



**CITY OF MONTE SERENO**  
**18041 Saratoga-Los Gatos Road**  
**Monte Sereno, CA 95030**  
**Phone (408) 354-7635 Fax (408) 395-7653**  
**www.montesereno.org**

## **When is a permit required?**

The City operates under the provisions of the California State Building Code with very few local amendments.

The State Building Code **requires permits any time a building or structure is “erected, constructed, enlarged, altered, repaired, moved, improved, removed, converted or demolished...”**. That is very large in scope.

There are projects that may not require building permits but may require other types of approval by the City and meet other requirements of the municipal code, such as setbacks and lot coverage limits.

Projects exempted from building permits are:

Single story, detached accessory buildings such as tool and storage sheds, playhouses and similar uses that do not exceed 120 square feet in floor area. These structures must still meet applicable setbacks and detached structures may also require a use permit;

Fences not exceeding 6 feet in height;

Movable cases, counters and partitions not over 5 feet 9 inches high;

Retaining walls not over 4 feet in height measured from the bottom of the footing to the top of the wall, unless the wall is supporting a surcharge;

Platforms, walks and driveways not more than 30 inches above grade and not over any basement or story below. Decks, platforms and landing places must still meet applicable setbacks and lot coverage limits;

Painting, papering and similar finish work;

Window awnings supported by an exterior wall as long as they do not project more than 54 inches from the wall. These structures must still meet applicable setbacks and lot coverage limits;

Prefabricated swimming pools installed completely above grade and do not exceed 5000 gallon capacity. Pools must still meet applicable setback and lot coverage limits.

Although the items mentioned above may be exempt from a building permit, they may require separate electrical, plumbing or mechanical permits.

If you have a question as to whether your project requires a permit call the Building Department at (408) 354-2805 or visit City Hall.