

The Building Department is here to protect the residents of Fort Lee by making sure all work that is done meets the codes of the State of New Jersey.

Please call the Building Department if there are any questions about a permit being needed. The violations for not obtaining a required permit for work can be substantial: up to \$2000.00 per violation and the work that was done having to be removed and either done over or put back to the way it was before the work took place.

The following items are all the things that you are able to do in your home that do *not* require a permit from the Building Department.

N.J.A.C. 5:23-2

5:23-2.7 Ordinary Maintenance

(a) Ordinary maintenance to structures may be made without filing a permit application with or giving notice to the Construction Official.

(b) Ordinary maintenance shall not include any of the following:

1. The cutting away of any wall, partition or portion thereof;
2. The removal or cutting of any structural beam or bearing support;
3. The removal or change of any required means of egress, or rearrangement of parts of a structure affecting the exitway requirements;
4. Any work affecting structural or fire safety;
5. Any work that will increase the nonconformity of any existing building or structure with the requirements of the regulations;
6. Addition to, or alteration, replacement or relocation of:
 - * Any standpipe;
 - * Water supply, sewer, drainage, gas, soil, waste, vent or similar piping;
 - * Electrical wiring, except that the following shall be considered ordinary electrical maintenance:
 - (1) Communications wiring in a Class 3 structure provided that the installation does not involve the alteration or penetration of a fire-rated assembly and is not in a hazardous location as defined in Chapter 5 of the electrical subcode.
- (A) For Purposes of applying this provision, communications wiring shall mean any wiring covered by Chapter 8 of the electrical subcode. Communications wiring shall also include data circuits between computers/information technology equipment, which may be classified as "communication circuits," in accordance with Article 725 of the electrical subcode; or
 - * Mechanical or other work affecting public health or general safety; or
7. Any work undertaken for the purpose of lead abatement.

The following items are ordinary maintenance and shall be treated as such by every enforcing

agency. No permit for, inspections of, or notice to the enforcing agency of ordinary maintenance shall be required. This is not an all-inclusive listing of ordinary maintenance.

Ordinary Building Maintenance shall include:

1. Exterior and interior painting;
2. Installation, repair or replacement of any interior finishes of less than 25 percent of the wall area in any given room in a one or two-family dwelling. This shall include plastering and drywall installation.
 - (A) Vinyl wall covering of any amount is ordinary maintenance;
 - (B) Paneling shall not be considered ordinary maintenance;
3. Wall papering at any location;
4. The replacement of glass in any window or door. However, the replacement glass shall be of a type and quality that complies with the minimum requirements of the code;
5. The installation and replacement of any window or door, including garage doors, in the same opening without altering the dimensions of framing of the original opening. This shall include storm windows and storm doors. The installation and replacement of means of egress and emergency escape windows and doors may be made in the same opening without altering the dimensions or framing of the original opening, and shall not reduce the required height, width or net clear opening of the previous window or door assembly;
6. The repair or replacement of any non-structural member such as a partition railing or kitchen cabinet;
7. The repair or replacement of any interior or exterior trim, decoration or moldings;
8. The replacement or installation of any flooring material, except carpeting, with a new material. However, installation of carpeting in one and two family dwellings shall be permitted under ordinary maintenance;
9. The repair of existing roofing material not exceeding 25 percent of the total roof area within any 12 month period;
10. The repair of existing siding with like material not exceeding 25 percent of the total building exterior wall area within any 12 month period;
11. The repair or replacement of any part of a porch or a stoop which does not structurally support a roof above;
12. The replacement or installation of screens;
13. The installation of any roll or batt insulation when installed adjacent to or not more than one and a half inches from an interior finish; and
14. Replacement of exterior rain water gutters and leaders.

Ordinary Plumbing Maintenance shall include:

1. Replacement of hose bib valves in single family dwellings. Replacement hose bib valves shall be provided with an approved atmospheric vacuum breaker;
2. Refinishing of existing fixtures. Relining of fixtures shall not be considered to be ordinary maintenance;
3. Replacement of ball cocks. Replacement ball cocks must be an approved anti-siphon type;
4. Repair of leaks involving the replacement of piping between two adjacent joints only;
5. Clearance of stoppages;
6. Replacements of faucets or working parts or faucets;
7. Replacement of valves (including shower or combination bath/shower valves in a single

family dwelling);

8. Replacements of working parts of valves, including, but not limited to, shower or combination bath/shower valves;
9. Replacement of traps except for traps on culinary sinks in food handling establishments;
10. Replacement of water closet, and/or lavatory, and/or bathtub or shower unit and/or kitchen sink in a single family dwelling with an approved similar fixture provided that no change in the piping arrangement is made. Replacement water closets bearing a date stamp of July 1, 1991 or later must use an average of 1.6 gallons or less of water per flushing cycle; and
11. Replacement of domestic clothes washers and dishwashers.

Ordinary Electrical Maintenance shall include:

1. The replacement of any receptacles, switch, or lighting fixture rated at 20 amps or less and operating at less than 150 volts to ground with a like or similar item, including receptacles in locations where ground-fault circuit interrupter protection is required;
2. Repairs to any installed electrically operated equipment such as doorbells, communication systems, and any motor operated device. Provided, however, that if fire protection systems are interrupted for repairs, the fire official shall be notified in accordance with the building subcode.
3. Installation of communications wiring for communications wiring in a Class 3 structure, provided that the rearrangement does not involve penetration of a fire-rated assembly and is not in a hazardous location as defined in Chapter 5 of the electrical subcode.
(a) For the purposes of applying these provisions, communications wiring shall mean any wiring covered by Chapter 8 of the electrical subcode, such as telephone, radio antenna, or coaxial cable TV wiring. Communications wiring shall also include data circuits between computers/information technology equipment, which may be classified as "communications circuits," in accordance with Article 725 of the electrical subcode; and
4. Replacement of domestic dishwashers; and
5. Replacement of kitchen range hoods in single family dwellings.

Ordinary Fire Protection Maintenance shall include:

1. The replacement of any sprinkler or smoke detector or heat detector head with a like device;
2. The repair or replacement of any component of a fire alarm or smoke and heat detection equipment (other than the replacement of a fire alarm control panel);
3. The installation of battery-powered smoke detectors; and
4. The installation of battery-powered or plug-in type carbon monoxide alarms.

Ordinary Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning Maintenance shall include:

1. Replacement of motors, pumps and fans of the same capacity;
2. Repair and replacement of heating, supply and return piping and radiation elements, which does not require rearrangement of the piping system;
3. Repair and replacement of duct work;
4. Repair of air conditioning equipment and systems; and
5. Repair or replacement of control devices for heating and air conditioning equipment; and
6. Replacement of kitchen range hoods in single family dwellings.
7. Replacement of clothes dryers serving and located within dwelling units, provided no change in fuel type or location or electrical characteristics is required.

