

Town of Gorham

Code Enforcement Department

Municipal Center Room 143

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ANSWERS TO FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES: Prior to any soil disturbance, all erosion control measures must be installed in accordance with the Maine Department of Environmental Protection Best Management Practices.

BUILDING CODE: All new buildings, including accessory structures, must be built in compliance with the 2009 IRC, 2009 IBC, 2009 IECC and the State of Maine Life Safety Code NFPA101.

BUILDING PERMIT LIFE: After the issuance of a building permit the developer has six (6) months to commence project construction. Construction must be completed within eighteen (18) months from the date of issuance.

CARBON MONOXIDE DETECTORS: Carbon monoxide detectors must be hard wired with a battery back-up. Carbon monoxide detectors must be surface mounted in areas adjacent to bedrooms. Combination smoke/carbon units are allowed.

CHIMNEYS: All chimneys must be constructed to meet the minimum standards of the most current edition of the NFPA 211. Some standards for chimneys, fireplaces, vents and solid fuel burning appliances are as follows:

- Interior chimneys must be constructed with a minimum clearance of two (2") inches from combustible material.
- Exterior chimneys must be constructed with a minimum clearance of one (1") inch from combustible material.
- Metal chimneys are not allowed for any solid fuel appliance.
- Clearance from combustible materials 18" from the smoke pipe

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION (DEP): DEP permits are required for any soil disturbance within one hundred (100') feet of any significant wetland or water body.

DRIVEWAYS: A Driveway Entrance Permit is required in conjunction with a building permit for new house construction. If access to the lot is from a State highway, and the lot is outside the Town of Gorham's compact zone, then a State of Maine Driveway Entrance Permit must be submitted with the Building Permit Application.

EGRESS WINDOWS: The maximum sill height above the finished floor is 44 inches. The net clear opening of the bottom sash must be no less than 5.7 square feet, with a minimum width of 20 inches, and a minimum height of 24 inches.

FIRE SEPARATION: The fire separation wall between a garage and a residential use must be constructed on the garage side. The wall must be 5/8 gypsum with all seams taped and all penetrations sealed. The entrance door must have a one (1) hour fire resistance rating. If the garage is located beneath habitable space, it must be separated with floor and wall assemblies of not less than one (1) hour fire resistance rating. Doors must have a one (1) hour fire resistance rating stamped on the assembly and an automatic closer (the assembly includes frame).

FLOOD ELEVATION: Any construction or reconstruction around lakes, rivers, or streams, may require a "Flood Elevation Survey."

HEAD ROOM: The minimum head room on stairways is six feet and eight inches (6'-8"). The minimum ceiling height for habitable living space is seven (7').feet

INSPECTIONS: Call or visit the Code Enforcement Department for appointments. The following inspections must be scheduled 24 hours in advance:

A. **Foundations:** Call prior to backfilling, when all the metal ties have been removed, when holes have been water plugged and tarred, and when the perimeter drains and rock have been installed.

B. **Subsurface Waster Water System (Septic):** Call prior to backfilling for 1st & 2nd inspections

C. **Sewer Connections (House to the street):** Call prior to backfilling.

ROUGH-IN INSPECTIONS INCLUDE Framing, Rough Electrical & Plumbing, ARE DONE AS ONE INSPECTION.

D. **Framing and Rough Electrical:** Call prior to any insulation and sheetrock being installed.

E. **Plumbing:** Prior to any insulation or sheetrock, and during the inspection, a water test or air test with a relief valve must be done.
(The test must include all basement piping.)

F. **Insulation:** Prior to any sheetrock being installed.

G. **Final Occupancy:** Prior to occupancy of the building, a final inspection must be made and a "Certificate of Occupancy" issued.

RAILING AND GUARDS: Guards must be at least thirty-six (36") inches in height, and the balusters must be placed so that no space is larger than four (4") inches. Guards are required for any opening that is more than thirty (30") inches above ground or floor level, inside or out. Rails are required to be continuous between floors.

SETBACKS: Setback distances vary according to the zoning district. The front setback line is measured from the road right-of-way line.

SIGNS: Prior to placing any sign on property, a Sign Application must be completed by the applicant and approved by the Town. Off premises signs will not be permitted.

SMOKE DETECTORS: Smoke detectors must be hard wired with a battery back-up. All smoke detectors within 20' of a bath with a shower or kitchen must be photo-electric. There must be one smoke detector in each sleeping area and one on each floor level, including basements and garages.

SNOW LOADS: Structure must be built to withstand a snow load of seventy (70) pounds per square foot, including a dead load of twenty-eight (28) pounds per square foot and a live load of forty-two (42) pounds per square foot.

(FROST DEPTH) is 48"

STAIRWAYS: Minimum stair width is three (3') feet. Treads and risers must be constructed as follows:

<u>Commercial</u>	<u>Residential</u>
Risers = 7 inches maximum	Risers = 7 3/4 inches maximum
Tread = 11 inches minimum	Tread = 10 inch minimum

STEEL: Structural Steel design must be certified in writing and stamped by a professional engineer or an architect. Structural steel design must meet or exceed the 2009 IBC.

TRUSSES: Prefabricated trusses must be certified in writing and stamped by a professional engineer or an architect. Prefabricated trusses must meet or exceed the 2009 IBC.

VENTS: Vents must be installed in crawl spaces, attics, dryers and some cook tops. Bathroom ceiling vents must be vented to the outside air so that moisture does not vent into the interior soffits.

WIND LOAD: Structures must be constructed to withstand a wind load of 90 miles per hour.