



# The Town of Richlands, Virginia

## 200 Washington Square

### Richlands, VA 24641

## DO I NEED A ZONING PERMIT?

**PLEASE NOTE:** For questions about any potential projects consult our Zoning Department at phone number 276-964-4856.

**Zoning Approval** -Exterior projects may require approval from the Town of Richlands Zoning Department, whether or not a Building Permit is required from Tazewell County. Zoning approval is always required before construction of principal buildings and accessory structures/buildings such as decks, additions, garages, carports, retaining walls, fences, hot tubs and swimming pools. Zoning approval is also required for some accessory uses, such as a secondary food preparation area (i.e. a wet bar and/or food warming kitchen) in a basement. You are urged to contact the Tazewell County Building Department at 276-385-1215 if you have any questions on building requirements.

**Building Code** -All jurisdictions in Virginia are required to use the Uniform Statewide Building Code (VUSBC). The state adopts the national model codes, with amendments, for use statewide so that everyone is subject to the same regulations. The applicable codes that are used for home improvement projects can be found on the VUSBC (Virginia Uniform Statewide Building Code) Web page. You may also obtain code and other helpful information from the Building Department.

**Permits Always Required** -A permit is always required for most all **commercial work** and the following work:

- Porches or decks where the floor is 16.5 inches or more above the finished grade
- Accessibility Upgrades (i.e. temporary ramps, permanent ramps, grab bars, widening doors and existing interior openings, wheelchair lifts)
- Additions
- Garages or carports
- Finishing your basement
- Secondary food preparation area-wet bar and/or food warming kitchen
- Residential accessory buildings (sheds)
- Any barrier/ fence used for pedestrian safety or for a swimming pool
- All retaining walls supporting more than three feet of unbalanced fill
- Retaining wall of any height that supports a surge from a structure above (walls, roads, driveways, sidewalks, etc.)
- In-ground or above-ground swimming pools or spas impounding more than two feet of water, greater than150 square feet, and greater than 5,000 gallons
- Removing or altering any structural (support) members and any work involving alterations to the house plumbing, electrical, or heating and air conditioning(mechanical) systems
- Installing a lawn irrigation system (permit required for backflow device)

- Installing a prefabricated fireplace, insert, or woodstove
- Installation or replacement of doors and/or windows when structural alterations are made or required
- Installing a new electrical circuit or wire replacement
- New appliances in a new location and upgraded appliances requiring electrical, plumbing, or mechanical systems upgrades
  
- Privacy fences
  
- Concrete or masonry walls provided such walls do not exceed six feet in height
  
- Flagpoles
  
- Accessory Structures (Privacy Fences, Storage Buildings and Garages)
  
- Carports
  
- Concrete or Masonry Wall
  
- Signs
  
- Home Occupations
  
- Temporary Construction or Sales Office Trailers
  
- Ponds and Major Landscape Installations
  
- Any accessory structure (privacy fences, storage buildings, etc.)
  
- Any changes in a floodplain area

**Zoning Permits Not Required** -Remember that although some work is not subject to zoning permit requirements, the work must be performed in a manner meeting code requirement. The following work does not require building permits, or is classified by the code as "ordinary repair"

- Replacing windows and doors with windows and doors of similar operating and opening dimensions that do not require changes to the existing framed opening
- Re-glazing (glass replacement in the existing windows)
- Installation or replacement of cabinetry or trim
- Installation or replacement of floor finishes
- Painting (interior or exterior) and wallpapering
- Replacing gutters or downspouts
  
- Replacing existing plumbing fixtures (water closets, tubs, sinks, garbage disposals, etc.) where no alteration to the supply or drain/waste/vent systems are involved
- Installation of low-voltage wiring (under 50volts-doorbell, landscape lights or security system)
- Replacing existing light fixtures
- Replacing existing electrical appliances when replaced in the same location with units of similar capacity where no alteration to the electrical circuit is involved
- Replacing an electrical water heater with the same size heater in the same location
- Replacing an electric furnace, heat pump, or air conditioning condensing unit with the same type unit in the same location
- Repairing air-conditioners or furnaces by installing replacement parts
- Anything that is classified by the code as "ordinary repair"