

2026 Washington Permit Requirements Guide

Permit fees, review timelines, and requirements for Washington's 10 most active building jurisdictions — from official sources.

How to read this guide

Permit coverage

Cities in this guide publish their permit types under their own vocabularies rather than a common one, so few permit types are shared across most of the cities in this guide. Each row shows how many of these cities publish that permit; a low number means the others describe the work differently, not that it is unregulated there.

Confidence badges

Every figure carries a confidence label. “Verified” means PermitBase confirmed the figure directly against the jurisdiction’s current published source. “Reviewed” covers everything else — the same figure, a lighter verification pass. We never upgrade a label past what was actually checked.

Tiered fees

Where a jurisdiction charges by project valuation, this guide prints the base/starting tier from the published fee table and points at the source for the full schedule — never a computed total.

“Not published”

When a jurisdiction does not publish a plan-review timeline, this guide says so plainly — “Not published — contact the department” — rather than estimating one.

The State Building Code is in effect in every county and city in Washington, and its minimum performance standards may not be diminished locally. A local amendment that affects single-family or multifamily residential buildings is not effective unless the State Building Code Council approves it; amendments to non-residential provisions carry no such approval requirement.

PermitBase is an independent reference and is not affiliated with any government agency. Requirements change and vary by project — confirm current details with the building department before you submit.

Washington snapshot

30 Washington jurisdictions covered — this guide features the 10 most active.

City	County	Annual units	Annual value
Seattle	King County	4366	\$1,058,371k
Spokane Valley	Spokane County	855	\$186,137k
Vancouver	Clark County	771	\$129,135k
Tacoma	Pierce County	742	\$88,581k
Bellingham	Whatcom County	737	\$133,714k
Spokane	Spokane County	692	\$178,200k
Bellevue	King County	566	\$301,840k
Everett	Snohomish County	565	\$99,605k
Kennewick	Benton County	530	\$119,551k
Port Orchard	Kitsap County	494	\$134,611k

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Building Permits Survey (BPS)

Seattle

King County · Seattle Department of Construction & Inspections (SDCI)
(206) 684-8600 · <https://www.seattle.gov/construction-and-inspections> · 4366 permitted units/yr

Permit	Fee		Review timeline	Tip
Residential Building (New Construction) (9 of 10)	Not offered / not tracked for this city			
Electrical (1 of 10)	From the city's own schedule - see notes	Not published — contact the department	Seattle enforces a city Electrical Code, which is listed separately from the Building Code on the department's Codes We Enforce (A-Z) page	
Mechanical / HVAC (1 of 10)	From the city's own schedule - see notes	Not published — contact the department	Submitting mechanical work with the building permit rather than separately changes how it is charged - it is included rather than charged at 100% of the index	
Deck / Covered Patio (4 of 10)	Not offered / not tracked for this city			

Good to know

- The most expensive surprise in Seattle is not the permit fee but the VALUATION that drives it. The 2026 Fee Subtitle sets the development fee from a Development Fee Index calculated from project value, beginning at "\$325 for the first \$1,000 of value or fraction thereof".
- Above \$1,000 of value the index climbs per hundred dollars: "\$325 for the first \$1,000 of value plus \$1.60 for each additional \$100 of value or fraction thereof". A small change in stated valuation moves the fee.

Spokane Valley

Spokane County · City of Spokane Valley – Permit Center
509-720-5000 · <https://www.spokanevalleywa.gov/> · 855 permitted units/yr

Permit	Fee	Review timeline	Tip
Residential Building (New Construction) (9 of 10)	Not stated in this guide – see notes	Not published — contact the department	Getting the application ACCEPTED AS COMPLETE is what fixes your code edition – aim for completeness early
Electrical (1 of 10)	Not offered / not tracked for this city		
Mechanical / HVAC (1 of 10)	Not offered / not tracked for this city		
Deck / Covered Patio (4 of 10)	Not stated in this guide – see notes	Not published — contact the department	All four conditions must hold – a deck that trips any one of them needs a permit

Good to know

- A COMPLETE APPLICATION VESTS YOU TO THE STATE CODE EDITION in force when it was accepted – a genuine protection, and a local one.
- Kent limits vesting to LAND USE regulations only. Same state, opposite answer. Check the city you are actually in.

Vancouver

Clark County · City of Vancouver – Building Division

360-487-8480 · <https://www.cityofvancouver.us/> · 771 permitted units/yr

Permit	Fee	Review timeline	Tip
Residential Building (New Construction) (9 of 10)	From the city's own schedule - see notes	Not published — contact the department	Budget the add-ons: 65% plan review, a 5.5% technology fee, and 1.6x if the work spans two or more codes
Electrical (1 of 10)	Not offered / not tracked for this city		
Mechanical / HVAC (1 of 10)	Not offered / not tracked for this city		
Deck / Covered Patio (4 of 10)	From the city's own schedule - see notes	Not published — contact the department	Vancouver's 12-inch frost depth is half Spokane's 24 inches - a footing detail from eastern Washington is not transferable

Good to know

- VANCOUVER PUBLISHES ITS PERMIT FEES IN THE CODE, which most Washington cities do not. Table I of VMC 17.08 is marked "2026 Fees".
- The sticker price is not the bill: add 65% plan review, a 5.5% technology fee, and a 1.6x multiplier where the work involves two or more codes.

Tacoma

Pierce County · City of Tacoma – Planning and Development Services
253-591-5030 · <https://www.tacomapermits.org/> · 742 permitted units/yr

Permit	Fee	Review timeline	Tip
Residential Building (New Construction) (9 of 10)	Not stated in this guide – see notes	Not published — contact the department	In-person service is currently 9 AM to 1 PM, Monday to Thursday – schedule an appointment
Electrical (1 of 10)	Not offered / not tracked for this city		
Mechanical / HVAC (1 of 10)	Not offered / not tracked for this city		
Deck / Covered Patio (4 of 10)	Not offered / not tracked for this city		

Good to know

- IN-PERSON SERVICE IS A FOUR-HOUR WINDOW ON FOUR DAYS: currently 9 AM to 1 PM, Monday through Thursday. The city offers appointments – book one rather than turning up.
- The chapter called "Fee Code" has no prices in it. Use the Fee Estimator on [tacomapermits.org](https://www.tacomapermits.org).

Bellingham

Whatcom County · City of Bellingham – Building Services
(360) 778-8000 · <https://www.cob.org/> · 737 permitted units/yr

Permit	Fee	Review timeline	Tip
Residential Building (New Construction) (9 of 10)	Not stated in this guide – see notes	Not published – contact the department	Budget for third-party review: if the city retains a consultant, you reimburse the cost on top of normal fees, and may have to deposit it up front
Electrical (1 of 10)	Not offered / not tracked for this city		
Mechanical / HVAC (1 of 10)	Not offered / not tracked for this city		
Deck / Covered Patio (4 of 10)	Not offered / not tracked for this city		

Good to know

- "THE BELLINGHAM COMMERCIAL ENERGY CODE" CHANGED MEANING ON 15 MARCH 2024. The city's own bespoke code was repealed and the state IECC adopted under the same name.
- The chapter index gives no repeal marker for it – you only see it on opening the section.

Spokane

Spokane County · City of Spokane – Development Services Center
(509) 755-2489 · <https://aca.spokanepermits.org/CitizenAccess/Default.aspx> · 692 permitted units/yr

Permit	Fee	Review timeline	Tip
Residential Building (New Construction) (9 of 10)	Not stated in this guide - see notes	Not published — contact the department	The Permit Center opens at 11am on Wednesdays
Electrical (1 of 10)	Not offered / not tracked for this city		
Mechanical / HVAC (1 of 10)	Not offered / not tracked for this city		
Deck / Covered Patio (4 of 10)	Not stated in this guide - see notes	Not published — contact the department	A 24 inch frost depth governs your footing depth - do not copy a shallower detail from a milder part of the state

Good to know

- THE PERMIT CENTER OPENS AT 11AM ON WEDNESDAYS, so staff can clear plan reviews. Every other weekday it is 8am to 5pm.
- Spokane's code names no edition - it adopts the IBC and IRC at the "current adopted Edition", so you cannot read the governing year off the code.

Bellevue

King County · City of Bellevue – Development Services

(425) 452-6800 · <https://www.bellevuewa.gov/> · 566 permitted units/yr

Permit	Fee	Review timeline	Tip
Residential Building (New Construction) (9 of 10)	Not stated in this guide – see notes	Not published — contact the department	Bellevue amends the IBC section by section – check the local text, not just the model code
Electrical (1 of 10)	Not offered / not tracked for this city		
Mechanical / HVAC (1 of 10)	Not offered / not tracked for this city		
Deck / Covered Patio (4 of 10)	Not stated in this guide – see notes	Not published — contact the department	A covered deck designed to 25 psf is not adequate at 1,000 feet in the same city

Good to know

- BELLEVUE'S SNOW LOAD DEPENDS ON YOUR ELEVATION: 25 psf below 500 feet, rising to 70 psf between 1,000 and 1,300 feet. There is no single city-wide number.
- Establish your site elevation before you design. A neighbour's figure may be from a different band of the same table.

Everett

Snohomish County · City of Everett – Permit Services
425-257-8700 · <https://www.everettwa.gov/> · 565 permitted units/yr

Permit	Fee	Review timeline	Tip
Residential Building (New Construction) (9 of 10)	Not stated in this guide – see notes	Not published — contact the department	You cannot read the governing edition off Everett's code – it says "current edition"
Electrical (1 of 10)	Not offered / not tracked for this city		
Mechanical / HVAC (1 of 10)	Not offered / not tracked for this city		
Deck / Covered Patio (4 of 10)	Not offered / not tracked for this city		

Good to know

- EVERY FENCE NEEDS A PERMIT IN EVERETT – no height threshold, and re-erecting an existing fence counts.
- That is the opposite of Tukwila, which exempts fences up to 6 feet. Fence answers do not travel between Washington cities.

Kennewick

Benton County · City of Kennewick
509-585-4200 · <https://www.go2kennewick.com/> · 530 permitted units/yr

Permit	Fee	Review timeline	Tip
Residential Building (New Construction) (9 of 10)	Set by 1997 UBC Table 1-A – see notes	Not published — contact the department	The permit fee table is Table 1-A of the 1997 Uniform Building Code, not the modern code
Electrical (1 of 10)	Not offered / not tracked for this city		
Mechanical / HVAC (1 of 10)	Not offered / not tracked for this city		
Deck / Covered Patio (4 of 10)	Not offered / not tracked for this city		

Good to know

- KENNEWICK'S PERMIT FEE TABLE IS FROM THE 1997 UNIFORM BUILDING CODE – Table 1-A, adopted in place of the modern code's Section 108.2. Grading fees come from the same 1997 code.
- The city adopts the current state building and residential codes with NO edition year, so you cannot read the governing edition off the code.

Port Orchard

Kitsap County · City of Port Orchard
(360) 876-4407 · <https://portorchardwa.gov/> · 494 permitted units/yr

Permit	Fee	Review timeline	Tip
Residential Building (New Construction) (9 of 10)	Not stated in this guide - see notes	Not published — contact the department	A tool or storage shed up to 120 square feet is exempt from permit
Electrical (1 of 10)	Not offered / not tracked for this city		
Mechanical / HVAC (1 of 10)	Not offered / not tracked for this city		
Deck / Covered Patio (4 of 10)	Not offered / not tracked for this city		

Good to know

- DO NOT READ POMC CHAPTER 15.04. It is still listed as "Building Code" in Title 15's contents and it is repealed. The live chapter is POMC 20.200, City Construction Code.
- Sheds up to 120 square feet, fences up to 6 feet and retaining walls up to 4 feet are exempt from permit — the retaining wall exemption is lost if it supports a surcharge or impounds Class I, II or III-A liquids.

Sources & verification

Every figure in this guide traces to one of the official sources below, grouped by city.

Seattle

<https://www.seattle.gov/construction-and-inspections>

[https://www.seattle.gov/construction-and-inspections/codes/codes-we-enforce-\(a-z\)](https://www.seattle.gov/construction-and-inspections/codes/codes-we-enforce-(a-z))

[https://www.seattle.gov/construction-and-inspections/permits/permits-we-issue-\(a-z\)](https://www.seattle.gov/construction-and-inspections/permits/permits-we-issue-(a-z))

Spokane Valley

<https://www.spokanevalleywa.gov/>

<https://ecode360.com/48524580>

Vancouver

<https://www.cityofvancouver.us/>

<https://vancouver.municipal.codes/VMC/17>

Tacoma

<https://www.tacomapermits.org/>

Bellingham

<https://www.cob.org/>

<https://bellingham.municipal.codes/BMC/17.10>

Spokane

<https://aca.spokanepermits.org/CitizenAccess/Default.aspx>

<https://my.spokanecity.org/smc/?Chapter=17F.040>

Bellevue

<https://www.bellevuewa.gov/>

<https://bellevue.municipal.codes/BCC/23>

Everett

<https://www.everettwa.gov/>

<https://everett.municipal.codes/EMC/16>

Kennewick

<https://www.go2kennewick.com/>

https://library.municode.com/wa/kennewick/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=TIT15BUCO

Port Orchard

<https://portorchardwa.gov/>

<https://ecode360.com/47353010>

Every figure in this guide links to a living page.

Fees, timelines, and requirements change. For the current version of every figure in this guide — plus fee-comparison and search tools for all of Washington — visit:

permitbase.app/washington

This edition was generated on 2026-09-16 from PermitBase's live dataset and is re-issued periodically as sources change. The dated PDF you're holding is a snapshot — the URL above always reflects the current data.