

DFW PERMIT QUICK REFERENCE

A Homeowner's Guide to Excavation-Related Permits

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
- 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

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.

DIRTROCK DALLAS

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