

Corrective Actions

If you find that you are in violation of DC construction code requirements, stop work immediately and get the proper permits. If you have questions, call (202) 442-4400.

Reporting Illegal Construction

Illegal construction threatens the safety of all DC citizens.

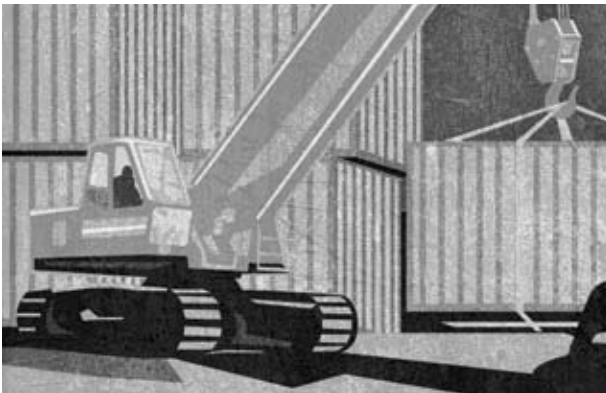
To report illegal construction at any time, day or night, call DCRA's Illegal Construction Unit: (202) 442-STOP(7867).

Please give the address and describe the illegal construction.

The Unit will schedule an inspection to investigate.

Don't Work Illegally

- Get building permits for your project
- Make sure any contractors or subcontractors get permits
- Only do work in the scope of your permit
- Work only 7 am - 7 pm
- Work only Monday - Saturday



DCRA Mission:

The Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs protects the health, safety, economic interests and quality of life of residents, businesses and visitors in the District of Columbia by issuing licenses and permits, conducting inspections, enforcing building, housing, and safety codes, regulating land use and development, and providing consumer education and advocacy services.

DCRA

DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER & REGULATORY AFFAIRS

DC Department of Consumer and
Regulatory Affairs
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www.dcra.dc.gov



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RESIDENT'S GUIDE

Illegal Construction in the District of Columbia

Know what to do!

DCRA

DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER & REGULATORY AFFAIRS

Building for the Future



Make sure you have the appropriate permits for your project.

What is illegal construction? Who is responsible for enforcing the District of Columbia Construction Code?

Any construction done without required building permits is illegal construction. Illegal construction is a public danger; it can hurt people and property.

To protect the public, DCRA has started an Illegal Construction Unit. It focuses on illegal construction complaints from citizens and police officers.

What Work Requires a Permit?

Several types of permits are required for construction and improvements. They are:

- Building permits
- Public space permits
- Raze permits
- Water and sewer excavation permits
- Supplemental systems installation permits

These types of work require **building permits**:

- New construction
- Additions
- Demolition
- Construction of retaining walls, decks, fences, sheds, garages, and vaults
- Erection of signs or awnings

You need a **public space permit** for:

- Dumpsters in public space
- Sidewalk construction and repair
- Flag poles, planter boxes, retaining walls, and fences in public space

You need a **raze permit** for demolition of buildings and structures. To raze structures larger than 500 square feet, you must show a certificate of insurance for \$500,000 in coverage.

Your project may require **water or sewer excavation permits** or **supplemental systems installation permits**. Only licensed DC contractors within each trade may apply for these permits.

Work that requires a **water or sewer excavation permit** includes:

- Water or sewer pipe installation
- Connections to water and sewer mains in the street
- Excavation for water meters and vaults in public space

Work that requires a **supplemental systems installation permit** includes:

- Air conditioning installation
- Refrigeration system installation
- Plumbing fixture installation
- Electrical installation
- Gas appliance installation

There is a fee for each permit and an additional fee for any work in a public space.

Penalties

There is a \$2000 fine for each offense, if you:

- Work without a permit
- Work outside the scope of a permit
- Work before 7 am or after 7 pm Monday-Saturday or any time on Sunday

If you break these laws again, you may be fined up to \$4,000.

If you get a Stop Work Order for illegal construction, you will also have to pay a fine of 50% of the permit you should have gotten. DCRA will not release the Stop Work Order until you pay the permit fee and fine.

You can get the following information for building permit applications from www.dcrd.dc.gov:

- Building Permit Application and Fee Schedules
- Building Codes
- Contract Agreement
- Environmental Questionnaire

What Work Does NOT Require a Permit?

Unless you live in a historic district, these projects do not require a permit:

- Brick pointing
- Caulking, patching, and plaster repair
- Installation of cabinets and architectural millwork
- Installation of window screens and storm windows
- Repair of existing fences with like materials
- Retaining walls, 18 inches (0.46M) or less in height
- Construction of garden storage sheds complying with DC Code section 107.3.3
- Painting, if it is not with fire-retardant paint
- Replacement of:
 - non-rated windows and doors
 - roofing and coping
 - siding
 - gutters and downspouts
 - private sidewalks and driveways
 - patios
 - non-rated suspended ceiling tile
 - floor coverings
 - up to 160 square feet (9.3m) of gypsum board
 - up to 50 linear feet (15.24m) of storm drain piping
 - up to 10 linear feet (3.05m) of sanitary/drainage system piping
 - up to 20 linear feet (6.10m) of sanitary venting piping
 - up to 50 linear feet (15.24m) of hydraulic system piping
 - up to 10 linear feet (3.05m) of duct work, in non-hazardous and commercial kitchen exhaust systems