cesspool), septic tanks, tile beds and holding tanks. Septic applications are available on the township's website, www.hortontownship.ca.

SEVERANCE/SUBDIVISION OF PROPERTY

Q: I would like to sever one or more pieces off my property to sell or give to family members. How do I do this?

A: Land severance applications are administered by the County of Renfrew. Contact the Planning Department at the County office in Pembroke at 613-735-3204 for more information and an application.

USE OF TRAILERS, CAMPERS & MOTOR HOMES

Q: Can I park a camper, motor home or other type of travel trailer on my vacant property and use it as a weekend "getaway"?

A: No. This is not a permitted use in any zone, except in a designated campground or trailer park.

COMPLAINTS

Q: I wish to file a complaint about the condition of a property in my neighbourhood. Is there a certain procedure that I need to follow?

A: Yes, Township by-laws are enforced on a written complaint basis by Municipal Law Enforcement. Telephone calls for complaints will not be accepted. The written complaint must include your name, address and telephone number or other contact information.

Failure to provide this required information will render the complaint incomplete and it will not be investigated. Your name will not be divulged unless your testimony is required in court. Where the Township has determined that a complaint has been filed for a malicious or vexatious reason or as part of an ongoing pattern of harassment, the Township may cease the investigation and close the file.



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Municipal By-law Enforcement and Animal Control can be contacted via phone for information at 613-281-3773 or by e-mail at bylaw.mles@gmail.com.

“SORRY, THAT’S NOT MY DEPARTMENT ...”

The Township is often asked to become involved in matters over which we have no legal authority. Civil matters such as,

- private right-of-way disputes,
- trespassing, and
- neighbour disputes over property lines, tree cutting, or fence locations are not within our jurisdiction. If the matter cannot be resolved between you and your neighbour, you may wish to consult legal counsel.