

# Demolition Permits

## WHEN TO GET A DEMOLITION PERMIT

A permit is required to demolish any building within the City of Tacoma, except for residential sheds that are 200 square feet or less and located at least 6 feet from other structures. Demolition permits can be applied for online at: [www.tacomapermits.org/apply-for-a-permit](http://www.tacomapermits.org/apply-for-a-permit).

## SITE PLAN

In order to get a permit, you must submit a site plan with the application. The site plan must show each building on the property, each building to be demolished, and each building to remain. For assistance with preparing a simple site plan, please see [Tip Sheet G-205](#).

## SEPA

Demolition of a building greater than 12,000 square feet requires an environmental review under the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA). Re-contouring a site, work within a critical area, and removal of underground tanks are also common SEPA triggers. For a comprehensive list, refer to the Washington Administrative Code (WAC) 197-11-800. See [Tip Sheet L-1200](#) outlines the SEPA process.

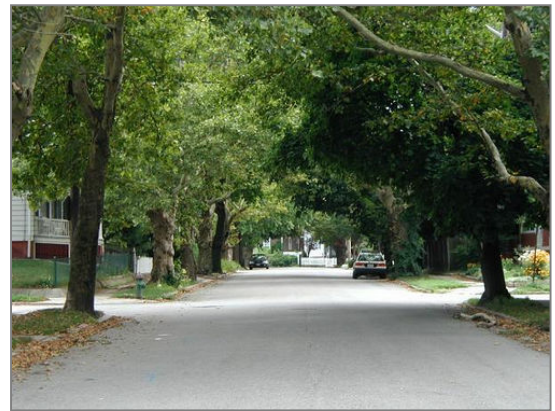
## TREES

Private Property – Removal of a tree from a Critical Area, as defined by Tacoma Municipal Code (TMC) 13.11, may require a permit. For multiple trees, a clearing and grading permit may be needed. Removal of just one or a couple of trees from private property that is not classified as a Critical Area, may not require a permit. If trees are to be retained on site the Stormwater Management Manual (SWMM) tree protection requirements must be followed during the demolition.

Right-of-way – A permit is required to remove trees that are located in the City right-of-way. Applying for a tree removal permit can be done online through the Tacoma Permits (ACA) portal: <https://aca.accela.com/tacoma/>. There is no fee associated with a tree permit for removal of trees within the right-of-way unless the permit is requested for the purpose of view enhancement which requires a separate application form. Please note that a [Right-of-Way Bond](#) is required to do work in the city right-of-way. This requirement can be waived if the work abuts a Single-Family Dwelling and the property owner provides a copy of the home owner's insurance with the application.



A permit is required to demolish any building, except for residential sheds smaller than 200 square feet



A permit is required for removal of trees within the right-of-way

## SURFACE WATER

All demolition projects of any size must practice temporary erosion and sedimentation controls. Information on temporary erosion and sediment control can be found in Volume 2 of the City of Tacoma Stormwater Management Manual (SWMM). If a project disturbs an area of 7,000 square feet or more, a Construction Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) is required to be reviewed and approved by Environmental Services. Site disturbance includes all areas to be demolished (including buildings, pavement removal, removal of other constructed features), areas of clearing, areas of grading and excavation, and any other alteration of the site features. A SWPPP short form may be used for projects disturbing less than one acre.



*Note: This Tip Sheet does not substitute for codes and regulations.*

*The applicant is responsible for compliance with all codes and regulations, whether or not described in this document.*

**More information: City of Tacoma, Planning and Development Services | [www.tacomapermits.org](http://www.tacomapermits.org) (253) 591-5030**

To request this information in an alternative format or a reasonable accommodation, please call 253-591-5030 (voice).

TTY or STS users please dial 711 to connect to Washington Relay Services.

# Demolition Permits

Sites where demolition occurs must be stabilized after disturbance. The method of stabilization shall be indicated on the submitted site plan.

All site utilities are required to be properly abandoned. All site utilities should be shown on the site plan submitted at the time of application for a demolition permit.

Based on the specific project scope, additional information may be required for approval of demolition.

**For questions regarding temporary erosion and sedimentation control for demolition activities, contact Environmental Services at (253) 591-5218 or [stormandsewer@cityoftacoma.org](mailto:stormandsewer@cityoftacoma.org).**



Any proposed demolition of structures that appear to be located within 300 feet of a critical area will be looked at by an Environmental Specialist.

Asbestos pipe fittings



## CRITICAL AREAS

Any proposed demolition of structures that appear to be located within 300 feet of a critical area (wetlands, streams, fish and wildlife habitat conservation areas, including marine waters) will be looked at by an Environmental Specialist to determine if further review or permitting is needed. All critical areas and buffers should be identified on the site plan for review and potential permitting. If the Environmental Specialist can determine that the proposed demolition is not located within a critical area or associated buffer, no further action is needed. The demolition of structures within a critical area or associated buffer requires a letter of exemption from the City, pursuant to TMC 13.11.140.B.12. The letter exemption process generally takes 30-45 days for approval and can be conditioned. Re-contouring a site, planting, removing vegetation, placing stabilizing structures or similar actions may require additional review and/or permitting.

## ASBESTOS

In the past, asbestos was used in many building materials because of its unique qualities. It is heat resistant, corrosion resistant, fire resistant, strong, flexible, and doesn't conduct electricity. Asbestos has since been found to cause serious health problems if handled improperly.

All applicants for demolition permits are required by state law to have an AHERA-certified building inspector survey the structure for asbestos prior to the start of work, and submit a Notice of Intent to the Puget Sound Clean Air Agency. All asbestos must be removed by a certified asbestos worker prior to start of demolition. This applies to all structures, including mobile homes, with greater than 120 square feet of roof area. Asbestos notifications can only be submitted or amended online, through the Puget Sound Clean Air Agency website (<https://secure.pscleanair.org/asbestos/>). For additional information: [www.pscleanair.org](http://www.pscleanair.org).

## STRUCTURAL HAZARDS

Any proposed demolition must be approved before issuance of the demolition permit and inspected after the demolition takes place. Review and inspection will need to ensure that there are no remaining hazards caused by a demolition. For instance, when demolishing a building with a basement the basement should be filled afterwards, and in partial demolitions the structural integrity of the building will need to be preserved.

## UTILITIES

Contact appropriate agencies to disconnect utilities prior to demolition. Any abandoned sewer lines must be capped and inspected.

## RESOURCES

- WAC Chapter: [197-11 SEPA Rules](#)
- Tacoma Municipal Code [2.02 - Building Code](#), [13.12 - Environmental Code and 13.11 Critical Areas](#), [9.18, 9.19, and 9.20 – Trees and Shrubs](#)
- Puget Sound Clean Air Agency [www.pscleanair.org](http://www.pscleanair.org)
- Puget Sound Energy [www.pse.com](http://www.pse.com)
- Tacoma Public Utilities (TPU) [www.mytpu.org](http://www.mytpu.org)
- [Stormwater Management Manual](#)



*Note: This Tip Sheet does not substitute for codes and regulations.*

*The applicant is responsible for compliance with all codes and regulations, whether or not described in this document.*

**More information: City of Tacoma, Planning and Development Services | [www.tacomapermits.org](http://www.tacomapermits.org) (253) 591-5030**

To request this information in an alternative format or a reasonable accommodation, please call 253-591-5030 (voice).

TTY or STS users please dial 711 to connect to Washington Relay Services.