



THE DEMOLITION PROCESS

With few exceptions, most buildings will undergo several alterations, and some will be **demolished**. All other removals of partial interiors or exteriors are correctly defined as **alterations** not **demolition(s)**. **Demolition** means removal of the **complete structure**, from roof to foundation. **Alteration** means any construction, retrofit or renovation to an existing structure other than repair or addition that requires a permit. Also, a change in a building, electrical, gas, mechanical or plumbing system that involves an extension, addition or change to the arrangement, type or purpose of the original installation that requires a permit. There are exceptions to the complete removal of some foundations in specific area(s) in the City of Norfolk; the Demolition Team will make those locations known. There could be **legal ramifications** involved with the demolition of properties, from acceptable sewer caps, final disposal of debris, seeding the lot, etc.

Demolition is an Inter-Agency Process!

The Department of Professional and Occupational Regulation (DPOR); Virginia Board for Contractors regulates the performance of demolition. See the below for classifications and specialties approved to carry out the function. Homeowners and property owners with documentation are allowed to obtain permits to demolish buildings. They must adhere to strict compliance to all Federal, State, and local environmental laws and will be subject to considerable fines and prosecution for violations.

Building Construction is not for novices nor is Building Demolition. Death, personal injury, or damage to equipment and property can and can occur. If you are a homeowner or property owner, check with your insurance underwriter concerning possible liability for injuries, death and property damage before applying for a Building Demolition Permit.

- **Sewer Cap installation is a Plumbing Permit.** It must be performed by a **Class A, B, or C Licensed Plumbing Contractor** (Plb) or **Heavy Highway** (H/H) contractor. The request for water meter removal must be placed internally an assigned permit technician. The meter removal and an approved final permit inspection must be completed before demolition can proceed.
- **Demolition Permits** for buildings and other structures must be performed by licensed **Class A, B, or C** contractors with any of the following classifications: **Heavy Highway** (H/H), and Commercial or Residential **Building contractors** (CBC or RBC).
- **Asbestos Abatement Contracting** (ASB) designation is not connected with any other classification or specialty and is exclusive to the installation, removal, or encapsulation of asbestos-containing materials.

Verification will be required:

If the existing building is **non-conforming**, then demolition in anticipation of **new construction** may not be allowed; for that reason, it is critically important to first inquire with Zoning department to determine if the address in question is a ***buildable site***. This is called an Ownership Review Request, and a fee is required for this service. A zoning staff member will further explain non-conforming buildings, properties and other issues related to land use; what would and would not be permissible. **All** construction **must** meet the applicable codes for that structure from foundation through roofing. The Zoning division in conjunction with Chesapeake Bay Preservation Ave (CBPA), Land Disturbance requirements and verification of certification from the Virginia Department of Conservation (www.dcr.state.va.us/sw/index), zoning certificates and **all** building Permits during the verification process.



The **Demolition Process** will require the **termination of all utilities**. This process begins by submitting a plumbing application in the portal [Login \(site.com\)](#) and select the *Sewer Cap* option. There is a set fee for the sewer cap inspection regardless of the number of sewers or septic tanks at the site. The acquisition of the sewer cap permit includes the removal of the water meter from the **Department of Utilities**.

1. A rodent certification must be acquired from the **Norfolk Department of Public Health/Environmental Health** and pay the required fee. A confirmation letter (***Rodent Certificate***) verifying the building to be demolished is rodent-free is sent from **Vector Control**. The inspection is only good for thirty (30) days from issuance.
2. The staff at **Vector Control** is solely responsible for the scheduling of inspection required to obtain the **Rodent Certificate**. Vector Control performs mosquito surveillance and abatement, rodent abatement on city properties, education, and consultation on all activities on private properties, and advises on controlling other vectors of disease affecting public health. There is a fee for this service.
3. The **Bureau of Fire Prevention** certifies the property undergoing demolition to contain no hazardous material including underground fuel tanks before a Building Demolition Permit is issued by issuing a **HAZMAT Certificate**. There is fee for this service. The inspection is only good for thirty (30) days from issuance.

The final inspection and approval of the Sewer Cap, verification of the removal of the water meter, and the Rodent Certificate are required before permission to obtain the actual Building Permit for Demolition can be issued. For properties void of utility services such as storage buildings, sheds, and detached garages; only the Rodent Certificate and Haz-mat Certificate is required to obtain the actual Building demolition permit.

The Building Demolition Permit is issued only after all prerequisites are met: Plumbing permit verifying sewer cap approval, removal of the water meter, Rodent Certification, and all **written memos of confirmation of termination from each utility or service-electrical, gas, phone, and cable service.**

- If the building in question has never had any utilities connected, such as a storage shed, then the Rodent Certification is required from the Health Department, and the Hazmat-Free Letter is required from the Fire Prevention Bureau *before a Building Demolition Permit can be issued*.

The Building Permit will then be issued for all occupied structures after verification from the Permit Technician along with utility termination letters, Asbestos Exemption, and Hazmat Certificate. A final inspection will be made by the Demo Team to ensure proper grading after the removal of all debris and possible seeding of the property.



SUMMARY OF THE DEMOLITION PROCESS

STORAGE OR UTILITY Buildings (without any utility services)

PREREQUISITES

1. Rodent letter (Only valid 30 days after inspection)
2. Hazmat Certification approval (Only valid 30 days after inspection)
3. Form complete (Owner eliminates non-metered utility service at site)
4. Complete the Building Permit and Asbestos Exemption form; select Demolition (a portal project will also be required at [Login \(site.com\)](#))

ALL OTHER USE GROUPS

PREREQUISITES

PHASE I

1. Plumbing application through the portal [Login \(site.com\)](#) use Sewer Cap work item.

PHASE II

1. Obtain termination of all utility services in writing: Electric, Natural Gas, Cable service and Telephone
2. Approved Final for the Sewer cap permit.
3. Hazardous Material (HAZMAT) certification
4. Rodent Certification Letter
5. Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act approval and/or Land Disturbance Permit where applicable

Final inspections must be completed for the sewer cap and the demolition permit to complete the process.

Important Numbers to Remember:

Norfolk Department of Public Health/Environmental Health

- (757)683-2712; 830 Southampton Ave, Norfolk VA

Vector Control

- (757)683-2840

Bureau of Fire Prevention

- (757)664-6600; 100 Brooke Avenue, Norfolk VA

Department of City Planning-Permits

- 757-664-6565 and/or planreviewpermits@norfolk.gov