

# DFW PERMIT QUICK REFERENCE

A Homeowner's Guide to Excavation-Related Permits

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Understanding permit requirements before starting your excavation project helps avoid delays, fines, and costly rework. This guide covers the most common permits related to excavation work in the Dallas-Fort Worth area.

## 1. ALWAYS CALL 811 BEFORE DIGGING

Texas law requires all homeowners and contractors to contact 811 at least two business days before any digging project—even in your own backyard.

- Call: 811 (free service)
- Online: [texas811.org](http://texas811.org)
- Wait Time: 2 business days (excludes weekends/holidays)
- Tolerance Zone: Hand dig within 18 inches of marked utilities
- Note: 811 does NOT locate private lines (sprinklers, pool equipment, private lighting)

## 2. CITY OF DALLAS PERMIT REQUIREMENTS

### Excavation Permits

- Required for excavation affecting public right-of-way
- Residential grading over 1,000 cubic yards may require engineered plans
- Contact: Oak Cliff Municipal Center: (214) 948-4480

### Pool Permits

- Building Permit: Required for all in-ground pools
- Electrical Permit: Required for pool lighting/equipment
- Fence Permit: Pool barrier fence required (min. 48" height)
- Construction fencing required from excavation until permanent barrier complete

### Fence Permits

- No permit needed: Fences under 4 ft in front yard, under 6 ft elsewhere
- Permit required: Over 4 ft in front yard OR over 6 ft in back/side yards
- Special rules apply in Historic/Conservation Districts and flood plains

### Demolition Permits

- Required for demolishing any structure or part of a structure
- Fee: \$42 base + \$0.021 per sq ft • Turnaround: Typically same-day
- Asbestos survey required; must disconnect all utilities before work

## 3. CITY OF FORT WORTH PERMIT REQUIREMENTS

### Grading Permits

- Required for land disturbance over 1 acre
- Apply Online: [aca-prod.accela.com/CFW](http://aca-prod.accela.com/CFW)

## Fence Permits

- Front yard max: 4 ft (solid) or 5 ft (50%+ open design)
- Permit required if fence exceeds 6 ft (solid) or 8 ft (open)
- Fines for no permit: Up to \$500/day; fire/health violations up to \$2,000/day

## 4. GENERAL DFW GUIDELINES

### Projects That Typically DON'T Need Permits

- Small accessory structures under 200 sq ft (no utilities)
- Fences under height limits • Minor landscaping (still call 811!)

### Projects That ALWAYS Need Permits

- Swimming pools (in-ground) • Demolition of structures • New construction
- Work in public right-of-way • Electrical, plumbing, or mechanical work

## 5. PERMIT CONTACT QUICK REFERENCE

Jurisdiction	Phone	Online Portal
City of Dallas	(214) 948-4480	dallascityhall.com
City of Fort Worth	(817) 392-2222	fortworthtexas.gov/permits
Dallas County (Unincorp.)	(214) 653-6568	mgoconnect.org
Texas 811	811	texas811.org

### IMPORTANT NOTES

- HOA: Check with your HOA—they may have additional rules beyond city permits
- Suburban Cities: Arlington, Plano, Frisco, McKinney, etc. have their own requirements
- Permit Review: Residential 1-3 days, Commercial 12-20+ days

Disclaimer: Permit requirements change frequently. Always verify current requirements with your local jurisdiction before starting work.

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