

# Underground Utility Infrastructure

## Is a building permit required for underground utility infrastructure work?

Description	Work in Right of Way or Private Property	Building Permit (BH) Required? A, C, D, G
Storm water detention vaults	Project in Public ROW	No
Storm water detention vaults	Project in Private Property	Yes <sup>E</sup>
Storm water detention tanks or chambers	Project in Public ROW	No
Storm water detention tanks or chambers	Project in Private Property	See Footnote B
Utility vaults	Project in Public ROW	No
Utility vaults	Project in Private Property	See Footnote F
Conveyance pipes	Project in Public ROW	No
Conveyance pipes	Project in Private Property	No

### Footnotes:

- A Per Chapter 1 of the International Building Code, work done in the public ROW is exempt from a building permit. In all cases where a permit is not required, compliance with all applicable codes is still required.
- B Construction documents submitted for detention tanks or chambers are reviewed under the Utility permit application.
- C The project design engineer should contact the Bellevue Fire Desk at (425) 452-4122 or [FireReview@bellevuewa.gov](mailto:FireReview@bellevuewa.gov) to determine whether the specific site location of a proposed buried structure is subject to [fire truck loading](#).
- D Utilities, Transportation or Fire Department may require the applicant to submit a Building permit for buried structures subject to fire truck loading per footnote C.
- E Storm water detention vaults where all horizontal dimensions are 6' or less and not subject to fire truck loading do not require building code review, permits and inspections unless requested by the Utilities Department
- F Utility vaults constructed by an *approved fabricator* where the entire footprint of the vault is visible from the ground surface and is designed to meet the minimum loading requirements of [City of Bellevue Utilities Codes and Standards](#) do not require a building permit unless required by Utilities or Fire Department.
- G Construction/installation of buried structures located in the private property but adjacent to public space may require separate shoring permit (BV) for excavation per IBC 3304.1.5. Please contact the Bellevue Building Division at 425-452-4121 or [BuildingReview@bellevuewa.gov](mailto:BuildingReview@bellevuewa.gov) for additional design information.

**Definitions:**

**Storm water detention** = Temporary storage of storm water in vaults, tanks or chambers to manage excess storm water runoff on a developed site.

- **Vaults** are typically pre-cast or poured-in-place concrete structures.
- **Tanks or chambers** are typically premanufactured buried structures of various shapes and material properties. These may include pipes or arched structures made of metal, concrete, thermo-plastic or other approved materials.

**Utility vaults** = Plant manufactured precast concrete products for enclosure for electrical transformers, water meters, switching equipment, etc.

**Conveyance pipes** = Pipe used to convey water, sewage, storm water, petroleum, natural gas, etc.

**Approved fabricator** = An established and qualified person, firm or corporation approved by the building official pursuant to Chapter 17 of International Building Code.

**Right of way** = Public streets and property dedicated to public use for streets, together with public property reserved for public utilities, transmission lines and extensions, walkways, sidewalks, bikeways or equestrian trails.

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We may require additional information as needed. If you have any questions concerning your application submittal, please visit or call a building plans examiner in the Permit Center 425-452-4121 between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m., Monday through Friday (Wednesday, 10 to 4). Our TTY number is 425-452-4636.