

**Article 9: Construction Permits**

**Division 4: Plumbing/Mechanical Permit Procedures**

*(Added 12-9-1997 by O-18451 N.S.)*

**§129.0401 Purpose of Plumbing/Mechanical Permit Procedures**

The purpose of these procedures is to establish the process for review of Plumbing/Mechanical Permit applications for compliance with the minimum standards necessary to safeguard public health, safety, and welfare.

*(Added 12-9-1997 by O-18451 N.S.; effective 1-1-2000.)*

**§129.0402 When a Plumbing/Mechanical Permit Is Required**

- (a) No plumbing system, or portion of a plumbing system, shall be installed within or on any *structure* or *premises*, nor shall any alteration, addition, or replacement be made in any existing plumbing system unless a Plumbing/Mechanical Permit has been obtained for the work except as exempted in Section 129.0403.
- (b) No heating, ventilating, air conditioning, or refrigeration system or part thereof shall be installed, altered, replaced, or repaired unless a Plumbing/Mechanical Permit has been obtained for the work except as exempted in Section 129.0404.

*(Added 12-9-1997 by O-18451 N.S.; effective 1-1-2000.)*

**§129.0403 Exemptions from a Plumbing Permit for Plumbing Work**

- (a) A Plumbing Permit is not required for the following plumbing work:
  - (1) stopping of leaks in drains, soil, waste, or vent pipe; however, this exemption does not apply for the replacement of any drain pipe, soil, waste, or vent pipe with new material in any part as part of the repair;
  - (2) clearing of stoppages, or the repair of leaks in soil, waste, or vent pipes, valves, fixtures, or replacement of exposed traps in existing plumbing systems serving lavatories, sinks, laundry trays, or similar fixtures;
  - (3) replacement in kind of plumbing fixtures, unless the installation requires an alteration or replacement of drainage, waste, vent, or water supply piping.

- (b) Exemption from the permit requirements of the Plumbing Regulations does not authorize any work to be done in any manner in violation of the provisions of the Plumbing Regulations or any other applicable local or state regulations.

*(Added 12-9-1997 by O-18451 N.S.; effective 1-1-2000.)*

*(Amended 4-8-2008 by O-19730 N.S.; effective 5-8-2008.)*

*(Amended 4-6-2016 by O-20624 N.S.; effective 5-6-2016.)*

**§129.0404 Exemptions from a Mechanical Permit for Heating, Ventilation, Air Conditioning, and Refrigeration Work**

- (a) A Mechanical Permit is not required for the following heating, ventilation, air conditioning, or refrigeration repair work:
  - (1) repairing heating, ventilation, air conditioning, or refrigeration equipment, provided the work does not require removal of the equipment from its installed position or the replacement of faulty controls, valves, driers, or filters in the system;
  - (2) installing temperature controls, repairing leaks, or recharging refrigeration compressors or systems;
  - (3) servicing, or repairing ice machines;
  - (4) installing self-contained refrigerators or freezers;
  - (5) installing a portable heating appliance, portable ventilating equipment, a portable cooling unit, or a portable evaporative cooler;
  - (6) replacement of piping in a closed system of steam, hot, or chilled water piping within heating or cooling equipment;
  - (7) replacement of any component part of assembly of an appliance that does not alter its original approval; or
  - (8) installing or servicing refrigerating equipment that is a part of equipment for which a permit has previously been approved.

- (b) Exemption from the permit requirements of the Mechanical Regulations does not authorize any work to be done in any manner in violation of the provisions of the Mechanical Regulations or any other applicable local or state regulations.

*(Amended 9-24-2002 by O-19105 N.S.)*

*(Retitled from "Exemptions from a Plumbing/Mechanical Permit for Heating, Ventilation, Air Conditioning, and Refrigeration Work" to "Exemptions from a Mechanical Permit for Heating, Ventilation, Air Conditioning, and Refrigeration Work" and amended 4-6-2016 by O-20624 N.S.; effective 5-6-2016.)*

**§129.0405 General Rules for Plumbing/Mechanical Permits**

- (a) A Plumbing/Mechanical Permit shall be obtained before work is started except in cases where emergency or urgent necessity can be shown to exist, in which case a permit shall be obtained within 2 *business days* of beginning work.
- (b) A separate Plumbing/Mechanical Permit is required for each building in which rough work for a plumbing fixture, or heating, ventilating, air conditioning, or refrigeration is installed, except in the case of an unoccupied accessory building or a garage that is part of the plumbing system of a *single dwelling unit*.
- (c) No privately owned lines, equipment, duct work, or other facilities shall be installed over, under, or across any public property without first complying with the requirements in Municipal Code Chapter 6, Article 2.
- (d) The Building Official may withhold permission to install or operate any gas or electrical meter for a *structure* until the *structure* is approved for occupancy.
- (e) The Building Official shall inspect, and reinspect as the Official determines to be necessary, all plumbing, heating, ventilating, air conditioning, or refrigeration system installations and shall keep complete records of all permits, inspections, and reinspections.

*(Added 12-9-1997 by O-18451 N.S.; effective 1-1-2000.)*

**§129.0406 Qualifications for Obtaining a Plumbing/Mechanical Permit**

A Plumbing/Mechanical Permit for plumbing work may be issued only to the following:

- (a) Contractors licensed by the State of California who are entitled to engage in the business of, or act in the capacity of, a contractor relating to plumbing;
- (b) Property owners or lessees; or
- (c) Businesses or organizations properly licensed by the City of San Diego to engage in the installation of special equipment or systems that require connection of the equipment or systems into the water or gas supply system where such work is not covered by State of California Contractor licensing laws. Heating, ventilating, air conditioning, or other contractors may obtain permits for the extension of gas piping only to equipment they are installing within their classifications of work as determined by the California Contractor's State License Board. They may not obtain permits for the repiping of a gas system, or work at the installation of gas piping to heating or air conditioning equipment, installed by others. Work authorized by any permit issued under Section 129.0406(a) shall not entitle the holder to perform work other than the connection of equipment or systems into an existing water or gas piping system.

*(Added 12-9-1997 by O-18451 N.S.; effective 1-1-2000.)*

**§129.0407 How to Apply for a Plumbing/Mechanical Permit**

- (a) An application for a Plumbing/Mechanical Permit shall be submitted in accordance with Sections 112.0102 and 129.0105. All submitted plans shall be signed as required by Chapter 7 of the California Business and Professions Code.
- (b) Every application shall include the following information:
  - (1) Location of the work proposed to be installed; and
  - (2) The amount and kind of work proposed.
- (c) Submittal documents including plans, specifications, and schedules may be necessary to determine whether the installation as described will be in compliance with the requirements of the Plumbing and Mechanical Regulations. Plumbing/Mechanical plans are not required when the Building Official determines that the scope of work and compliance with the applicable provisions of Title 24 of the California Code of Regulations can be verified through an inspection.

- (d) When plans are required, they shall be sufficiently complete to demonstrate compliance with the Plumbing and Mechanical Regulations or other applicable local or state regulations.
- (e) The Building Official may require plans to be signed by a mechanical engineer or shall require signature as otherwise specified by state law.
- (f) All pertinent changes in mechanical plans submitted for plan check that are made before a Building Permit is issued must be indicated by appropriate revision marks and the date of revision.
- (g) An owner, or the owner's authorized representative, may request in writing, and be granted, a temporary waiver of mechanical plan check clearance before completion of regular mechanical plan check for the purpose of obtaining a building foundation permit under the following circumstances:
  - (1) Estimated data for sizing and locating the sewer connection and water meter are indicated on the plans;
  - (2) The fees are paid for the required water meter and sewer connections;
  - (3) Complete mechanical plans are submitted and plan check approval is obtained before a Building Permit is issued; and
  - (4) The owner or the owner's authorized representative agrees in writing to make any necessary changes in the plumbing system, size of water meter, or sewer connection necessary to make the installed plumbing system comply with the Plumbing and Mechanical Regulations and to pay any required additional water meter or sewer connection fees before the Building Permit for the remainder of the *structure* is issued.

*(Added 12-9-1997 by O-18451 N.S.; effective 1-1-2000.)*  
*(Amended 4-6-2016 by O-20624 N.S.; effective 5-6-2016.)*

**§129.0409 Decision Process for a Plumbing/Mechanical Permit**

A decision on an application for a Plumbing/Mechanical Permit shall be made by the Building Official in accordance with Process One. The Plumbing/Mechanical Permit shall be approved if the Building Official determines that the work described in the permit application and the accompanying plans comply with the Plumbing and Mechanical Regulations, other applicable laws and ordinances, other applicable *construction permits*, or any applicable *development permits*.

*(Added 12-9-1997 by O-18451 N.S.; effective 1-1-2000.)*

**§129.0410 Issuance of a Plumbing/Mechanical Permit**

A Plumbing/Mechanical Permit may be issued after all approvals have been obtained and the required fees have been paid. A Plumbing/Mechanical Permit shall not be issued for a *development* that requires a *development permit* until the *development permit* has been issued.

*(Added 12-9-1997 by O-18451 N.S.; effective 1-1-2000.)*

**§129.0411 Plumbing/Mechanical Permit Expiration**

- (a) A Plumbing/Mechanical Permit shall expire if substantial work authorized by the permit has not been completed and validated by an inspection within 180 calendar days of the date of permit issuance.
- (b) A Plumbing/Mechanical Permit shall expire if, after initial utilization of a permit pursuant to Section 129.0411(a), work authorized by the Plumbing/Mechanical Permit is suspended or the *structure* is abandoned for a continuous period of 180 calendar days.
- (c) A Plumbing/Mechanical Permit shall expire 2 years after the date of permit issuance if the work authorized by the Plumbing/Mechanical Permit has not received final inspection approval by the permit expiration date.
- (d) If the work authorized by the Plumbing/Mechanical Permit has not received final inspection approval by the permit expiration date, all work shall stop until a new permit is issued.
- (e) Any Plumbing/Mechanical Permit associated with a Building Permit shall expire concurrently with the Building Permit.
- (f) An expired Plumbing/Mechanical Permit may be extended by the Building Official concurrently with the extension of a Building Permit.

*(Added 12-9-1997 by O-18451 N.S.; effective 1-1-2000.)*

*(Retitled from "Initial Utilization of a Plumbing/Mechanical Permit" to "Plumbing/Mechanical Permit Expiration" and amended 4-6-2016 by O-20624 N.S.; effective 5-6-2016.)*

*(Amended 1-18-2018 by O-20897 N.S.; effective 2-17-2018.)*

**§129.0415 Required Inspections for a Plumbing/Mechanical Permit**

- (a) All construction work and equipment authorized by a Plumbing/ Mechanical Permit shall be inspected by the Building Official in accordance with Section 129.0111.
- (b) No equipment regulated by the Plumbing and Mechanical Regulations shall be connected to the fuel, water, or power supply until it complies with all applicable Plumbing and Mechanical Regulations and a final inspection approval has been issued, except when otherwise approved by the Building Official for construction or test purposes.
- (c) Required Inspections. New plumbing and mechanical work and such portions of existing systems that may be affected by new work, or changes to existing plumbing and mechanical systems, shall be inspected by the Building Official to ensure compliance with the requirements of the San Diego Municipal Code and to ensure that the installation and construction of the plumbing and mechanical system is in accordance with the approved construction plans. The following inspections shall be required. The *permit holder* shall be responsible for scheduling the inspections:
  - (1) Final Inspection. Final inspection shall be made upon completion of the installation and after the installation of the plumbing or mechanical has been tested, inspected, and approved.
  - (2) Other Inspections. In addition to the inspections required by Section 129.0415, the Building Official may require additional inspections to ascertain compliance with the provisions of the Plumbing Regulations and the Mechanical Regulations of the Land Development Code.
- (d) The *permit holder* shall ensure that the work will pass the test prescribed prior to requesting an inspection for the Building Official to witness the test. The permit holder shall furnish the equipment, material, and labor necessary for inspection or tests.

*(Added 12-9-1997 by O-18451 N.S.; effective 1-1-2000.)*

*(Amended 1-18-2018 by O-20897 N.S.; effective 2-17-2018.)*

**§129.0416 Notification of Incomplete Installations**

- (a) If any person to whom a Plumbing/Mechanical Permit has been issued abandons an installation, the *permit holder*, owner, or owner's authorized representative shall notify the Building Official in writing. The notice shall be given within 2 calendar days of the date on which work was discontinued and shall include a request for inspection of the work installed. Upon receipt of this notification by the Building Official, the Plumbing/Mechanical Permit shall expire.
- (b) No person shall resume work on any incomplete installation until the installation has been released by the Building Official and a new Plumbing/Mechanical Permit has been obtained. A copy of the notice shall accompany the application for the new permit.

*(Added 12-9-1997 by O-18451 N.S.; effective 1-1-2000.)  
(Amended 4-6-2016 by O-20624 N.S.; effective 5-6-2016.)*

**§129.0419 No Deviation from Plumbing/Mechanical Permit Without Approval**

The Plumbing/Mechanical Permit shall be for the installation described in the permit application and no deviation shall be made from the installation so described without the written approval of the Building Official.

*(Added 12-9-1997 by O-18451 N.S.; effective 1-1-2000.)*

**§129.0420 Temporary Plumbing Permit**

- (a) The Building Official may issue a Temporary Plumbing Permit for the following types of plumbing installations:
  - (1) Use during construction. The temporary plumbing authorization shall be for the time construction is in progress; and
  - (2) Other temporary uses. The authorization for other temporary uses shall not exceed 30 calendar days.
- (b) Approval to place temporary plumbing over the *street* area or other public property must be obtained from the City Engineer.
- (c) All temporary installations shall conform as nearly as practicable with the requirements of the Plumbing Regulations for permanent installations. The Building Official may permit deviations that will not cause hazard to life or property.

- (d) If the Building Official subsequently determines that the plumbing installation is a hazard to life or property, the Building Official may immediately rescind or cancel the permit covering the installations and disconnect or order disconnection and removal of the plumbing installation.

*(Added 12-9-1997 by O-18451 N.S.; effective 1-1-2000.)*

**§129.0421 Temporary Gas Permit**

- (a) The Building Official may issue a Temporary Gas Permit for gas service for construction purposes before final heating inspection. The authorization shall be for the time construction is in progress.
- (b) The Building Official shall send a Temporary Gas Service Release Notice to the gas utility company, provided the gas piping system has been inspected, tested, and approved.
- (c) A Temporary Gas Permit may be issued only to those possessing a valid Gas Permit.
- (d) A Temporary Gas Permit and Release Notice may be revoked at the discretion of the Building Official. A Temporary Gas Permit will automatically be revoked if any portion of the building is occupied without authorization of the Building Official. The Building Official will notify the gas utility company when any Temporary Gas Release Notice is revoked.
- (e) It is unlawful to use gas from, or supply gas to, any system after the Temporary Gas Release Notice has been revoked.

*(Added 12-9-1997 by O-18451 N.S.; effective 1-1-2000.)*