

New Bedford DPI Permitting FAQs

What permits are issued by the Department of Public Infrastructure?

The Department of Public Infrastructure, or DPI, is the issuing department for water, sewer, drain, stormwater, sidewalk/driveway*, and trench permits.

*Driveway permits are reviewed/issued first by DIS then they go to DPI unless for a commercial curb cut.

How can I apply for a permit?

Contractors can submit permits applications online through OpenGov, which allows users to submit forms, pay fees and track approval progress.

Training and assistance will be available during normal business hours, weekdays 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM. Contact the MIS department at 508-991-6245.

For more information and permit related questions, please contact the DPI during normal business hours, weekdays 7:30 AM to 4:00 PM, at 508-979-1550.

Who can apply for a permit?

The DPI issues permits to property owners or duly designated representatives (with a signed permission slip from the property owner on record).

What is a City of New Bedford Bonded Contractor and when is one required?

A contractor that has been vetted by the DPI to perform work within the City Right of Way with necessary permit(s). All work that falls within the City Right of Way must be completed by a City of New Bedford Bonded Contractor. A list of contractors that are currently bonded with the City of New Bedford is available at the DPI and online at <https://www.newbedford-ma.gov/public-infrastructure/wastewater/fog-program/>.

What do I need a water permit for?

A water permit must be filed when installing or repairing a water main, fire supply service and/or service connections. A water permit allows for work being completed by the Bonded Contractor to be inspected and recorded by the City while ensuring City construction standards are being met.

What documents/information is required for a water permit?

- Property information
- Name of City of New Bedford Bonded Contractor
- Building Permit
- Foundation as-built if applicable
- Signed permission slip if the applicant is not the property owner on record. If property purchased within six months a copy of the deed will be required.
- Site plan (specific site plan requirements vary by project and scope of work)
- Flow test results and supporting calculations for sizing of service(s) if applicable (to be specified by the DPI)

What do I need a sewer permit for?

A sewer permit must be filed when installing or repairing a sewer main, structure and/or service connections. A sewer permit allows for work being completed by the Bonded Contractor to be inspected and recorded by the City while ensuring City construction standards are being met.

What documents are required for a sewer permit?

- Property information
- Name of City of New Bedford Bonded Contractor
- Building Permit
- Foundation as-built if applicable
- Signed permission slip if the applicant is not the property owner on record. If property purchased within six months a copy of the deed will be required.
- Site plan (specific site plan requirements vary by project and scope of work)

What do I need a drain permit for?

A drain permit must be filed when installing or repairing a new drain main, structure and/or service connections. A drain permit allows for work being completed by the Bonded Contractor to be inspected and recorded by the City while ensuring City construction standards are being met.

A drain permit is a separate permit from the stormwater management permit, see stormwater management permit sections for more information.

What documents are required for a drain permit?

- Property information
- Name of City of New Bedford Bonded Contractor
- Building Permit
- Foundation as-built if applicable
- Signed permission slip if the applicant is not the property owner on record. If property purchased within six months a copy of the deed will be required.
- Site plan (specific site plan requirements vary by project and scope of work)

What do I need a stormwater management permit application for?

A stormwater management permit (SMP) must be filed when completing new development and redevelopment projects that are not exempt from the Stormwater Rules and Regulations (SMRR) and City Ordinance Chapter 16, Article VIII – Stormwater Management. The following are examples of projects that require a SMP:

- New Development Projects
- Redevelopment Projects
 - Construction of a garage or accessory building over 500 square feet
 - An addition over 500 square feet
 - Resurfacing of commercial driveways or parking lots
 - Roofing projects over 4,000 square feet
 - New residential driveways or existing residential driveways that are being extended beyond the existing footprint

A stormwater management permit allows for work being completed by the contractor to be inspected and recorded by the City while ensuring City construction standards and conditions of the permit approval are being met.

What documents are required for a stormwater management permit application?

- Property information
- Name of Contractor
- Building Permit
- Foundation as-built if applicable
- Signed permission slip if the applicant is not the property owner on record. If property purchased within six months a copy of the deed will be required.
- A stormwater management plan stamped by a professional engineer registered in the state of Massachusetts
- Stormwater calculations and test pit/soils evaluation results
- Stormwater Operations and Maintenance Plan
- Other materials may be required to support site specific design and/or requests

What do I need a DPI sidewalk/driveway permit for?

A sidewalk/driveway permit must be filed with the DPI when working on driveways or sidewalks in the City Right of Way. A sidewalk/driveway permit allows for work being completed by the Bonded Contractor to be inspected and recorded by the City while ensuring City construction standards and other regulatory agency's regulations are being met.

What documents are required for a DPI sidewalk/driveway permit?

- Property information
- Name of City of New Bedford Bonded Contractor
- Building Permit
- Foundation as-built if applicable
- Signed permission slip if the applicant is not the property owner on record. If property purchased within six months a copy of the deed will be required.
- Site plan (specific site plan requirements vary by project and scope of work)

NOTE: Commercial curb cuts or commercial curb cut alterations require approval from the Traffic Commission. The application process for these permits begins at the DPI. The applicant must submit a driveway permit application with the DPI with a site plan and supporting documents. The DPI reviews the application and either provides feedback for revision to the applicant or sends the application to the Traffic Commission

to be added to the next meeting's agenda. Hearings are scheduled by the Traffic Commission. The applicant or representative of the applicant is required at the hearing.

What do I need a trench permit for?

A trench permit must be filed when excavating a trench that is not in the City Right of Way that will be equal to or greater than 3 feet deep.

What documents are required for a trench permit?

- Property information
- Name of Contractor
- Hoisting License and Insurance Information
- Sketch of proposed work zone

What other reviews might be required for my project?

Department of Inspectional Services - the issuing body for building permits, as well as certificates of inspection and electrical, plumbing, gas and mechanical permits.

Historical review - buildings in historic districts (Bedford Landing-Waterfront Historic District) require review from the Historical Commission, which meets on the first Monday of the month (applications must be submitted 21 days in advance). Demolition of structures older than 75 years in age also requires historical review.

Conservation review - buildings within conservation areas (within 100 feet of wetlands) will require review from the Conservation Commission, which meets on the first and third Tuesdays of the month (applications must be submitted 12 days in advance).

Planning review - for new developments and any projects involving site plans, the Planning Board will need to review plans - see the planning board website for details on meetings and deadlines.

Zoning review - projects with zoning relief, variances, special permits, signs, comprehensive permits, and administrative appeals require review from the Zoning Board. See the zoning board website for meeting times and deadlines.

Traffic Commission review – commercial driveway curb cuts require approval from the Traffic Commission after being reviewed by the DPI.

Licensing Board - any project for car dealers, auto body repairs, motels/hotels, food service establishments, entertainment, or buying or selling alcoholic beverages require approval from the Licensing Board. The board meets on the fourth Monday of the month (applications required 21 days in advance).

Where can I find more information about the requirements for storm water permits?

Several resources are available to provide more information about storm water permitting and examples of low impact development and green infrastructure designs.

- The Stormwater Rules and Regulations, the regulation manual developed in compliance with Chapter 16, Article VIII of the City of New Bedford Code of Ordinances, can be found at: <https://www.newbedford-ma.gov/public-infrastructure/wastewater/stormwater/>
- The City of New Bedford Green Infrastructure Master Strategy and Implementation Roadmap, a guide for retrofitting green infrastructure in heavily developed areas and a plan for City-wide implementation of green infrastructure, can be found at: <https://nbresilient.com/category/green-infrastructure>
- The New England Stormwater Retrofit Manual, a guide for meeting practicable compliance with local, state and federal regulations when full compliance can not be met, can be found at: <https://snepnetwork.org/stormwater-retrofit-manual/>

What is the City of New Bedford Construction Standards and Specifications?

The City of New Bedford Department of Public Infrastructure Construction Standards and Specifications Manual (DPI Spec Book) is a regulatory manual developed by the DPI for all work being completed in the City Right of Way and on City-owned utilities. The manual is reviewed annually and updated as required. Bonded contractors are provided updated versions of the manual with a summary of revisions at the time of bond renewal.

What if I've already started a project without a permit?

Starting work without a permit may incur you fines for each day since the start of the project. Further, you may be ordered to remove some or all completed work if its found

to violate state or city/state laws/codes. This is applicable to projects with permits currently pending.

If you've begun a project without receiving a permit, stop immediately and submit a permit to DPI and DIS via OpenGov.

What are access requirements for persons with disabilities?

The DPI Spec Book includes the Massachusetts Architectural Access Board (MAAB) and The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Compliance Regulations. Any work being completed on sidewalks, curb ramps and/or driveways is required to meet the standards set forth in MAAB, ADA and the DPI Spec Book and will be inspected by the DPI post construction for compliance.

Does my DPI permit have an expiration date?

Expiration dates are provided on the permit at time of issuance. In general DPI:

- Water, sewer, drain, sidewalk/driveway stormwater management permits are valid for one year from date of issuance.
- Trench permits are valid for three months from the date of issuance.

How do I determine whether a structure is located in a residential or commercial zone?

You may consult the Zoning Map provided on the City of New Bedford website at <https://www.newbedford-ma.gov/maps/> to determine which zone your proposed project is within.

Can I speak with an inspector or engineer before I start a new project?

Yes - we strongly encourage potential applicants to contact the DPI Engineering Division before applying for a permit, and as early on in the process as possible, to prevent unnecessary or unexpected delays from an incomplete application.

What factors are considered when my permit application is reviewed?

DPI will review the applications to ensure compliance in all submitted plans with both local and state laws, as well as any city ordinances.

What will it cost to take out a permit?

Refer to the most recent fee schedule available at the DPI.