

# BASEMENT FINISHING

## Construction Permit Tips For Home Owners

This publication provides guidelines for constructing a basement finish in a detached single-family home. The code requirements herein are not all inclusive and should not be construed to represent all code requirements for your project and are representative of all conditions that you may encounter.

You must obtain permits for the construction of a residential basement finish. Listed below are the types of permits required depending on the complexity of the project. Apply for your permits at the Grand Ledge City Hall – Building Department, located at 310 Greenwood Street.

- **Building permit** for all architectural and structural elements.
- **Electrical permit** for all electrical installations.
- **Mechanical permit** for all heating, cooling and ventilation systems.
- **Plumbing permit** for all installations of plumbing and gas piping systems.

*Helpful Hint:* As the property owner, you may obtain permits in your own name; however, if a contractor is to perform the work, it is **required** that the contractor secure the permit and be listed as the responsible party. In this way, the city will be in a better position to assist you in gaining compliance with codes if the work is defective. A contractor must be properly licensed in order to obtain a permit.

## **PERMIT PROCESS**

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- Bring the construction documents described herein to the Grand Ledge City Hall Building Department where your permit process will begin. Here you will complete a **Building Permit Application**. Permit applications are also available on the City of Grand Ledge website **grand-ledge.com**.
- A building permit is issued when all required approvals have been obtained and applicable fees have been paid. Once your permits are issued, you must post a copy on the job site until the project has received final approval.
- A building permit must be issued within 6 months of the application date or the application will be cancelled.
- Permits that have no activity for 6 months or more will be cancelled.

## **FEES**

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- For information on the related fees for a basement finish, contact the Grand Ledge Building Department located in the Grand Ledge City Hall at 310 Greenwood Street, or call 517-622-4756.
- Fees may be paid by cash or check made out to the **City of Grand Ledge**.

## **BUILDING CODE**

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Your project is required to comply with the 2015 Michigan Residential Code (MRC), which incorporates the 2015 International Residential Code (IRC) for residential construction, effective April, 2015. You may purchase the MRC through the State of Michigan Bureau of Construction Codes, ph. 517-241-9302, or by visiting their website at <http://www.michigan.gov/bccfs>.

- New emergency escape and rescue openings shall have a sill height not more than 44".
- All emergency escape and rescue openings shall have a minimum clear opening of 5.7 square feet. If the window is at grade, the minimum clear opening is reduced to 5.0 square feet.

- The minimum clear opening height is 24 inches.
- The minimum clear opening width is 20 inches.
- Emergency escape and rescue openings with a sill height below grade shall be provided with a window well in accordance with code.
- Habitable spaces created in existing basements shall have a minimum ceiling height of not less than 6' -8'. Obstructions may project within 6' 4" of the basement floor.
- An existing basement stair, landings, stairway width and handrails not otherwise being altered or modified shall be permitted to remain. Stairway headroom height on existing basement stairs being altered or modified shall not be reduced below the existing stairway finished headroom height.
- When one or more sleeping rooms are created, the dwelling unit shall be provided with smoke alarms as required for new dwellings. The smoke alarms shall be interconnected and hard wired.

## **MINIMUM SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS**

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All submissions for a basement finishing project must include the following:

- Two sets of building plans.
- Two copies of the house location survey.

## **HOUSE LOCATION SURVEY**

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If you do not have a copy of your house location survey, review your loan closing documents or contact your mortgage lending institution to obtain one. You may also contact the City of Grand Ledge Building Department 517-622-4756. However surveys are not available for all properties. If you are unable to locate a copy of your survey through these sources, you will be required to hire a certified land surveyor or civil engineer to have one prepared, **provided zoning deems unnecessary.**

House location surveys must meet the following requirements:

- No reduced, enlarged or faxed copies
- The area of the basement finishing drawn to scale.
- Provide the square footage or overall dimensions of the addition.

## **BUILDING PLANS**

Building plans must meet the requirements or show the items listed below.

- Minimum scale of  $\frac{1}{4}'' = 1'-0''$ . All dimensions must be shown.
- Minimum sheet size:  $8 \frac{1}{2}'' \times 11''$ . No pencil sketches.
- Edition of the code used for the design.
- Name, address and phone number of the building designer, if not noted on the permit application.
- If plans are prepared by a Michigan licensed design professional, at least one set of plans must bear the **original** seal, signature and date in accordance with Public Act 299 of 1980. This set will be retained by the City of Grand Ledge.
- List of material specifications including, but not limited to, grade and species of lumber, concrete strength and steel strength.
- Floor plans of the basement level with all rooms labeled with location of smoke alarms indicated.
- Insulation R-values.
- Details and dimensions of new basement egress windows.

## **ELECTRICAL, MECHANICAL AND PLUMBING PERMIT PROCESS**

Electrical, mechanical and plumbing permits are issued after the building permit is approved, but may be processed at the same time. In most cases they do not require a plan submission. Code compliance will be determined at the time of the inspection.

## **REQUIREMENTS FOR PUBLIC UTILITIES**

You must call the **MISS DIG** system, a free service, at **811** or 800-482-7171, at least 3 full working days before excavating to ensure that the construction does not interfere with underground utility lines. The MISS DIG system member utilities will mark the approximate location of their underground public utility lines at no charge. MISS DIG system, Inc.

DOES NOT MARK! If you fail to contact MISS DIG and damage occurs, you may be liable for all cost of repair.

## **INSPECTION REQUIREMENTS**

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A copy of the approved permit, plat or grading plan and building plans must be on the job site and must be available to the inspector during each inspection. Approval must be obtained prior to proceeding with the next applicable element.

- **Electrical, Mechanical and Plumbing Rough:** Rough inspection required prior to or completed and approved before scheduling the building rough inspection.
- **Building Rough:** All work left exposed; fire stopping and fire blocking completed; electrical, mechanical and plumbing rough inspections must be completed and approved before the building rough inspections.
- **Electrical, Mechanical and Plumbing Final:** Final inspection required prior to or completed and approved before the building final inspection.
- **Building Final:** Any electrical, mechanical or plumbing permit final inspections must be approved or completed before the final building inspection. The structure must be complete and ready for use and occupancy.

## **SCHEDULING AN INSPECTION**

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**PROVIDE A MINIMUM 24 HOURS NOTICE WHEN YOU REQUEST A BUILDING INSPECTION. INSPECTION REQUEST MAY BE MADE BY CALLING 517-622-4756.**

It is the responsibility of the permit holder's representative to notify the city when the stages of construction are reached that requires an inspection. Ladders, scaffolds, and testing equipment required to complete an inspection must be provided. Inspection requests may be made by calling our office 517-622-4756.

**For detailed information visit  
[www.cityofgrandledge.com](http://www.cityofgrandledge.com)**

## SETBACKS & ZONING

The image below depicts the minimum required setbacks in  
This drawing is intended for illustrative purposes only and does not  
depict all of the Zoning Ordinance requirements applicable to this  
district. If you have any additional questions please contact Susan  
Stachowiak, City of Grand Ledge Zoning Administrator at (517)622-7928  
or by email at [sstachowiak@cityofgrandledge.com](mailto:sstachowiak@cityofgrandledge.com).

