

**Department of Permitting and Environmental Review (Permitting)**

35030 SE Douglas Street, Suite 210 • Snoqualmie, Washington 98065-9266 • 206-296-6600 • TTY Relay 711

**Demolition Permits for Commercial and Residential Structures**Permitting Customer  
Information Bulletin #**3**• **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS** •

*Visit the Permitting Web site at  
[www.kingcounty.gov/permits](http://www.kingcounty.gov/permits)  
for more information*

King County Permitting has created customer information bulletins to inform the general public about the effect of codes and regulations on their projects. These bulletins are not intended to be complete statements of all laws and rules and should not be used as substitutes for them. If conflicts and questions arise, current codes and regulations are final authority. Because the codes and regulations may be revised or amended at any time, consult King County staff to be sure you understand all requirements before beginning work. It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that the project meets all requirements of applicable codes and regulations.

For alternate formats, call 206-296-6600.

This bulletin describes what must be done and what permits are required if a property owner plans to demolish a residential or commercial building and clear the building site.

**How Can a Property Owner Obtain a Permit For Demolition and Clearing?**

Customers may obtain a permit for demolition of a residential or commercial building and for clearing the site from the King County Department of Permitting and Environmental Review (Permitting), 35030 SE Douglas Street, Suite 210, in Snoqualmie, WA 98065-9266. If customers still need additional information after reviewing this bulletin, contact the Department of Permitting at 206-296-6600.

When applying for a demolition permit, property owners will need three copies of the legal description of the actual property and the address of the building or residence. Customers will also need a plot plan if there is more than one building on the site and not all the buildings are to be demolished. In addition, proof must be provided indicating that property taxes are not delinquent.

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 additional helpful information, refer to the booklet entitled "Construction, Demolition, and Landclearing," published by the King County Solid Waste Division. Customers may also want to obtain a copy of a flyer published by the K.C. Solid Waste Division entitled, "Construction, Demolition, and Landclearing Waste," which gives instructions about where demolition debris can be disposed of, as well as the associated fees. Both the booklet and flyer are available at the Permitting offices. Simply call the Permitting Customer Information Line at 206-296-6600.

If a contractor is hired to demolish the structure, a copy of the contractor's current Washington State Contractor's license must also be provided at the time of permit application.

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. Contact Permitting Services staff at 206-296-6600 for the current fees associated with demolition permits.

### **SEPA Review**

According to Washington State law, demolition of a structure or building is subject to, and must undergo, a State Environmental Protection Act (SEPA) review, 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.

### **What If the Structure Contains Asbestos?**

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. (Undamaged asbestos that remains in place has not been shown to pose a health risk.) 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 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. Owners are also responsible for removing the materials. Certified firms that are licensed and bonded to remove asbestos are listed in the yellow pages of a local telephone book under "Asbestos Abatement." If building owners need further information about this requirement, contact L&I at 425-281-5325.

If ACMs are identified in a building, anyone conducting renovation or demolition operations involving removal or disturbance of the ACMs should notify PSAPCA at 206-689-4058. PSAPCA requires that building owners file a Notice of Intent to Remove Asbestos and pay a filing fee. The proper procedures for removing these materials are extensive and costly. 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.

### **What About 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.

### **How Do Property Owners Deal With Sanitary Systems?**

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 at 206-296-4932.

### **What Happens To Wells?**

All wells associated with structures being demolished must be abandoned in accordance with Washington State Department of Ecology (Ecology) guidelines (WAC 173-160-415 through 465). Contact Ecology at 425-649-7000 to receive specific information and to report well abandonment.

### What Is Needed For Underground Flammable Liquid Storage Tanks?

For **commercial tanks, customers** must obtain a permit to remove or abandon-in-place any underground tank(s) used to store a flammable liquid. For more information, contact the King County Fire Marshal's Office at 206-296-6675.

**Residential heating oil tanks** may be either removed or abandoned-in-place; however, this work must be done by a contractor certified by the King County Fire Marshal. For more information or to obtain a list of certified contractors, contact the Fire Marshal's Office at 206-296-6675.

### How Do Customers Address Site Stabilization And Erosion Control?

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. Information on King County erosion control requirements is available at the Permitting Services Center and also via the Permitting Web site at [www.kingcounty.gov/permits](http://www.kingcounty.gov/permits).

### Additional Requirements For Demolition:

Additional requirements for demolition activities include the following:

1. 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. For information on disposal sites, call the King County Solid Waste Division at 206-296-4490.
2. 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. 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 grading permit may be needed. For more information on these requirements, see Bulletin 28, Clearing and Grading Permits, or call Permitting Customer Services at 206-296-6600.
3. 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.
4. During demolition, use water to control and reduce dust impact on neighboring properties.
5. When demolition activities are complete, leave the site clean, in safe condition, and protected from erosion and drainage problems.

### What Inspections Are Needed?

A preconstruction conference may be required for any large and/or critical sites. Following demolition and cleanup work, call Permitting at 206-296-6635 to request a final inspection. Before a permit can be finally approved, the property owner must provide the DDES inspector with disposal receipts verifying that all demolition debris has been disposed of properly. In addition, all permanent site stabilization, erosion, and drainage controls must be in place before final approval may be granted. Contact the Permitting Inspections at 206-296-6630 to get more information about inspection requirements for Demolition Permits.

**Other Bulletins and Telephone Numbers That May Be Helpful**

- Bulletin 1 Building and Development Permit Telephone Numbers
- Bulletin 16 Shoreline Erosion Control
- Bulletin 21 Critical Areas Review
- Bulletin 28 Clearing and Grading Permits
- Bulletin 44 Underground Fuel Tanks

These bulletins are all available via the Permitting Web site at [www.kingcounty.gov/permits](http://www.kingcounty.gov/permits).

- 206-296-6600 Permitting Information
- 206-296-6600 Permitting Site Development Services
- 206-296-6630 Permitting Building Inspection Services
- 206-296-6635 Permitting Inspection Request Line
- 206-296-6675 King County Fire Marshal
- 206-296-4490 King County Solid Waste Division
- 206-296-4932 Seattle-King County Department of Public Health  
Environmental Health Services
- 425-281-5325 Washington State Department of Labor and Industries
- 206-689-4058 Puget Sound Air Pollution Control Authority
- 425-649-7000 Washington State Department of Ecology

**Be sure to visit our Web site at:**  
[www.kingcounty.gov/permits](http://www.kingcounty.gov/permits)



King County complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). If you require an accommodation to attend a meeting (two weeks' notice) or require this information in Braille, audiocassette, or large print, please call 206-296-6600 or TTY 206-296-7217.