



Information Guide

The purpose of the Albemarle County Building Regulations is to promote and to protect the public health, safety and welfare by making the Virginia Uniform Statewide Building Code applicable to all matters affecting or relating to structures, including the construction, alteration, repair, addition, demolition and removal of all structures, and to the equipment in such structures.

[When do I need a building permit?](#)



To learn more about the documents required for your application, please click on an item below.

1. [Accessory Apartment Information](#)
2. [Accessory Structure Setback Requirements in Residential Zoning Districts](#)
3. [Approved Site Plan](#)
4. [BTEX – Testing your well for Benzene, Toluene, Ethylbenzene, and Xylenes](#)
5. [Building Plans](#)
6. [Certificate of Flame Resistance \(Tents\)](#)
7. [Change of Building Occupancy](#)
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22. [Third-Party Inspection Policy](#)

1. **Accessory Apartment Information:** An accessory apartment is a self-contained dwelling unit either added to or created within a single-family residence. The gross floor area allocated to the accessory apartment must not exceed 35% of the total gross floor area of the primary structure. [The Accessory Apartment Application](#)* must be completed and submitted.
2. **Accessory Structure Setback Information:** All accessory structures need building permits to verify location and structure size. To learn more about the setback requirements, please [click here](#)*.
3. **Approved Site Plan:** A site plan is defined as a plan satisfying the requirements of second 32 of the Albemarle County Code that delineates the overall scheme of development of one or more lots including, but not limited to, grading, engineering design, construction details and survey data for existing and proposed improvements. Before the building permit can be issued, the site plan must be approved. If you do not have access to the site plan, please email applicationservices@albemarle.org. In your message, please indicate that you are unable to locate the approved site plan and include the address.
4. **BTEX:** For a structure to be located within an active contamination area and to be served by a private ground water well as the primary potable water supply the well shall be tested for the presence of Benzene, Toluene, Ethylbenzene, and Xylenes. For information regarding testing, please [click here](#)*.
5. **Building Plans:** A set of drawings and specifications that outline the design, layout, and construction details of this project.
 - ❖ [Residential Permit Application Checklist](#)* – this checklist outlines the essential requirements for residential applications
 - ❖ [Deck Brochure](#)*
 - ❖ [Prefab Sheds and Engineered Carport Footing and Slab Details](#)*
 - ❖ [Advisory Determination of Use – Accessory Structure – Residential Solar Panels](#)*
 - ❖ [Typical Finished Basement Details](#)*
 - ❖ [Fire Rated Drywall Assembly Construction](#)*
6. **Certificate of Flame Resistance (Tent):** This certification ensures compliance with fire safety standards.
7. **Change of Building Occupancy:** To determine whether the proposed change of occupancy requires stamped engineered drawings, please refer to page 18 of the [Special Inspections Guidelines and Procedures Packet](#)*.
8. **Critical Resource Map:** A critical resource map visually identifies essential resources in a specific area. Please visit [Albemarle County's GIS system](#)*. Enter the address or parcel ID/short parcel ID and click "Search." Once the parcel loads, select "Maps" from the left-hand side of the screen. Under "Map Themes," choose "Critical Resource Plan" from the drop-down menu and refresh the map. Right-click on the parcel, select "Save Image As," title your map, and click, "Save."

9. **Critical Resource Plan:** Building permit applicants whose properties are not located within a common plan area zoning district will be required to submit a plan that demonstrates compliance with both the zoning ordinance and the water protection ordinance. For more information regarding this plan please [click here](#)*
10. **Engineered Stamped Drawings:** A set of drawings prepared and stamped by a Registered Design Professional. A Registered Design Professional is defined as an architect or professional engineer licensed to practice architecture or engineering in accordance with [§54.1-400 of the Code of Virginia](#)*
11. **Farm Building:** Farm buildings are typically exempt from the building code; however, a zoning permit is still required. To obtain this permit, the property owner(s) must complete [The Affidavit for the Use of an Accessory Structure](#)* affidavit and have it notarized. Since farm buildings are exempt from the building code, you may provide your electric company with the [Exemption of Farm Buildings or Structures Form](#)* to supply the structure with electricity.
12. **Health Department for New Dwellings:** If you selected well and/or septic for water and sewage, please provide us with a copy of your OSE Construction Permit. If you need to obtain a copy or apply for this permit, please contact the Virginia Department of Health (VDH) by calling 434-972-6219, emailing cahdeh@vdh.virginia.gov, or visiting their office at 1138 Rose Hill Drive for assistance. *(BTEX may be required. To view more information pertaining to BTEX, please [click here](#)*
13. **Health Department Info for non-dwelling structures:** If you selected well and/or septic for water and sewage, you must obtain approval from the Virginia Department of Health (VDH), for all new construction and repairs, including but not limited to, decks, porches, accessory structures, solar systems, retaining walls additions, additional bedrooms, and swimming pools. Please contact VDH to complete the required SAP form. You can reach them by calling 434-972-6219, emailing cahdeh@vdh.virginia.gov, or visiting their office at 1138 Rose Hill Drive for assistance.
14. **Health Department Information regarding New Wells for New Dwellings (Groundwater/Assessment Completion):** If you selected well and/or septic for water and sewage and the parcel is under 21 acres, a copy of the well log, approved by the Virginia Department of Health (VDH), must be submitted. You can reach them by calling 434-972-6219, emailing cahdeh@vdh.virginia.gov, or visiting their office at 1138 Rose Hill Drive for assistance.
 - ❖ If this parcel has an existing well and septic system, please provide the SAP documentation indicating that the septic system is adequate for accommodating the additional bedrooms.
15. **Material Data Sheets:** Specifications that provide detailed information about the features, capabilities, and requirements of the system.
 - ❖ [ACSA Fire Main Flushing and Testing Process](#)*
16. **Proof of Utility Cut Off:** A letter from the utility company confirming the power has been disconnected.

- 17. Recorded Plat:** A plat is a representation of land boundaries surveyed by a licensed land surveyor. To be legally recognized by the County, this plat must be recorded in the Office of the Clerk of the Circuit Court. The plat should display the Deed Book and Page number, as well as the location of the proposed structure(s) and their distances to the parcel boundaries. **(Note: GIS web printouts are not accepted as recorded plats.)** If you do not have a recorded plat for your parcel, you can obtain one through the Clerk's Office. You can contact them at (434)-972-4083, or visit them at 501 East Jefferson Street, Charlottesville, VA 22902-5110.
- 18. Retaining Walls:** Retaining walls that measure over four feet in height require [Stamped Engineered Drawings](#). For retaining walls containing stacked blocks, a [Special Inspection Report*](#) is required.
- 19. Schematics Auto/Pool Cover:** Schematics, or manufacturer specifications for an automatic pool cover refer to detailed diagrams or drawings that illustrate the design, components, and layout of the pool cover system.
- 20. Site Plan/ Location Sketch:** On the copy of the recorded plat, please indicate the location of the proposed structure(s). Ensure that you also include the setbacks from the property lines to the structure(s).
- 21. Surveyor's Worksheet:** The Zoning Administrator has found in some cases additional information is necessary to review the building permit application. For more information regarding a surveyor's worksheet or a certified survey, please [click here*](#).
- 22. Third-Party Inspection Policy:** All third-party inspectors must be pre-approved by the building official prior to acceptance perform third-party inspections. For more information regarding this policy, please [click here*](#).

For assistance and questions regarding this document, please contact
applicationservices@albemarle.org.