**HOW DO I KNOW IF I NEED A BUILDING PERMIT?**

Because Bristol does not have a building inspector, the Town issues a **Land Use Permit** rather than a building permit. Although Bristol does not have an inspector, all building, renovations, etc. **MUST follow the State Building Codes**. Bristol DOES have a permit officer who issues the applicable permit and works with the property owner through to the completion of the project. Also, depending upon the location of the project, it may require specific applications/approvals/permits before ANY work can begin.

Land Use Permits are required for:

* any new construction (including modular and mobile homes)
* remodeling/renovations and/or relocation with a cost of $2,000 or more, this includes changes to flooring materials
* any change of use of an existing structure
* additions or alterations to existing structures (including decks and dormers)
* demolition or relocation of any structure
* installation of any detached structure (including sheds, barns, garages, docks, signs and swimming pools)
* fences that are over six feet tall

Land Use Permits are not required for repairs limited to:

* painting or siding
* re-roofing (with like materials)
* repair of accidental damage that does not involve structural modification
* construction of entry steps
* landscaping, however, it’s important to note property setback guidelines including lot coverage by impervious cover. Also, it’s the law to call DIG Safe \*811 if you, or a contractor, intend to dig on public or private property, so utility and underground facilities can be marked.
* residential paving over existing pavement (A [Driveway Permit](https://www.townofbristolnh.org/highway-department/pages/driveway-permit-information) is required if existing pavement is being replaced or new pavement is added. See [Town of Bristol Driveway Regulations](https://www.townofbristolnh.org/sites/g/files/vyhlif2866/f/uploads/driveway_regulations_-_final_approved_12-8-21.pdf))

The quickest way to determine what type of permit may be needed is to refer to the Permitting and Enforcement section of the Town website or call the Land Use team at 603-744-3354.

<https://www.bristolnh.gov/permitting-and-enforcement>

General information can be found under the Land Use Department or by calling or stopping by the Land Use Department at the Town Office building.

**WHAT IS THE PROCESS FOR OBTAINING A LAND USE (BUILDING) PERMIT?**

The various permitting applications are available on the Permitting and Enforcement page of the Town website, under Permitting Applications, or from the Land Use Department at the Town Office building.

<https://www.bristolnh.gov/permitting-and-enforcement>

Once a **completed** application is received it will be reviewed by various departments (Land Use, Water & Sewer, Highway, Fire Department, etc.) for concerns/comments/conditions. Any concerns raised may need to be addressed before any further review and approval occurs.

Generally, once a completed application is received and does not need to be referred for further action, the permit will be issued in 5-7 business days.

Additional permits may be needed if:

* The property is in one of the Overlay Districts (Shoreland Protection area, Pemigewasset River, or Wetlands Conservation) The Land Use Department can check to see if the property location is in an Overlay District, or you can check the [online map](https://www.axisgis.com/BristolNH/).
  + If the project is for a use not otherwise permitted in an Overlay District, a [Special Use Permit](https://www.townofbristolnh.org/sites/g/files/vyhlif2866/f/uploads/1_special_use_permit_application_-_fillable_1.pdf) must be granted by the Planning Board.
  + Once a Special Use Permit has been approved, then the Land Use Application can move forward and, if the submission is complete, a Land Use Permit will be issued.
* The property is in the Historic District
  + If the proposed project requires renovating the exterior of a building, the property owner may need to receive a [Certificate of Approval](https://www.townofbristolnh.org/sites/g/files/vyhlif2866/f/uploads/coa_application_0.pdf) from the Historic District Commission before receiving their Land Use Permit.
  + Once a Certificate of Approval has been approved, then the Land Use Application can move forward and, if the submission is complete, a Land Use Permit issued.
* If the use of the property or the projected work is not permitted by the Town’s Zoning Ordinance, a Variance would be required. Contact the Land Use team for more details.
* If the use of the property or the projected work is permitted but only by special exception, the owner would need to apply for a Special Exception with the Zoning Board. The Land Use team can assist through this process.