

Consumer Guide to Low Risk Building and Plumbing Work

What can I build without a building permit?

As an owner, you can do general maintenance and repairs on your home and build small structures such as sheds (no bigger than 18m² or up to 36m² if it's prefabricated) without getting a building permit from the council.

... but I heard most building work does not need a permit?

This is not correct.

For larger projects such as sheds over 36m² you'll need to use a licensed builder and engage a building surveyor, but you still won't need a building permit. Farmers can build prefabricated farm sheds up to 200m² without a building permit.

You may even be able to contract a licensed builder to build a new home without a building permit but you will still need a building surveyor for approvals and to make sure your project complies with national standards.

For all jobs you still need to check with council about planning rules.

Visit www.cbos.tas.gov.au for more details about what you can and can't build in the:

- Director's Determination on Categories of Building and Demolition Work, and
- Director's Determination on Categories of Plumbing Work.

Or you can email your questions to cbos.info@justice.tas.gov.au or discuss your project with your builder, designer or building surveyor.

Who can do my building work?

Mostly you'll need to use a licensed builder or licensed plumber to ensure that your project is safe and complies with national standards.

But there are some simple projects you can undertake yourself.

For some larger residential work, you can apply to become an owner builder. More information on this is available at www.cbos.tas.gov.au.

Do I need to obtain professional drawings or specifications?

If you're building a house or other large project, you must use a licensed designer.

For smaller projects such as prefabricated sheds, engineering drawings are usually included.

However, even for low risk projects, it's a good idea to use a designer to make sure it complies with the national standards and is safe. Your designer will also ensure that issues such as stormwater are dealt with appropriately.

What checks do I need to make before building?

You need to make sure you are complying with the planning rules. For instance, there may be height restrictions and setbacks from boundaries that you need to consider. Check with your council to make sure your project is not going to contravene the local planning scheme.

You should also check your property title to make sure you are not building over an easement and, of course, [dial before you dig](#) to make sure you are not interfering with our valuable underground assets.

Visit www.cbos.tas.gov.au and read the:

- Fact Sheet on Low Risk Work by Owner or Competent Person
- Checklist – Director's Determination Categories of Building and Plumbing Work. Use this before using the Building Determination

I've finished the work – do I need to tell anyone about it?

The Directors Determinations will also tell you need to tell the council about the work so that they can update their records. You – or your builder – should complete the Notice of Low Risk Work form available at www.cbos.tas.gov.au and send it to your local council. For larger projects, where a building surveyor is required, they will notify councils before work commences.

Faster, fairer, simpler, cheaper?

Faster - because you don't need to wait for council approval for low and medium risk projects, you can more easily plan when your work will begin.

Fairer - there are new consumer protection laws when you sign a contract with a builder to protect your rights.

Simpler and cheaper - the process for building low risk projects is much simpler and cheaper, while those that are considered medium or high risk still have the appropriate amount of oversight to ensure that they are safe and fit for purpose.

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