

As at 29/03/2010

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### What type of building work requires the issue of a Building Permit?

Generally, all building work including fences requires the issue of a Building Permit before work starts. 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/structures) and/or shade cloth structures having an area of less than 30 m<sup>2</sup>. If a pergola or shade structure is attached to a building then a Building Permit is required.

### How do I obtain a Building Permit to allow me to carry out building work

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

- Details of the proposed development (including drawings);
- Structural engineer's certification for the structural design; and
- Certified plumbing design for any plumbing work).

You may choose to have plans prepared for submission to a Building Certifier to enable the issue of a Building Permit, or you may engage a Building Certifier to provide you with plans, certification and a Building Permit.

For more details, see

*Fact Sheet 1: How do I get a Building Permit?*

*Fact Sheet 5: What is a Self-Certifier?*

### Can I access building plans and records for my property held by Building Advisory Services Branch?

The owner of the property or someone authorised by the property owner may access the file. You will be required to show proof of identity and authorisation before accessing the file.

### What information can I get from Building Advisory Services Branch records?

Copies of applications, drawings, specification, inspection records, site plans, sewer plans and certificates, but not correspondence or advice to or from property owners, status reports or other documents. All documents are subject to availability from the building files and a fee will be charged for photocopying.

### What role does Building Advisory Services Branch play in the private certification system?

Under the legislation introduced in 1993, Building Advisory Services Branch have an advisory, liaison, monitoring and auditing role to ensure the regulatory system is being complied with. Building Advisory Services Branch has no control over the private sector costs, charges and other business administrative procedures.

### Do I need a building permit if I am replacing the roof on my house, shed etc?

Yes. You should contact a building certifier for assistance.

**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](http://www.nt.gov.au/building)**

#### DARWIN

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

Building Advisory Services Branch has retained files for authorised building works which started before the introduction of private certification. Some terminology is different from that currently in use, eg approved building work only means that a Building Permit was issued. It does not mean that periodical inspections were carried out that a Certificate of Completion or an Occupancy Permit has been issued. In addition, the building file is still active where a Completion Certificate or Certificate of Occupancy has not been issued.

### What is my position when unauthorised building work on my property is identified by Building Advisory Services Branch? (Work carried out without a Building Permit/Permit to Build).

Regardless of whether the building work was recently started, constructed or has been in existence for many years, the building work is unauthorised. In this case the property owner must:

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

Immediately following either of the above, notify Building Advisor Services Branch of the action taken so that records can be adjusted and to avoid follow-up procedures and possibly legal action.

### Plumbing Information

#### Can I obtain a copy of a sewer plan for my property?

This information may be obtained by an owner, a plumber engaged in maintenance or renovation work, an architect or building/plumbing designer, for the purpose of preparing drawings for alterations/additions to a building, or by a real estate agent obtaining information for a status report.

Building Advisory Services Branch does 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/or drainer licensed by the Plumbers & Drainers Licensing Board and, for certification purposes, the plumber/drafter must be registered with the Building Practitioners Board.

#### What is the procedure to obtain approval for plumbing and drainage work?

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

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

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