



Was your home flooded? Do you need a permit?

Item	Permit Required
Remove & replace carpet & padding	No
Remove & replace drywall	No
Remove & replace cabinets	No
Remove & replace wood trim	No
Replacing light fixtures or outlets	No
Replacing kitchen appliances that plug-in	No
Replacing kitchen appliances that are hard-wired	Yes
Replacing or adding electrical wiring	Yes
Replacing electrical panels	Yes
Replacing overhead electrical services	Yes
Removing & replacing plumbing fixtures & faucet's	No
Moving or replacing sewer & water lines	Yes
Replacing wood studs in wall (no-load bearing)	No
Replacing wood studs in wall (load-bearing)	Yes
Clearing sewer blockages or repairing leaks	No
Replacing wet insulation	No
Painting, wallpaper, or tile work	No
Moving or replacing any gas lines	Yes
Disconnecting & reconnecting gas appliances & fixtures	No
Roofing repairs under 100 square feet	No
Roofing repairs over 100 square feet	Yes
Emergency repairs of items requiring permits	Yes-permits required the next business day

You can apply for permits on-line at permits.osceola.org or in person at 1 Courthouse Square, Kissimmee, Florida 34741

As recovery from Hurricane Ian begins over the coming days, we want to remind the community about the risks of unlicensed activity and unpermitted work. During recovery from a storm, reports of improper construction activity generally increase. Don't fall victim to those that may try to take advantage of a bad situation. Osceola County Government advises residents to be wary of unlicensed contractors and to ensure they have the correct permits as they rebuild after a storm.

If you hire an unlicensed contractor and an injury occurs while doing work at your business or house, you will likely sustain the liability. If you wish to sell the home in the future, unpermitted work discovered by a home inspector or title company may prevent your sale or cost you thousands in remediation. Unlicensed work also carries a substantial risk of failing to adhere to building codes, and your home may be more likely to sustain costly damage in the event of a storm or other disaster.

Additionally, most of the complaints Osceola County receives about so-called "contractors" backing out of deals and taking the money and running are almost exclusively among business conducted with an unlicensed contractor.

✉ buildingoffice@osceola.org 🌐 www.permits.osceola.org 🌐 www.osceola.org

1 Courthouse Square, Suite 1400, Kissimmee, FL 34741

📞 (407) 742-0200 📠 (407) 742-0202



OFFICE OF BUILDING SAFETY

Always ensure you have a contract and vet the business, including verifying the contractor license before providing funds. Never enter an agreement with just a handshake; always make sure to have a contract for the work being performed.

Other tips to keep in mind:

- Make sure the contract has the contractor's license number on it and verify that license.
- To verify a contractor license, use these websites: myfloridalicense.com and FastTrack.ocfl.net
- Ensure the name on the license is valid and the license holder qualifies the company they are contracting with.
- Call or email the local permitting authority to verify permitting requirements.
- If it sounds too good to be true, then it probably is.

Unpermitted work can cost property owners thousands of dollars. Whether the intentions are innocent or not, completing work without necessary building permits for repairs and renovations puts current owners, residents, and future owners, at risk. Work completed without a permit may be subject to costly enforcement and fines on the property, not to mention having to have work redone.

In addition, homes with unpermitted work can be difficult to sell and unsafe for habitation. One of the most important things you can do as a property owner to protect your assets is to ensure all work is performed by a licensed contractor and all work that requires a permit gets the correct legal permit.

The Following Information is Provided by the American Red Cross

How Can You Stay Safe After a Flood?

After a Flood:

Let friends and family know you're safe. The American Red Cross can help you [reconnect with family members](#).

- If evacuated, return only when authorities say it is safe to do so.
- Continue listening to local news or a NOAA Weather Radio for updated information and instructions.
- Keep children and pets away from hazardous sites and floodwater.

Caring For Yourself & Loved Ones

- Pay attention to how you and your loved ones are experiencing and handling stress. Promote [emotional recovery](#) by following these tips.
- Do not use water that could be contaminated to wash dishes, brush teeth, prepare food, wash hands, make ice or make baby formula.
- Watch [pets](#) closely and keep them under your direct control.
- Help people who require special assistance—[children](#), [older adults](#), those without transportation, large families who may need additional help in an emergency situation, [people with disabilities](#), and the people who care for them.

✉ buildingoffice@osceola.org 🌐 www.permits.osceola.org 🌐 www.osceola.org

1 Courthouse Square, Suite 1400, Kissimmee, FL 34741

📞 (407) 742-0200 📠 (407) 742-0202



Returning Home Safely

- Beware of snakes, insects and other animals that may be in or around your home.
- If power lines are down outside your home, do not step in puddles or standing water. Report them immediately to the power company.
- Follow these tips for inspecting your [home's structure](#) and [utilities & systems](#) after a flood.
- If any gas or electrical appliances were flooded, don't use them until they have been checked for safety.
- Dispose of any food that has come into contact with flood water.
- Take pictures of home damage, both of the buildings and its contents, [for insurance purposes](#).

Cleaning and Repairing Your Home (Flood Clean Up and Mold Prevention)

Mold prevention should be a primary concern because black mold is likely to start growing within 24 to 48 hours after a house is flooded. Many people are simply focused on the immediate flooding situation not realizing that mold growth can be a much greater health problem and one that can persist long after the initial flood cleanup.

- Wear protective clothing, including rubber gloves and rubber boots, and be cautious when cleaning up.
- Learn more about how to clean up after a flood, including the supplies you'll need, how to sanitize food contact surfaces, and how to repair water damage.
- Be careful when moving furnishings or debris, because they may be waterlogged and heavier.
- Throw out items that absorb water and cannot be cleaned or disinfected. This includes mattresses, carpeting, cosmetics, stuffed animals and baby toys.
- Throw out all food, beverages and medicine exposed to flood waters and mud. When in doubt, throw it out. This includes canned goods, plastic utensils, baby bottle nipples and containers with food or liquid that has been sealed shut.
- Pump out flooded basements gradually (about one-third of the water per day) to avoid structural damage. If the water is pumped out completely in a short period of time, pressure from water-saturated soil on the outside could cause basement walls to collapse.
- Service damaged septic tanks, cesspools, pits, and leaching systems as soon as possible. Damaged sewage systems are health hazards.
- Get all the water out as soon as possible. You should wear protective clothing if possible because the water, mud and debris may have been contaminated by sewerage.
- Remove carpeting, padding, and carpet strips from all flood-affected areas.
- Baseboards should be removed and all drywall should be removed a foot above the waterline.
- Remove all wet insulation.



- Remove all flooded cabinets, appliances, and fixtures
- Items like mattresses, furniture, books, or other personal belongings that can not be washed or disinfected should be thrown away.
- **Successful mold prevention is dependent on removing all porous items where mold can easily grow.**
- **Time is of the essence for mold prevention. Use a shop vac to pull up as much remaining moisture as possible.**
- Clean all remaining items and interior surfaces with hot water and detergent.
- Set up fans and dehumidifiers to get your home dried out as quickly as possible.
- DO NOT TRY TO DRY YOUR HOME OUT BY TURNING THE HEAT ON! Mold grows best at higher temperatures.
- You will not be able to dry things out and lower humidity fast enough to keep up with the accelerated growth rate this will cause.
- Monitor your home closely after the flood clean-up for signs of mold growth because you need to know if additional steps will be required for mold prevention.
- **Flood Clean Up and Mold Prevention Conclusion**
 - Flood damage cleanup and mold prevention are important to prevent long-term health problems.
 - Homeowners should take immediate action to remove all water, mud, and debris from their homes.
 - Carpeting, padding, and carpet strips should be removed from all flood-affected areas.
 - Baseboards and drywall should be removed a foot above the waterline.
 - All wet insulation should be removed. Porous items that can not be washed or disinfected should be thrown away.
 - Fans and dehumidifiers should be set up to get the home dried out as quickly as possible.
 - Homeowners should monitor their homes closely for signs of mold growth after the flood clean-up.
 - If mold growth is found, additional steps will need to be taken for mold prevention.
 - If you had to leave your home, return only when local authorities advise that it is safe to do so. Do not cut or walk past colored tape that was placed over doors or windows to mark damaged areas unless you have been told that it is safe to do so. If a building inspector has placed a color-coded sign on the home, do not enter it until you get more information, advice, and instructions from your local authorities.
 - If you have children, leave them with a relative or friend while you conduct your first inspection of your home after the disaster. The site may be unsafe for children and seeing the damage firsthand may upset them even more and cause long-term effects, including nightmares.

Make a careful and thorough inspection of your home's structural elements:

- Check the outside of your home before you enter. Look for loose power lines, broken or damaged gas lines, foundation cracks, missing support beams or other damage. Damage on the outside can indicate a serious problem inside. Ask a building inspector or contractor to check the structure before you enter.

✉ buildingoffice@osceola.org 🌐 www.permits.osceola.org 🌐 www.osceola.org

1 Courthouse Square, Suite 1400, Kissimmee, FL 34741

📞 (407) 742-0200 📠 (407) 742-0202



OFFICE OF BUILDING SAFETY

- If the door is jammed, don't force it open – it may be providing support to the rest of your home. Find another way to get inside.
- Sniff for gas. If you detect natural or propane gas, or hear a hissing noise, leave the property immediately and get far away from it. Call the fire department after you reach safety.
- If you have a propane tank system, turn off all valves and contact a propane supplier to check the system out before you use it again.
- Beware of animals, such as rodents, snakes, spiders and insects, that may have entered your home. As you inspect your home, tap loudly and often on the floor with a stick to give notice that you are there.
- Damaged objects, such as furniture or stairs, may be unstable. Be very cautious when moving near them. Avoid holding, pushing or leaning against damaged building parts.
- Is your ceiling sagging? That means it got wet – which makes it heavy and dangerous. It will have to be replaced, so you can try to knock it down. Be careful: wear eye protection and a hard hat, use a long stick, and stand away from the damaged area. Poke holes in the ceiling starting from the outside of the bulge to let any water drain out slowly. Striking the center of the damaged area may cause the whole ceiling to collapse.
- Is the floor sagging? It could collapse under your weight, so don't walk there! Small sections that are sagging can be bridged by thick plywood panels or thick, strong boards that extend at least 8–12 inches on each side of the sagging area.
- If the weather is dry, open windows and doors to ventilate and/or dry your home.
- If power is out, use a flashlight. Do not use any open flame, including candles, to inspect for damage or serve as alternate lighting.
- Make temporary repairs such as covering holes, bracing walls, and removing debris. Save all receipts.
- Take photographs of the damage. You may need these to substantiate insurance claims later.

Checking Your Home: Utilities, Systems & Household Items

Once you have evaluated your home's [structural elements](#), the next step is to check the major systems to determine what repairs need to be done before your home is habitable.

Electrical, Plumbing and Heating Systems

If you see sparks, broken or frayed wires, or if you smell hot insulation, turn off the electricity at the main fuse box or circuit breaker.

- If there is a pool of water on the floor between you and the fuse box or circuit breaker panel, use a dry wooden stick to try to reach to turn off the main fuse or breaker, but do not step or stand in water to do that. If you cannot reach the fuse box or breaker panel, call a qualified electrician for assistance.
- Inspect the panel box for any breakers that may have tripped. A tripped breaker may indicate damaged wiring inside your home. Do not turn them on. Call an electrician.
- Use a flashlight to inspect fuses. Replace broken fuses with exactly the same amperage rating and never use an object such as a coin or strip of metal to bypass the protection that fuses provide.

✉ buildingoffice@osceola.org 🌐 www.permits.osceola.org 🌐 www.osceola.org

1 Courthouse Square, Suite 1400, Kissimmee, FL 34741

📞 (407) 742-0200 📠 (407) 742-0202



- If you suspect sewage lines are damaged, avoid using sinks, showers or toilets and call a plumber.
- If water pipes are damaged, turn off the water at the main valve. Call a plumber for assistance.
- If you have a heating oil tank system, turn off all valves and contact a professional specializing in maintenance of such equipment before using it again.

Telephones

Check each telephone to see if it is still on the hook. Hang up any phones that aren't. Wait a few minutes, and then pick up one phone to listen for a dial tone to know whether you have working telephone service.

- If you don't have a dial tone, try unplugging all the phones. Plug in one at a time and listen for dial tone. This will help you determine if the phone itself is broken or the service is completely out. If it is, contact the telephone company to report the problem and request repair.

Other Household Items

Normal household items, such as cleaning products, can cause toxic fumes and other hazards if they mix.

- Spilled chemicals that don't pose a health risk must still be carefully cleaned up. Wear rubber gloves and discard spilled chemicals and rags used for cleaning according to the advice of local authorities.
- Throw away food, beverages and medicine exposed to heat, smoke, or soot. Food that was in the freezer can be used if it still has ice crystals on it. If not, discard it.
- Disconnect and check all appliances for damage before using them.