

Frequently Asked Questions

Permitting

What is a building permit?

A building permit gives an applicant legal permission to “start construction of a building project in accordance with the approved drawings and specifications.” The purpose of the permit is to ensure the building project meets minimum construction, safety, fire and zoning requirements established by the City of Glenn Heights and required by the Adopted Building Codes and International Fire Code. Building permits are reviewed by City staff for compliance with zoning and city code requirements and inspected by the City’s building inspectors for compliance with the Adopted Building Codes.

When is a permit required?

Permits are required when there is new construction to a building as well as some repair work or alterations to an existing structure. In addition, when a building is to be remodeled or enlarged, a permit shall be required. New work consists of any new construction, commercial or residential, from vacant ground to a completed new structure. Contact our office for any questions concerning your specific project.

When is a permit not required?

Permits are not required for the following projects: replacing cabinets in a kitchen or elsewhere, installing carpet or other floor coverings, installing wallpaper or paneling on finished surfaces, redecorating without structural changes and simple landscaping projects. Projects that are considered cosmetic, such as new wallpaper, carpet, paint, cabinets, or trim work do not require a permit.

How does the City make sure people are getting building permits when they are required?

The City relies upon the integrity of contractors and the honesty of citizens of Glenn Heights to follow the rules. However, the City relies on staff assistance from all departments, as well as citizen comments, to identify construction projects that have begun without proper building permits.

How do I know who has an approved building permit and who does not?

Once a building permit application is approved, the applicant is given a “permit.” This “permit” is to be displayed at the construction site. The absence of a “permit” is a likely indication that the construction project has not been approved or reviewed by the City of Glenn Heights.

What if the contractor does not get a permit?

When a contractor is discovered working without a permit, a building inspector will issue a stop work order. In these cases, some work may have to be uncovered for inspection and redone. The property owner is ultimately responsible for the work performed on his property.

Is there a time limit or expiration date on permits?

Permits expire 180 days after their issuance.

Why does the City of Glenn Heights require building permits?

The City of Glenn Heights and all other cities across the country use the building permit process to verify that construction or development will comply with building codes and zoning ordinances. The building codes and zoning ordinances are adopted by the city council and become the law of the city. The development projects are also inspected to insure that they are in compliance. Building codes and ordinances help protect the health, safety, and welfare of a structure’s occupants.

What is the value of a permit?

Most peoples' homes are their single largest investment. If the construction project does not comply with the codes adopted by the City, the value of a person's investment could possibly be reduced. In addition, property insurers may not cover work done without proper permits and inspections. If a person decides to sell their home or building, the potential buyer may examine City records to make sure the proper permits and inspections were obtained.

What is a Certificate of Occupancy?

A certificate of occupancy, or C.O., is required for all buildings or structures that are occupied or used. When a tenant leases a new space, a C.O. shall be required. Upon issuance of a C.O. and approval of all required inspections, utilities will be released with the new tenant's name.

How are addresses assigned?

All addresses are assigned by the Police Department's office 972-223-2107. Addresses are assigned to undeveloped parcels as temporary addresses.

What are some of the more common permits that homeowners should be concerned with?

Typically projects like fences, accessory structures, roofing, water heater replacement, garage conversions and carports are the most common projects that will affect homeowners. Permits and inspections are required for these types of projects.

Whose responsibility is it to see that the building code is followed?

The contractor you hire to complete your project is responsible for compliance with the City adopted Codes. They should be licensed by the state (when required) to perform the work. If there is ever a question as to whether or not some aspect of a construction project complies with the code, the contractor is the responsible party. If you are performing the work yourself, then you are the responsible party.

What should I look for in a contractor?

Find out how long the contractor has been in business in the area. Check references to make sure they are valid by contacting those for whom the contractor has performed construction work. Contact the Better Business Bureau to see if complaints have been registered against the company. Check to be sure the contractor is registered with the City of Glenn Heights and has insurance coverage. The City of Glenn Heights cannot recommend contractors.

Who must be licensed?

Most contractors are required to be licensed (electrical, mechanical and plumbing contractors); however, there are some exceptions. General contractors do not have any licenses, but a property owner should ask their contractor if they are registered with the City of Glenn Heights before beginning. If a contractor asks you to apply for the building permit, chances are that they may not be registered because the city verifies applicable contractor licensing with the State for all building permit applications. Resident homeowners do not have to be licensed to perform work on their own home. If you have questions about contractor registration, contact the City of Glenn Heights' Planning and Zoning Department.

Should I take the permit out for the contractor?

Do not take out a building permit for any contractor. When the contractor signs the permit, the contractor is agreeing to do the work according to code. If you sign for the permit, you are liable for correcting the contractor's work if it should fall short of the City adopted code standards. Before your project begins, insist on seeing the permit. During the course of your project, monitor your contractor's inspection records. This will protect you from being responsible for code violations and ensure project completion.

Code Compliance

Who is responsible for maintaining an alley or easement behind their property?

The property owner is responsible for maintaining the alley or easement free from high grass and weeds, trash or debris, and may also include trimming tree branches back for 7-ft clearance.

Who is responsible for cutting and edging the grass between the sidewalk and street?

The property owner is responsible for maintaining this area up to the street including the curb.

What is the height regulation for grass and weeds in the City of Glenn Heights? In the City of Glenn Heights grass should not exceed 10 inches.

What is outside storage?

Household furniture, trash, building materials, tools, toys, equipment, car parts and items not intended or designed for outdoor use. Outside storage should be stored in an enclosed building or removed.

Do you have to have an address number on your house if you already have them on the curb?

Yes, address numbers must be on the structure and be visible from the street. If you have a rear entry way the numbers must be placed in the back in a conspicuous place so that they are visible from the alley or rear entrance.

Do you have to get a fence permit when you are replacing or repairing a fence? Yes, new fences and repairs that exceed 36 linear feet require a permit.

My neighbor's tree fell and damaged my fence, can the City make him repair the damages?

This is a civil matter between property owners. The City does not intervene in matters which are primarily personal or private in nature and which may appropriately be resolved between or among private interests. Speak with your neighbor and try to reach a mutually acceptable solution.

I received a notice of violation, what should I do?

Please abate or remedy the violation as soon as possible. If this is not possible due to extenuating circumstances, contact the code compliance officer that sent you the notice at the telephone number listed in the notice.

I received a notice of violation that indicated a re-inspection would be conducted, what should I do? Please abate the violation as soon as possible. A code compliance officer will conduct a follow-up inspection to ensure compliance. If this is not possible due to extenuating circumstances, contact the code compliance officer that sent you the notice at 972-274-5100.

I received a notice of violation but cannot abate the violation before the re-inspection date, what should I do? Please contact the Code Compliance Division at 972-274-5100.

I received a notice of violation regarding a property I no longer own, what should I do? Please contact the Code Compliance Division at 972-274-5100.

I would like to report a junk / abandoned vehicle parked on my street, what should I do? Please contact the Police Department at 972-223-2107.

I would like to report a junk / abandoned vehicle parked on private property (commercial or residential), what should I do?

Please contact the Planning and Zoning Department at 972-274-5100.

Zoning

What is the purpose of zoning?

Zoning is the practice of dividing an area into districts within which regulations and requirements uniformly govern the use, placement, spacing and size of land and buildings. Zoning is most often utilized to protect properties from incompatible adjacent land uses and to preserve the “character” of a community.

What is a Zoning District?

A Zoning District defines the types of primary and accessory uses that can be developed and what types of development standards will govern that use. Development standards include but are not limited to lot size, lot width, setbacks, heights of structures and buildings, lot coverage and screening.

Can I run a business from my home?

Some businesses can be operated out of a home if they do not increase the level of activity in a neighborhood. These businesses are referred to as home occupations. Certain criteria must be satisfied and licensing may be required. A complete listing of criteria is available online in the City of Glenn Heights Zoning Ordinance [Section 3, Special Residential Uses, XI.3.1 Home Occupation Regulations](#). Please contact the Planning and Zoning Department at 972-274-5100 for more information.

What uses are allowed in each zoning district?

In order to determine the uses allowed in each zoning district please refer to the City of Glenn Heights’ Code of Ordinances Article 14, XI Permitted Uses. This matrix shows which uses are allowed in each district. Please contact the Planning Department at 972-274-5100.

How do I measure a setback?

To determine setbacks, first find out what the zoning of the property is so that you can determine the setbacks for that property. Then you may refer to the City of Glenn Heights’ online Code of Ordinances to look up the setbacks for that zoning designation.

What is the Development Review Committee (DRC) Meeting?

Development Review Committee is a group of representatives from Planning and Zoning, Fire, Police, and Utilities. The group meets weekly to review and discuss ongoing projects. An applicant or developer may schedule to meet with the group for a proposed development prior to the formal submittal of development plans. These meetings are meant to provide general information regarding development standards and to help point out any major issues with a proposed development plan prior to making a formal submittal. These meetings are encouraged if a developer is new to the City of Glenn Heights, has questions about the development process, or has a complex development proposal. These meetings are available to anyone who has questions regarding the development process. To schedule a pre-development meeting, please call 972-274-5100.

What does the public hearing process involve?

The public hearing process involves appearing before the City's Planning & Zoning Commission and then the City Council. Each will hear your request, staff's report, and public input before reaching a decision on the matter. The Planning & Zoning Commission will make a recommendation to the City Council regarding approval or denial of your request. The City Council then holds a public hearing to consider the formal approval of the request.

How should I prepare for the public hearing?

Any presentation should be brief and concise. You should describe any impacts on existing uses (both negative and positive) that would be created by the requested zoning and proposed use. If you decide to use visual aids, notify the Planning and Zoning Department 24 hours prior to the meeting so that projectors, easels, etc. can be provided. Make sure your graphics can be seen from the audience. You should describe any efforts (and results of previous meetings, if any) that have been made to discuss the request with nearby property owners.