

Some Frequently Asked Questions

What type of building work requires a Permit to Build?

Generally all building work (including fences) requires a Permit to Build before work commences. There are a few exemptions for minor structures such as chain mesh or similar open type fencing, fencing less than 1 metre high and free standing pergolas (not attached to other buildings) and/or shadecloth structures with an area of less than 30 square metres. (If a pergola or shade structure is attached to a building then a Permit to Build is required).

How do I obtain a Permit to Build?

Under private certification introduced in 1993, Permits to Build are issued by registered private building certifiers. Only a registered building certifier can issue a Permit to Build and a Permit to Occupy for the completed work. For a Building Permit you will need to provide the building certifier with:

- i) details of the proposed development (including drawings);
- ii) structural engineer's certification for the structural design; and
- iii) certified plumbing design (for plumbing work).

You may have plans prepared for a building certifier to enable the issue of a Permit to Build, or you may engage a building certifier to provide you with plans, certification and a Permit to Build.

Can I access building plans and records held by the Building Advisory Services Branch?

Yes! But you must be the property owner or have specific written authorisation from the property owner.

What information can I get from the Building Advisory Services Branch?

Copies of applications, drawings, specifications, inspection records, site plans, sewer plans and certificates. No copies of correspondence or advice to or from property owners, status reports etc. All documents are subject to availability and incur a fee.

What is Building Advisory Services Branch's role in the private certification system?

Under the legislation introduced in 1993, Building Advisory Services Branch (BAS) has an advisory, liaison, monitoring and auditing role to ensure compliance with the regulatory system. BAS has no control over private sector functions of costs, charges and other business administrative procedures.

For further information about building rules and regulations contact the Building Advisory Services Branch in your region or visit our website : www.nt.gov.au/building

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Ground Floor, Cavenagh House
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Ph: 8999 8965 or 8999 8966

KATHERINE
1st Floor, Government Centre
First Street
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Ph: 8973 8926

TENNANT CREEK
Transport and Works Building
Leichardt Street
TENNANT CREEK NT 0860

Ph: 8951 9235 (Alice Springs)

ALICE SPRINGS
First Floor, Alice Springs Plaza
Todd Mall / Parsons St
ALICE SPRINGS NT 0870

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What happens with Building Permits or Approvals issued by BAS before the start of private certification?

Building Advisory Services Branch have retained files for authorised building works which started before the introduction of private certification. Please note that some terminology is different to that currently being used, eg approved building work only means that a Building Permit has been issued. It does not mean that periodical inspections were carried out or that a Certificate of Completion or a Certificate of Occupancy was issued. Also, the building file is still active where a Certificate of Completion or Certificate of Occupancy has not been issued.

What is my position where Building Advisory Services Branch have identified unauthorised building work (ie without a Building Permit or Permit to Build) on my property?

Regardless of whether the building work was recently started or has been in existence for many years, the building work is unauthorised. In these cases it is necessary for the property owner to either:

- i) Have the building work assessed for compliance with all relevant legislation and obtain a post construction Permit to Build from a Building Certifier; or
- ii) Demolish or remove the building.

Immediately following i) or ii) above to :

Notify Building Advisory Services Branch of the action taken so that records can be adjusted and to avoid follow-up procedures and possible legal action.

Plumbing Information

Can I obtain a sewer plan for my property?

Yes! This request may come from an owner, a plumber engaged in maintenance or renovation works, an architect or building/plumbing designer, for the purpose of preparing drawings for alterations/additions to a building, or from a real estate agent obtaining information for a status report.

Building Advisory Services Branch do not have records of the location of water supply pipes, stormwater drains, electrical or telephone cabling or other underground services.

Who may carry out plumbing and drainage work?

Only a plumber and drainer licensed by the Plumbers and Drainers Licensing Board. For certification purposes plumbers and drainers must be registered with the Building Practitioners Board.

How do I obtain approval for plumbing and drainage work?

A certifying plumber or designer must be engaged to prepare the relevant drawings. If no other building work is involved, the certifying plumber must submit the relevant drawings to Building Advisory Services Branch for auditing and filing.

If other building works are involved in the project the certifying plumber must submit the plumbing design to the private building certifier who is doing the full certification work.

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