



BASEMENT FINISH

Building permit information for one- or two-family dwellings and townhomes.

Permit Submittal

- Building plans can be submitted on paper or electronically through our ePlans system.
- To obtain a building permit for a basement finish you **must** supply the following:
 - Signed and completed residential building permit application form.
 - Signed and completed property owner waiver form (if the homeowner is obtaining the permit).
 - If submitting on paper: Two (2) copies of plans showing proposed layout and materials. If plans are 11x17 or smaller only one (1) copy of plans is required to be submitted. The plans need to be full-sized and to scale (1/2-sized plans are not allowed).
 - If submitting electronically: One (1) copy of plans.
 - See page 3 for example of plans required.

Once the application, waiver (if required), and complete correct plans are received by the Building Safety Department allow for up to five business days for the plan review to be completed and the building permit to be issued. Please plan accordingly.

- **Plumbing, electrical, and heating permits are separate from the residential building permit.**
- **Heating permits are required for all basement finishes.**

Inspection Information

- It is the responsibility of the person doing the work to schedule ALL the required inspections.
 - Call 255-7238, 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. to arrange an inspection at least one business day in advance.
 - Inspection appointments are scheduled on a first-come first-serve basis, and there is no guarantee that you can get an inspection within 24 hours of calling.
 - Inspections are available from 9:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. Monday through Friday.
 - Permits are considered expired when work has been suspended or abandoned for over 6 months. A building inspection is required at least every 6 months to allow the Building Safety Department to verify that work is progressing. If an inspection is not completed and the 6 month timeline has lapsed, the permit will be considered to be expired, closed without the required inspections approved, and a new permit will be required to finish the project.
 - When needed, a one-time extension may be requested in writing.

Required Inspections

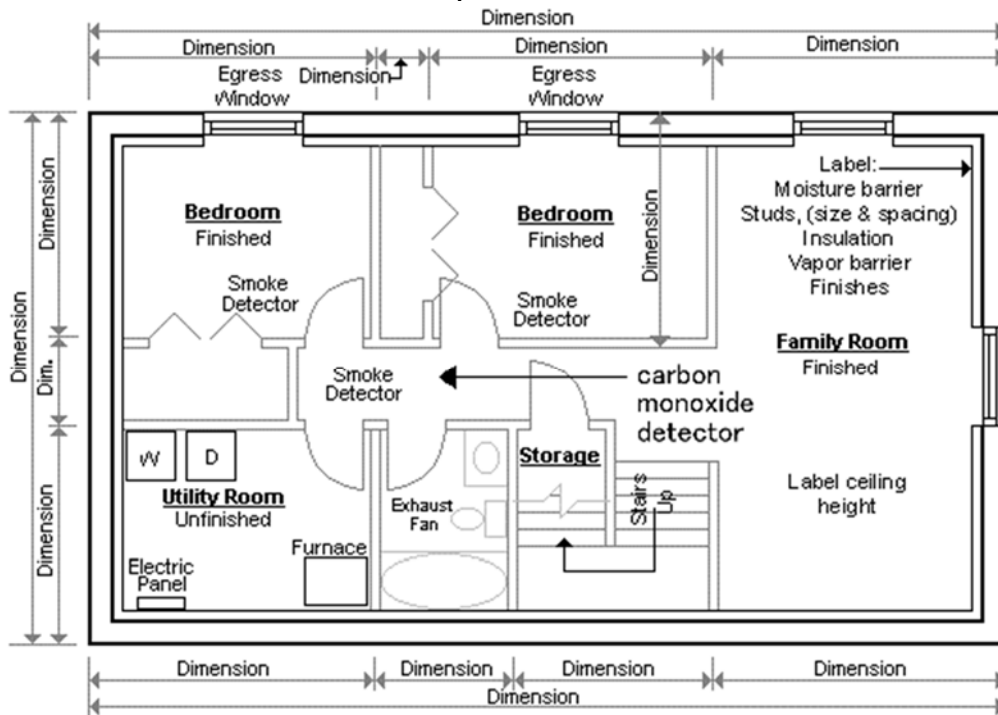
1. **Rough-in plumbing, electrical, and heating inspection.** This inspection is required before plumbing piping is concealed, before electrical wires are covered, and after all ductwork and vents are in place.
2. **Framing inspection.** This inspection is required after all framing is in place and rough-in plumbing, electrical and heating has been approved.
3. **Insulation, vapor/air barrier, fire blocking, draft-stop inspection.** This inspection is required after all insulation, vapor/air barrier, fire blocking and draft-stopping is in place.
 - Inspections 2 & 3 will be done at the same time if basement finish is for a newer home that had the wall insulation inspected when it was built.
4. **Final plumbing, electrical, and heating inspection.**
5. **Final inspection.** This inspection is after all work is complete and all other final inspections have been approved.
 - At this inspection the inspector will also check:
 - Smoke & carbon monoxide alarms throughout the house meet current code.

General Building Code Requirements

- Bottom plates of proposed walls shall be of decay resistant or approved treated wood unless there is an impervious moisture barrier (poly) under the slab. (R317.1, #3)
- Properly sized beams and headers must be used in structural bearing conditions. Specify sizes and locations on plans.
- Fireblock all soffits, dropped ceilings and concealed spaces. Fireblocking helps prevent the movement of smoke and fire through concealed spaces within walls and ceilings and shall consist of approved materials placed in such a way to block any connection between a concealed horizontal (floor/ceiling area) and vertical space (wall cavity). (R302.11) *See fireblocking/draftstopping handout for more information.*
- Draftstops shall be installed in open web floor trusses so that the area of concealed space does not exceed 1,000 square feet. (R302.12) *See fireblocking/draftstopping handout for more information.*
- All stairs with four (4) or more risers shall have a graspable handrail. Handrails shall be returned to the wall or terminate in a newel post. (R311.7.8)
- Open sides of stairways more than 30" above the floor shall be provided with a guard having intermediate rails with all spaces less than 4-3/8". (R312.1.3, exception 2)
- Stairs with six (6) or more risers require a wall switch at each floor level. (R303.7.1)
- Enclosed usable space under stairs shall have walls, under-stair surface and any soffits protected on the enclosed side with ½" gypsum board. (R302.7)
- Smoke alarms are required to be brought up to current code throughout the entire house.
 - Smoke alarms are required in the following areas: (R314.3)
 - In each sleeping room.
 - Outside each separate sleeping area in the immediate vicinity of the bedroom(s).
 - One on each level of the home.
 - When more than one smoke alarm is required to be installed the alarm devices shall be interconnected in such a manner that the actuation of one alarm will activate all the alarms. (R314.4)
 - Exception: Smoke alarms in existing areas are allowed to be battery operated unless there is an attic, crawlspace or basement available which could provide access for hardwiring and interconnection without the removal of interior finishes.
- Carbon monoxide alarms are required to be brought up to current code throughout the entire house.
 - Carbon monoxide alarms are required in the following areas (R315.1.1):
 - Outside and not more than 10' from each separate sleeping area or bedroom.
 - Alarms shall be installed on each level containing sleeping areas or bedrooms.
- Each bedroom/sleeping room shall be provided with an egress window. (R310.1) *See emergency escape and rescue openings handout for more information.*
- Foam plastic (rigid) insulation shall be protected on the inside with not less than ½" gypsum board. (R316.4)
- Fiberglass insulation shall be covered on the inside by a ceiling or wall finish that meets flame spread & smoke-developed index requirements. (R302.9.1)
- Provide a moisture barrier over the concrete walls prior to framework. (MN Energy Code section R402.1.1.4)
- The minimum finished ceiling height, including beams, girders, ducts, or other obstructions is 6'-4". (R305.2.1)
- Water closets (toilets) shall be located in a clear space not less than 30" in width (minimum of 15" clear in each direction from center of toilet) and shall have a clear space in front of the water closet of not less than 24". Water closets shall have a flush volume not exceeding 1.6 gallons. (MN Plumbing Code section 402.5 & R403.2)
- When adding a shower or shower-type bath, it must be equipped with an ANTI-SCALD TYPE water control valve. The shower stall must have a minimum diameter of 30" at the shower handle with the door closed. (MN Plumbing Code section 408.6)
- Windows located in a bathroom may require safety/tempered glazing. (R308) *See Safety Glazing/Tempered Glass handout for more information.*

- Water resistant gypsum board shall NOT be used (R702.3.8):
 - Over a class I or II vapor retarder in a shower or tub compartment.
 - In saunas or steam rooms.
 - On ceilings where framing exceeds 16" on center spacing.
- Bathrooms & water closet compartments shall be provided with an operable window or power exhaust fan that vents to the outside. (R303.3) Exhaust ductwork that will be concealed shall be of a type approved for the concealing. Insulate the last 3' of duct before the exterior wall.
- Fuel-fired furnace and water heaters shall NOT be in or accessed through a bedroom, bathroom, toilet room or closet (MN Mechanical code section 303.3).
 - Exception: direct vent furnaces, enclosed furnaces and electric heating furnaces.
- New ductwork to be sealed with approved tape or mastic that is listed & labeled in accordance with UL 181 (MN Mechanical code section 603.9).
- Panning of joists or stud space returns are NOT allowed (MN Mechanical code section 602.3).
- Electrical service panels & overcurrent protection devices shall not be located in clothes closets, bathrooms or over the steps of a stairway. (National Electrical Code section 240.24)

Sample Floor Plan:



(For the purpose of this handout: ' = foot/feet; " = inch(es))

The information in this handout is just an overview. See the 2015 Minnesota Residential Code, 2015 Minnesota Mechanical Code & Fuel Gas Code, Minnesota Plumbing Code & 2017 National Electrical Code for complete information.

All pictures in this handout are examples; other methods of construction may be approved by the Building Safety Department. Questions regarding design and cost should be referred to a professional builder or architect.