



Building Department

TOWN OF ACTON

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BUILDING PERMITS FOR FINISHING BASEMENT SPACES

A Building Permit is required to finish basements into storage areas, recreation rooms and habitable spaces. The basement must comply with minimum standards for building code compliance. It must also comply with Board of Health regulations. The following are requirements for a typical basement project, there could be other regulations which are not addressed or are specific to your project which might apply. The greater the detail that is on the plans, the easier it will be to help you comply with applicable regulations. Recreation rooms and habitable rooms require glazing not less than 8% of the floor area. One-half of the required area of glazing shall be operable. Artificial lighting (standard electrical lighting) and mechanical ventilation (system to provide fresh air into space which doesn't differentiate more than 10 degrees from the conditioned space) can be used to meet this requirement. Energy conservation regulations require insulation for heated or cooled spaces. Minimum finish ceiling height for a habitable space in a basement is 7 feet, storage areas are exempt. Habitable basements must have an emergency escape and rescue opening. Rooms that contain fuel burning appliances (furnaces) must supply sufficient combustion air to appliances. If room is not large enough vents can be added in walls to supplement. If combination of spaces is not enough, outside air will be required.

- Please apply online / OpenGov
- All applications require the workers comp insurance affidavit to be filled out by the applicant.
- Homeowners must complete an application and an affidavit exempting them from the home improvement contractor law. Owners pulling their own permit or dealing with unregistered contractors for applicable home improvement work do not have access to the arbitration program or guaranty fund under MGL c. 142A.