

CITY OF NEW KENSINGTON

Code Enforcement Fact Sheet For Commonly Asked Questions

1. A building permit and approval by the City Building Code Official are required for the following: decks, porches, fences, garages, additions, swimming pools deeper than 24 inches (2 feet), structures larger than 200 sq. ft., and retaining walls higher than 4 feet. Placement of carports and sheds requires approval by the City Engineer. New driveways require a curb cut permit and approval by the City Engineer. Repair of an existing driveway does not require a permit unless it is being made wider. A Street Opening Permit is needed for utility repairs below ground.
2. All commercial structures and public buildings require professional drawings, building permits, approval and inspection by the City's Commercial Building Inspector for any construction projects or modifications.
3. A permit is required to demolish any permanent structure.
4. A permit is required to prune or cut down a City-owned tree. The City's Shade Tree Commission must also approve planting of trees on City property. Fines will be issued if a City tree is damaged or removed without a permit. City shade trees are typically planted along City sidewalks or in City right-of-way.
5. A permit is not required for placement of a household dumpster or Bagster. However, please inform the Code Enforcement Office of the location so that we can be sure pedestrian and vehicle traffic is not obstructed. Dumpsters and Bagsters that have been filled must be removed in a timely manner.
6. Trash should only be placed at curbside or in alley the night before trash pickup, which is typically Thursday night. Trash must be placed in a trash can with a lid or in thick construction/contractor bags and must not exceed 40 pounds in weight.
7. Waste Management will not pick up loose debris. They will not pick up televisions, tires, or building materials during regular weekly collection. You must call Waste Management to schedule a special pickup.
8. Please regularly clean up dog waste on your property. Please clean up after your dogs when walking them in your neighborhoods. Under Pennsylvania State dog laws, dogs must be on a leash or within an adequately fenced area, and must have current rabies vaccination and dog license. There are fines for littering.
9. Open burning of trash, leaves, or building materials is prohibited. However, a small, controlled recreational wood fire in an approved fire pit or outdoor fireplace/chimney is permitted during non-drought conditions. There must be a water source within reach and the fire must not be left unattended. There must be clearance above the fire, (i.e. no tree branches, utility lines or roof overhangs). If the fire/smoke becomes a nuisance or is a hazard to neighbors, a Police Officer or the Fire Chief can order the fire to be extinguished. Fire pits must be a minimum of 10 feet from other structures. If it is excessively hot and dry or there are high winds, please refrain from burning.
10. All houses, apartment buildings, and commercial establishments must have address identification numbers visible from the street. The characters must be a minimum of 4 inches high.
11. Sidewalks must be clear of ice and snow within 24 hours of snowfall. Sidewalks must be clean of debris, vegetation overgrowth, and overhanging tree branches. The sidewalk surface must be in good condition. Homeowner is responsible for repair/replacement of sidewalks.

12. Streets and alleyways must be free of over-hanging branches that prevent Emergency and Public Works vehicles from passing freely.
13. Lawns and shrubs must be maintained. Yards, porches and walkways must be free of trash and debris. Keep vegetation cut back from utility meters, utility lines, and windows.
14. Unregistered, uninspected or abandoned vehicles cannot remain parked on City streets, in alleys, in City parking lots or in yards and driveways.
15. Trailers of all types cannot be parked on City streets, in alleys or in City maintained lots.
16. If a bedroom is located on the third floor of a house, a fire escape ladder and escape window are required. Bedrooms in basements must have a secondary exit window & fire exit door. All bedrooms must have a window for fire exit.
17. Functioning smoke detectors must be installed on each floor and in each bedroom.
18. A Carbon Monoxide detector is required in every house and in every rental unit.
19. All categories of rental properties require an inspection as well as a new rental license for each change of tenant. Out of town landlords must have a local property manager.
20. Every house or building that changes ownership requires an inspection and Occupancy Permit.
21. Any company or individual wanting to sell a product or service door to door in the City of New Kensington must obtain a Solicitor permit from the Code Enforcement Office. If a person comes to your door, you have the right to ask to see the permit and identification card. You have the right to refuse them entry to your home. The companies must carry a current and valid permit at all times. Contact the police if you encounter any problems.
22. Most types of fireworks are illegal in the City of New Kensington and in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Please use discretion when purchasing fireworks out of State.
23. There is a loud noise ordinance. Please be courteous to your neighbors. Please refrain from running lawn mowers or machinery, playing loud music, and lighting fireworks before 8:00 AM or after 10:00 PM. Please try to avoid these activities on Sundays and National holidays.
24. Thinking of opening a business in town? Contact our office first as there are some preliminary steps that the City requires.
25. Contact our office before placing signs or advertising. There are ordinances governing banners and placing signs on public property.

For additional information about specific permit and license fees, or to schedule an inspection, please call the Code Enforcement office at 724-335-3554.

We appreciate your cooperation and together we can improve property values and provide safe neighborhoods for all our citizens.