



# Non-residential demolition permits

The Department of Local Services, Permitting Division (Permitting) issues permits for commercial and other non-residential building demolition and the associated site clearing work. When the non-residential demolition is being done in conjunction with the remodel of an existing structure or construction of a new structure, the demolition work can be included as part of the remodel or new construction permit.

## Preparation for Demolition Work

Although the scope and complexity of individual demolition projects will greatly vary, every demolition project will need to consider the following elements.

- Washington State Environmental Protection Act (SEPA) Review
- Hazardous Materials
- Utilities, Wells and Septic Systems
- Underground Tanks
- Debris Removal and Disposal
- Erosion Control and Site Stabilization
- Clearing and Grading Permit
- Preconstruction meeting and Inspections

## SEPA Review

Washington State law requires SEPA review for demolition of a structure or building, unless it is included under the general exemptions to SEPA. If a SEPA review was required to build the structure being demolished, an environmental review is also required to demolish it. See Washington Administrative Code (WAC) 197-11-800 (2-f) for further clarification. If your demolition project is subject to SEPA review you are required to provide the information outlined in Permitting's SEPA submittal checklist and information handout. See the [SEPA packet](#).

## Hazardous Materials

Many older buildings contain asbestos in roofing, siding, ceilings, flooring, fireproofing, pipe coverings, and/or other insulation. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has determined that asbestos is a hazardous substance, particularly airborne asbestos. Federal law administered by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) requires building owners to identify asbestos-containing materials (ACMs) in their buildings and to arrange for their proper removal. This law is

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enforced locally by the Washington State Department of Labor and Industries (L&I) and the Puget Sound Air Pollution Control Agency (PSAPCA).

Building owners are responsible for hiring a professional testing firm to perform a good faith survey to identify ACMs in the building. For more information regarding asbestos abatement see the L&I [Asbestos Certification](#) web page. If ACMs are identified in a building, PSAPCA requires that building owners file a [Notice of Intent to Remove Asbestos](#) and pay a filing fee. PSAPCA can provide customers with a list of certified asbestos abatement contractors, as well as a list of possible asbestos-disposal locations where proceed customers can proceed with proper removal and disposal processes.

### Utilities, Wells and Septic Systems

*Call 811 before your dig – locate utilities*

Before beginning demolition activities, contact local utilities for procedures to disconnect and abandon the utility service to the building. These services, which may include sewer, water, electricity, natural gas, and cable, should be properly disconnected before starting demolition work.

Before demolition of any structure, all sewage must be removed from existing septic systems, cesspools, and any other cavities where sewage is located. After sewage removal, the voids must be filled with sand, gravel, or other approved material. For additional information on abandonment of septic systems and cesspools, contact the Seattle-King County Department of Public Health [Environmental Health Services](#).

All wells associated with structures being demolished must be abandoned in accordance with Washington State Department of Ecology (Ecology) [abandon well](#) guidelines (WAC 173-160-415 through 465).

### Underground Tanks

For non-residential underground tanks, customers must obtain a permit to remove or abandon-in-place any underground tank(s) used to store a flammable liquid. This permit is available online. See [Decommissioning Underground Fuel Tanks](#).

### Debris Removal and Disposal

A Solid Waste Management Plan (SWMP) may also be required. It should detail how the property owner intends to dispose of the waste materials. Property owners must consider recycling options to the extent possible, when compiling a demolition plan. For detailed information, refer to the King County Solid Waste Division, [Construction & demolition recycling](#) web page.

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## Erosion Control and Site Stabilization

Erosion control measures must be in place before disturbing any soil associated with demolition activities. All disturbed soil must be stabilized and must remain on site. At the completion of demolition work, permanent soil stabilization, erosion, and drainage controls measures must be in place. See [Erosion and Sediment Control Requirements](#).

## Clearing and Grading Permit

If filling or site grading exceeds 100 cubic yards, or if the site where the work is to be done is located in a critical area (if within an area with special P-suffix requirements), a separate clearing and grading permit may be needed. For more information on these requirements, see the [Clearing and Grading Permits](#) packet.

## Demolition and Site Clearing Checklist

1. Erosion control measures must be in place before disturbing any soil associated with demolition activities. All disturbed soil must be stabilized and must remain on site. At the completion of demolition work, permanent soil stabilization, erosion, and drainage controls measures must be in place.
2. Remove all floors, foundations, footing, basement, and retaining walls down to 18 inches below grade. Basement sections below this level must be broken into pieces that do not exceed eight inches in dimension. Demolition debris must be removed from the site and delivered to a licensed landfill or recycling facility.
3. Fill excavations and other cavities with clean fill material that is smaller than eight inches in dimension and cover so that no broken concrete is exposed.
4. Grade the site so the surface is smooth, and water will run off. Be sure grading conforms to existing neighboring grades on all sides of the lot or site.
5. During demolition, use water to control and reduce dust impact on neighboring properties.
6. When demolition activities are complete, leave the site clean, in safe condition, and protected from erosion and drainage problems.
7. Be prepared to provide the Permitting inspector with disposal receipts verifying that all demolition debris has been disposed of properly.

The demolition permit is valid for one year and may be extended in accordance with County codes and ordinances. If a code violation or hazard to public health exists, however, the active life of the permit may be limited.

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## Application Submittal Requirements

- [Permit application](#)
- Site Plan showing (See [Computer Aided Design \(CAD\) Template packet](#)):
  - Location of all structures
  - All structures labeled with current use
  - Identify structures to be demolished and square feet of each structure
- [Solid Waste Management Plan](#)

A pre-construction conference may be required for large and/or critical areas sites.

## Additional Information

King County Department of Local Services, [Permitting Division](#)

[Demolition Waste Disposal Resources](#)

[SEPA](#)

[Clearing and Grading](#)

[Permit Fees](#)

[On-line Permit Status, Invoice Payment and Inspection Scheduling](#)

[IVR Inspection Scheduling, phone number and codes](#)

