



## Permit Requirements for Residential Pools

### 1. Building Permit

- A **Swimming Pool Permit** is required for all residential pools — in-ground and permanent above-ground pools — within Columbia city limits.
- The permit falls under the City's **Residential Building Permit** process and requires submission of plans and documentation described below.

### 2. What You Must Submit

- Completed **Pool Permit Application** (online via the Access portal).
- **Site Plan** showing property lines, pool location, setbacks, and proposed barrier details.
- **Schematic Diagram** showing the required electrical connection of all conductive parts of the pool, pool structure (rebar, steel), pool water and associated equipment to form an equipotential bonding grid. Perimeter bonding must include concrete pool decks, pavers or stone set in mortar, any conductive surfaces within 5 ft. of the inside pool wall.
- **Plans** drawn to scale that include construction details of the pool and enclosure/barrier consistent with code and city ordinance requirements.

### 3. Pool Barrier / Safety Requirements

A Pool Barrier may require a separate **Fence Permit**. While exact barrier standards reflect IRC barrier requirements (e.g., minimum 48-inch fences, spacing, gates), the City has specific enclosure criteria in its ordinance and Pool Permit Checklist.

Typical elements include:

- Barrier / Fence surrounding the pool area complying with height and opening restrictions.
- Gate hardware that is secure and restricts unauthorized access.
- Location of pool and barrier relative to property lines and structures.

#### 4. Required Inspections

After the pool permit is issued, inspections must be scheduled through the **City's Building Inspections Division**. Typical inspections include:

- A. **Site/Location inspection** — confirmation of placement and setbacks.
- B. **Structural/Pre-concrete inspection** — rebar/steel reinforcement and pool formwork (for in-ground pools).
- C. **Pool Bonding inspection** — bonding of pool rebar/steel before pool covering (gunite) or backfill.

**NOTE:** Inspections for A, B and C are completed at the same time.

- D. **Equipotential Bonding inspection** — (often called a perimeter bonding inspection) is required before pouring concrete or finishing pool deck. The perimeter bond must be attached to the pool's rebar or copper grid at a minimum of **four points**, uniformly spaced around the pool. A bare solid copper conductor not smaller than #8 AWG shall follow the pool's contour, 18 to 24 inches from the inside walls, buried 4 to 6 inches below the finished surface. **This conductor must be continuous around the pool contour without any breaks or splices.**
- E. **Barrier/Fence inspection** — verify that the pool enclosure meets barrier requirements before filling with water.
- F. **Final inspection** — confirm that pool construction, equipment installation, pool bonding and safety features are complete and compliant.

Inspections are requested via the City's Access portal or by contacting the Inspections Coordinator.

These Code Requirements can be found in the International Residential Code with South Carolina Modifications and the City of Columbia's Code of Ordinances.