

Sauna Permit Decision Worksheet

Use this before ordering equipment, trenching power, building a base, or closing walls. Permit and zoning rules are local, so record the answer from the authority that governs the project address.

A sauna can be exempt from one permit and still need another. Check building, zoning, electrical, mechanical, plumbing, and wood-heater requirements separately.

1. Project Details

Project question	Your answer
Property address / jurisdiction	_____
Indoor or outdoor	☐ Indoor ☐ Outdoor
Sauna type	☐ Prefab ☐ Barrel ☐ Custom framed ☐ Other
Finished dimensions	L _____ W _____ H _____
Structure height	_____
Distance to nearest property line	_____
Base / foundation	_____
Heater type	☐ Plug-in electric ☐ Hardwired electric ☐ Wood
Exact heater / sauna model	_____
New electrical circuit or feeder	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unknown
Mechanical ventilation changes	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unknown
Water line / shower / drain	☐ Yes ☐ No
Structural changes to existing building	☐ Yes ☐ No

2. Approval Check

Approval / question	Authority	Answer / permit no.
Building permit required?	Building department	_____
Zoning / land-use approval required?	Planning / zoning	_____
Setback / lot coverage rules checked?	Planning / zoning	_____
Electrical permit required?	Electrical authority	_____
Mechanical permit required?	Mechanical / building	_____
Plumbing permit required?	Plumbing / building	_____
Wood stove / chimney approval required?	Building / fire / mechanical	_____
HOA / condo approval required?	HOA / association	_____

3. Questions to Ask the Local Authority

- ☐ Does the sauna structure itself require a building permit?
- ☐ If the structure is building-permit exempt, do zoning rules still apply?
- ☐ What setback, height, lot-coverage, easement, or overlay-zone rules apply?
- ☐ Does the electrical scope require a separate permit and inspection?
- ☐ Does mechanical ventilation or ducting require a mechanical permit?
- ☐ Does a shower, drain, or water line require a plumbing permit?
- ☐ What approvals apply to a wood-burning heater, chimney, or roof penetration?
- ☐ Who is allowed to pull each permit?
- ☐ Which inspections must happen before insulation or wall finishes cover the work?
- ☐ What plans, manuals, or site drawings should be submitted?

4. Documents to Prepare

Document / information	Ready?
Site plan showing property lines and sauna location	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A
Sauna dimensions and height	☐ Yes ☐ No
Floor plan / elevations if requested	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A
Base / foundation information	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A
Sauna and heater manufacturer/model	☐ Yes ☐ No
Manufacturer installation manual	☐ Yes ☐ No
Electrical scope / panel information	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A
Ventilation layout	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A
Wood heater / chimney documents	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A
Plumbing / drainage scope	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A

5. Inspection & Recordkeeping

Checkpoint	Project record
Rough electrical inspection required before covering work?	_____
Framing / structural inspection required?	_____
Mechanical / chimney inspection required?	_____
Plumbing rough-in inspection required?	_____
Final inspection(s) required?	_____
Permit / approval numbers saved?	☐ Yes ☐ No
Written email or portal confirmation saved?	☐ Yes ☐ No
Approved plans / manuals kept with project records?	☐ Yes ☐ No

Final check: Do not rely on a retailer, contractor, forum post, or generic square-foot threshold as the final authority for a specific address. The local permitting and zoning authorities control the answer.

This worksheet is a planning aid, not legal or code advice. Requirements vary by jurisdiction and project scope.

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