



EXCAVATION AND GRADING PERMIT
INSTRUCTIONS

City of Palo Alto
Public Works Department
Engineering Division

The purpose of this permit is to provide for safe grading operations, to safeguard life and property, to preserve and enhance the natural environment including the water supply, and to regulate clearing and grading on private property while maintaining stormwater pollution prevention practices.

Why require a permit for grading and excavation?

To provide for safe grading operations, to safeguard life and property, to preserve and enhance the natural environment including the water supply, and to regulate clearing and grading on private property while maintaining stormwater pollution prevention practices.

Do I need to apply for a permit?

Public Works Engineering has created a screening tool which assists in determining whether an Excavation and Grading permit is needed. This tool is based on project-specific information and on the criteria set forth in the Palo Alto Municipal Code (PAMC). Please contact a member of the Public Works Staff at the City's Development Center to arrange for an Excavation and Grading permit screening for your project.

Generally, an Excavation and Grading permit **IS** required:

If you are clearing, grading, filling, excavating, storing or disposing any soil or earth materials, or performing any other land-disturbing activity on a private property.

Exemptions

Generally, an Excavation and Grading permit **IS NOT** required:

For excavations in a public street,
For grading in connection with a public improvement or public work.

An Excavation and Grading permit **IS NOT** required for the following specific activities:

- Excavations for wells, utility pipes and conduits,
- Exploratory excavations made under the direction of a soils engineer,
- Emergency situations posing an immediate danger to life or property,
- If less than 100 cu yds is disturbed, stored, disposed of, or used as fill and the grading activity does not obstruct or modify a drainage course
- If less than 5 cu yds is disturbed, stored, disposed of, or used as fill

For additional exemption conditions, see section 16.28.070 thru 16.28.080 of the Municipal Code.

Exemption from permit requirement does not provide relief from the requirements of Sections 16.28.270 through 16.28.340 of the Municipal Code.

Who should apply for the permit?

The Application for Excavation and Grading is to be completed by the property owner or the property owner's duly authorized representative. Evidence of authorization to represent the property owner is required at permit issuance.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETING THE APPLICATION FOR EXCAVATION AND GRADING

SECTION A – PROPERTY INFORMATION

*****THIS SECTION IS REQUIRED FOR INITIAL APPLICATION SUBMITTAL*****

A1. Identify the property and its location. Enter the building's situs, street or mailing address and the mailing zip code. Do not enter a rural route or post office box number.

A2. Provide the assessor's parcel number (APN) for the property. The APN is available from the City's Development Center at (650) 329-2496.

SECTION B – APPLICANT INFORMATION

*****THIS SECTION IS REQUIRED FOR INITIAL APPLICATION SUBMITTAL*****

B1 – B3. Provide the applicant's contact information.

B4 – B5. Provide the property owner's contact information.

SECTION C – CONTRACTOR INFORMATION

C1 – C4. Identify the Prime Contractor's contact information and Contractor's License Number.

C5. Provide the scope of work that the Prime Contractor will perform.

C6 – C9. Provide the Grading Subcontractor's contact information and Contractor's License Number.

C10. Provide the scope of work that the Grading Subcontractor will perform.

- ✓ **C11.** Check this box if there are additional (more than one) Subcontractors who will be working on the site grading. A separate sheet listing the additional Subcontractors' information as shown in items C6 – C10 shall be attached to the application prior to permit issuance.

SECTION D – SITE MAP AND GRADING PLAN PREPARER INFORMATION

*****THIS SECTION IS REQUIRED FOR INITIAL APPLICATION SUBMITTAL*****

D1 – D3. Provide the site map and grading plan preparer's contact information and professional license number.

SECTION E – EROSION AND SEDIMENT CONTROL PLAN PREPARER INFORMATION

- ✓ Check the first box if the interim and final plans WERE NOT prepared by the same person. A separate sheet with the additional preparer information must be provided.
- ✓ Check the second box if the erosion and sediment control plan preparer IS THE SAME as the site map and grading plan preparer in Section D. If checked, skip to Section F.

E1 – E3. Provide the erosion and sediment control plan preparer's contact information and professional license number.

SECTION F – SOILS REPORT PREPARER INFORMATION

- ✓ Check the first box if the soils engineering and engineering geology reports ARE NOT prepared by the same person and provide the additional information on a separate sheet.
- ✓ Check the second box if the soils report preparer IS THE SAME as the site map and grading plan preparer, Section D, and skip to Section G.

F1 – F3. Provide the soils report preparer's contact information and professional license number.

SECTION G – EXPORTED SOILS RECEIVER INFORMATION

- ✓ Check the first box if NO SOIL will be EXPORTED from the site, and skip to Section H.

G1 – G3. Provide the exported soils receiver contact information.

SECTION H – REQUIRED ATTACHMENTS

*****THIS SECTION IS REQUIRED FOR INITIAL APPLICATION SUBMITTAL*****

Check each box for H1 – H11 to indicate that the required attachments have been submitted.

- ✓ Check this first box if the Building Official or City Engineer has required supplementary information or has waived any of the requirements of this Section and comment below in J3 or attach a separate sheet with explanation.
- ✓ **H1.** Check this box when a vicinity/site map has been prepared and included with the Excavation and Grading permit application.

The site map must contain the following:

- General existing topography of the area within 100 ft of site sufficient to show drainage behavior.

- ✓ **H2.** Check this box when a grading plan has been prepared and included with the Excavation and Grading permit application. *The grading plan must be prepared and signed by an individual licensed or registered by the State of California to perform such work.*

The grading plan must contain all of the following:

- Detailed existing and proposed topography of the site.
- Property lines.
- The location and graphic representation of all existing and proposed natural and manmade drainage features.
- Detailed plans of all surface and subsurface drainage features and protective devices to be constructed, such as pipes, area drains, swales, etc..
- A map showing the drainage area and estimated runoff to be received by each drain; this must be done for existing and proposed site conditions.
- The location and graphic representation of proposed excavations and fills, and of on-site soil storage.

- The location and types of existing vegetation, noting the vegetation that will be left undisturbed.
 - Detailed information (location, species, size, dripline) for all on-site trees as well as neighboring trees that overhang any part of the site, including all public trees within 30 ft of the site.
 - The location of proposed final surface runoff, and erosion and sediment control measures.
 - A list of each of the quantities of soil (in tons and cu yds) excavated, filled, and stored on-site.
 - An outline description of the methods to be used in clearing vegetation and in storing and disposing of the cleared material.
 - Description of the proposed sequence and schedule of excavation, filling, storage, and disposal activities.
 - Location of any structures on-site or (any part) within 15 ft of the property.
 - Construction and material requirements and specifications.
- ✓ **H3.** Check this box when the interim erosion and sediment control and stormwater pollution prevention plan (SWPPP) has been prepared and included with the Excavation and Grading permit application.

With respect to the conditions existing on the site during land-disturbing or filling or storage activities, the interim erosion and sediment control plan and SWPPP must be consistent with the Manual of Standards for Erosion and Sediment Control (by Association of Bay Area Governments, ABAG) and must include:

- Calculations showing maximum surface runoff.
- Description of, and specifications and maintenance schedule for:
 - Sediment control measures.
 - Surface runoff and erosion control measures.
 - Vegetative measures to be used including types of seeds and fertilizers, their application rates, as well as the types and locations of pre-existing vegetation.
 - Measures to prevent storm water pollution from sources such as stockpiles, vehicles, and equipment, paving, painting, etc..

Show all of the above measures on the grading plan.

- Provide cost estimate of implementing and maintaining the above measures (for the duration of the project).
- ✓ **H4.** Check this box when the final erosion and sediment control and stormwater pollution prevention plan (SWPPP) has been prepared and included with the application for Excavation and Grading permit.

With respect to conditions existing after final structures and improvements have been completed, the final erosion and sediment control plan and SWPPP must be consistent with the Manual of Standards and must include:

- Calculations showing maximum surface runoff.
- Provide description of, and specifications for:
 - Sediment retention devices.
 - Surface runoff and erosion control devices.
 - Vegetative measures.

- Measures to improve the quality of storm water runoff from the site including:
 - Grassy swales.
 - Protected dumpster areas and loading docks.
 - Permeable paving materials.
 - Etc.

Show all the above measures on a final erosion and sediment control – SWPPP - plan sheet.

- Provide a cost estimate for implementing the above measures.
- ✓ **H5.** A soils engineering report must be included with the Excavation and Grading permit application. The soils engineering shall be specific to the property and contains information regarding:
- The properties of existing soils.
 - The properties of imported soils, if any.
 - The existing and projected maximum groundwater levels.
 - Recommendations for grading procedures.
 - Recommendations for interim and permanent (final) soils stabilization measures.
 - The adequacy of the site for development.

The information and recommendations contained in this report shall be incorporated into the grading plan and specifications.

- ✓ **H6.** An engineering geology report must be included with the Excavation and Grading permit application. The soils engineering shall be specific to the property and contains information regarding:
- The onsite geology.
 - The effect of geologic conditions on the proposed development.
 - The adequacy of the site for development.
- ✓ **H7.** A detailed construction schedule shall be submitted with the Excavation and Grading permit application. The schedule shall include the following information:
- Descriptions of the proposed site conditions on the following dates: **July 15, August 15, September 15, October 1, and October 15.**
 - Proposed installation schedule for interim erosion and sediment control measures making particular note of the state of installation on the dates mentioned above.
 - The proposed schedule for final improvements and erosion and sediment control measures.
- ✓ **H8.** A map showing the proposed haul routes within the City to be used by all construction traffic to and from the work site.
- ✓ **H9.** A shoring plan for any excavation stamped & signed by a licensed engineer.
- ✓ **H10.** A current copy of the DOSH permit issued to the excavation contractor from the CA State Division of Occupational Safety & Health.
- ✓ **H11.** A Tree Protection plan for all City regulated trees. Please visit our website for more information at: http://www.cityofpaloalto.org/environment/urban_canopy.asp

SECTION I – PERFORMANCE BOND

I1. Check the **YES** or **NO** box to indicate whether the City Engineer has required the posting of a performance bond in conformance with Municipal Code section 16.28.170. If YES is checked, attach the bonding details on a separate sheet. ***The bond must be submitted and approved prior to Excavation and Grading permit issuance.***

The City Engineer has the right to require a performance security, either by bond or deposit, in conjunction with this permit. The bond shall guarantee the performance of the work in the event there is a failure to meet the obligations of this permit, if the work is left incomplete, or if the work would pose a particular hazard.

SECTION J – PROPERTY OWNER (OR OWNER’S REPRESENTATIVE) CERTIFICATION

J1 – J2. The property owner or the property owner’s authorized representative shall print their name and sign and date the application in this area.

J3. This comment area should be used to note additional information or clarification such as any requirements that have been waived (i.e. in Section H), authorized representative letter from the property owner, etc..

SECTION K – FOR CITY USE

K1 – K4. This area is for City use only.

PERMIT CONDITIONS

1. **Fees** – Permit fees will be collected at the time of permit issuance. The fee is based on the current year's Municipal Fee Schedule.
2. **Permit expiration** – An Excavation and Grading permit has a validity period as indicated on the permit. If the permitted activity does not begin within sixty (60) days of the permit issuance, the permit shall expire.
3. **Permit transfer** - A permit may be transferred if certain conditions are met. The proposed transferee must submit an application as well as agree to all conditions imposed by the original permit.
4. **Permit issuance** - The Public Works official shall issue a permit when all conditions have been met (including deposit of appropriate security, if required), all plans have been approved, and required fees have been paid. The permittee shall maintain a copy of the permit and all required and approved reports and plans on the job site and make them available for public inspection during all working hours.
5. **Notification requirements - Notify** the Stormwater Inspector at (650) 329-2430 **72 hours in advance** of the following:
 - Beginning of grading activities.
 - Completion of rough grading.
 - Completion of finished grading.
 - Installation of erosion control devices.
 - Completion of planting requirements.
 - Site's readiness for final inspection.

Upon inspection approval by the Stormwater Inspector, the contractor shall **notify** the Public Works Inspector at (650) 496-6929 **24 hours prior** to start of work. Any substantial delays in the performance of the work, or any work not being done in conformance with the approved plans, must be reported immediately to the City Engineer. A corrective action plan must also be submitted with such reports.

6. **Inspection and testing** - The City Engineer may require inspection and testing by an approved independent testing agency.
7. **Wet season work (October 1 through April 15)** - For permitted continuing activities other than installation, maintenance or repair of sediment and erosion control measures, the permittee must apply for and receive, every five working days, special permission to proceed with work during the wet season. ***It shall be unlawful to commence any land-disturbing activity during the wet season without having obtained specific permission to do so.***
8. **Slopes** - No steeper than two horizontal to one vertical.
9. **Stop Work** - The permit may be suspended and a stop work order issued when:
 - It is determined that the permit was issued on the basis of incorrect information supplied.
 - The permittee fails to submit a required report.
 - An inspection finds the work in non-compliance.
 - The work is likely to be a hazard.
 - The permittee has failed to obtain permission for grading activity during the wet season.

Failure or refusal to comply with a stop work order is unlawful. If the permittee fails or refuses to cease work after being issued a stop work order, the permit may be revoked and the stop work order may be enforced by any means available under the law. Revoked permits may not be reinstated.

PERMIT IMPLEMENTATION

1. Inspection - The Building Official or City Engineer or their designees shall be allowed to inspect the site at any time. In particular, inspections may take place upon receipt of non-compliance reports, before, during and after rain events, and to verify completion of permitted work including stages of work.

2. Additional requirements - The Building Official or City Engineer or their designees may request and shall be entitled to the following at rough grading and final completion:

- As-graded plans prepared by a civil engineer showing the original and as-graded surface elevations, drainage patterns, elevations of surface and subsurface drainage facilities, and certification that the work is in accordance with the final approved grading plan.
- Soil grading report prepared by the soils engineer including plans showing locations of field tests, summaries of field, laboratory test results, and certification as to the adequacy of the site for the intended use.
- Geologic grading report prepared by an engineering geologist including a final description of the geology of the site.

3. Engineered grading requirements - When activity involves the disturbance of more than 5,000 cu yds of material,

- The **civil engineer** shall be responsible for:
 - Incorporating the recommendations from the soils and geology engineering reports into the grading plan.
 - The inspection and approval of the grading with respect to, at minimum, lines, grades, and drainage.
 - Acting as the coordinating agent in the event the need arises for liaison between other professionals, the contractor, and the Building Official, City Engineer, or their designees.
 - The submittal of as-graded plans upon completion of the work.
- The **soils engineer** shall be responsible for:
 - The inspection and approval of, at minimum, activities concerning preparation of the ground to receive fills, compaction testing, slope stability, and buttress fills.
- The **engineering geologist** shall be responsible for;
 - The inspection and approval of the adequacy of the natural ground to receive fills and the stability of cut slopes with respect to geological matters.
 - Identifying the need for subdrains or other ground water drainage devices.

<END OF EXCAVATION AND GRADING PERMIT DOCUMENT>