



Projects Without Permits

If you have unpermitted construction on your property and would like to legalize the work, the first step is to check the permit records of the City of San Carlos and the County of San Mateo Assessor's office (650-363-4500).

Before you begin to correct the project, please consider some other options. For example, if you have a garage that was converted is it simple to revert it back to a garage? If you have a fully enclosed patio, you may be able to conform to the requirements of an enclosed patio or remove the walls to make a covered patio.

There are several steps which are required to legalize unpermitted construction. The steps are the same as applying for a new construction permit, and not limited to the steps mentioned below.

Step 1:

Planning Division may be required to review the project (normally for all exterior changes, and increase in square footage). Please contact them directly, at 650-802-4263. You may visit the Planning Division Monday thru Friday 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Step 2:

Plans are required for the construction. At a minimum, a site plan, floor plan, and related construction details are required. These drawings must be drawn by you or your agent and to scale (1/4" per foot preferred). We have samples of the required plans available. 3 copies shall be provided to the Building Division at the time of submittal.

Step 3

Once the plans are approved by Building and Planning, building permits with all applicable plumbing, mechanical, and electrical will be issued. If you have purchased the property or not been cited about the illegal construction, normal building permit fees are assessed.

Step 4:

After receiving your permit, you need to schedule inspections for the project. For work that has commenced and covered up without inspections, you will need to expose the following, but not limited to:

- a. Spread footings: Verify width of spread footings and rebar in all locations requested.
- b. Slab floors: Open one location to determine slab reinforcement.
- c. Wood floors: Open one 4' x 4' section in the middle of the project for access and inspection.
- d. Plumbing: All under-floor or under-slab piping or connections shall be exposed for inspection.
- e. Framing: One side of each wall covering shall be removed from floor to ceiling for inspection.
- f. Ceiling: Open one 4' x 4' section in the ceiling for inspection.
- g. Tests: All standard water, waste, and gas tests are required.

Depending on the work performed you should receive corrections or move on to the next required inspection up to and including the final. Once the final is completed and signed off, with no outstanding comments, corrections, or fees, the structure is then legal and no longer needs special attention when disclosing items upon sale of the house.