

1. **Permits.** *Although certain work is exempt from permits; exemptions from permit requirements of this code shall not be deemed to grant authorization for any work to be done in any manner in violation of the provisions of this code or any other laws or ordinances of this jurisdiction. Any alteration, repair, remodel, renovation, or new construction in both residential and commercial buildings requires permits unless specifically exempted by the applicable code. Any work done to repair, replace, alter or install mechanical, electrical and plumbing equipment also requires a permit. Note: Permit applications and the submittal of plans must be done electronically.*
2. **Permit Exemptions.** *Some examples of the items exempt from a permit are:*
  - a. *Painting, carpet, tile and wood flooring*
  - b. *Interior trim and similar finish work*
  - c. *Typical wood or cyclone fences up to 8 feet tall that are not electrically energized*
  - d. *Residential accessory structures such as storage sheds less than 120 square feet*
  - e. *Uncovered decks up to 30 inches above the ground*
3. **Deed Restrictions.** *The City of Houston Legal Department enforces certain deed restriction items. Confirm whether your property has deed restrictions before you build in order to ensure that your project will conform. Contact the Harris County Clerk's office at (713) 274-8600.*
4. **Licensed Trades.** *A general contractor's license is not required for the structural portion of the work; however, in general, mechanical, electrical and plumbing work must be permitted and performed by a licensed person.*
5. **Certificate of Occupancy.** *All commercial buildings require a Certificate of Occupancy to show conformance with the local building codes. The Certificate of Occupancy can either be issued after the completion of new construction or on an existing building, following inspection by the Occupancy Inspection team.*
6. **Exits.** *Many code items could save your life. Bedroom windows must be the correct size to ensure that in the event of a fire, you can get out and the Fire Fighters can get in. In commercial buildings, we ensure appropriate size and spacing of doors and hallways to allow exiting for the number of people in the building.*
7. **Inspections.** *All requests for construction inspections are completed the next business day following the request.*
8. **Energy Code.** *The State of Texas has an Energy Code which places restrictions on the building components to reduce the overall energy consumption of the building. Items affected by this code are windows, wall ceiling insulation, air-conditioning equipment and ducts. If you plan on remodeling or repairing, ensure that your project conforms to this code.*
9. **Trees and Other Landscaping.** *Trees are protected by the City of Houston. Trees within the building setback line may not be cut down or destroyed. Required landscaping that has been provided in parking lots and on new building sites are required to be maintained for a year by City Ordinance.*
10. **Architects and Engineers.** *The State Board of Architectural Examiners and the State Board of Professional Engineers require that some buildings and structures be designed by a registered design professional, but not every project does. To confirm whether a registered design professional is required for a specific project please contact <https://www.tbae.texas.gov/> or <https://pels.texas.gov/>*

#### **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

**Adopted Codes.** *2015 International Building Code, 2015 International Residential Code, 2020 National Electrical Code (State Mandated), 2015 Uniform Mechanical Code, 2012 Uniform Plumbing Code, 2015 International Fire Code, 2015 International Existing Building, 2018 Swimming Pool and Spa Code, 2015 International Energy Conservation Code, ASHRAE 90.1-2013*

**Who to Contact?** *Non-permitted construction activity can result in the issuance of citations, so if you are not sure if a permit is required, or what code is to be followed, please contact us. We are here to help. You can contact the Customer Assistance Office at [rmcaccd@houstontx.gov](mailto:rmcaccd@houstontx.gov) or 832-394-9494.*

**Web Resources.** *The City of Houston has many online resources to take advantage of. The following are just a few:*

- **Home Page:** [www.houstontx.gov](http://www.houstontx.gov)
- **Permit Website:** <https://www.houstonpermittingcenter.org/our-services/eservices>
- **General Information:** [www.houstontx.gov/311](http://www.houstontx.gov/311)
- **Building Code Enforcement:** [www.houstonpermittingcenter.org/building-code-enforcement.html](http://www.houstonpermittingcenter.org/building-code-enforcement.html)