



Over the Counter Permits and Express Plan Check

The Planning Department is providing over the counter permits and express plan check services.

Verify hours [online](#). This service is normally available Monday-Thursday 8:00 am – 11:30 am and 1:00 pm – 3:30 pm.

Appointment requests can be made by email (Planning.BuildingInfo@santacruzcounty.us) by including “appointment” in the email subject line.

Note: Some projects located in the coastal appealable area may not be eligible for this type of processing.

WUI: Santa Cruz County has amended the CA Codes in SRA areas. WUI compliance is required as described at [Wildland Urban Interface](#).

Over the Counter Permits

- [ePermit](#): Contractors and Homeowners can process, pay & print permit cards online instantly! Most projects meeting the over-the-counter (OTC) criteria, that do not require plan review, can be processed using ePermit. Please submit an online account request at ePermit.
- Reroofs, window change outs, siding, sheetrock, small remodels with no alteration of walls.
- *Residential Decks (less than 30 inches above grade, requires a site plan and zoning.)
- Electrical (Service upgrades, repairs, residential rewiring, septic pumps, etc.) For Electrical Service Upgrades, read these [Guidelines](#) .
- Plumbing (Water heaters, re-piping, fixture replacement, repairs, etc.)
- Mechanical; Furnaces, Air conditioning units, wall heaters, wood stoves, ducting, etc. Energy compliance documents required for alterations to mechanical systems.
- [Electrical Vehicle Charging Systems](#)
- Demolition (Not Commercial)
- Special Inspections

Express Plan Check [Effective November 1, 2020: All Express Plan Check permits are required to use [ePlan](#)]

Staff will designate Express Plan Check for all applications meeting the criteria, it is not a request item. Express Plan Checks are normally completed within 30 days or less, depending on current workload.

- *Small sheds, gazebos, trellises, patio covers, sunrooms, greenhouses not more than 500 sq. ft.
- *Decks over 30” above grade.
- *Residential remodels not more than 500 sq. ft. with altered walls.
- Residential roof mounted photovoltaic (PV) systems. *Residential ground mounted PV systems.
- [Expedited Permitting for Solar Photovoltaic](#)
- Solar roof mounted hot water systems. *Solar ground mounted hot water systems
- *Small residential additions not more than 250 sq ft that do not require a soils report.
- Small tenant improvements not more than 1,500 sf with no structural alterations, no change of occupancy or increased occupant load, and includes only minor mechanical, electrical and/or plumbing alterations.

This is how it works

- If your project is on septic and your footprint is increasing or there’s a bedroom being added you must show the septic system on the site plan.
- Pay with cash or check, or credit card. You will pay two fees: the submittal fee and then the issuance fee when your plans are approved.
- Increases in the scope of work will require an additional permit.

***If in a coastal area or project is multi-family, a zoning and/or plan check review is required.**

Please note that if your project is located in a FEMA Flood Zone (A, AE, AO, AH, V, or VE), you must submit the substantial improvement forms found in “[Environmental](#)” in order to obtain your permit.