

Before you install plumbing in your home, you must live there.

A plumbing license is required to install plumbing in Wisconsin, except when the plumbing work is performed by a property owner in a one-family dwelling he or she occupies.

Farmers may install plumbing in their own buildings.

Remember to check with local plumbing officials for local requirements that may not allow for this exemption from the license

You can install plumbing on your own property if:

1. The plumbing is inside the building.
2. The work is in a one-family dwelling.
3. The home is your primary residence, not a cabin, summer home, rental property business, etc (primary residence is determined as the address where he or she claims permanent residency for voting and receipt of state or federal tax mailings, etc).
4. You occupy the home, so this exemption does not apply to new construction. There are code requirements regarding plumbing fixtures that must be installed for a home to be occupied, including at least; one water closet, one wash basin, one kitchen sink, one bathtub or shower and a water heater to meet the basic requirements of sanitation and personal hygiene.
5. The plumbing is in farm buildings, other than a new, one-family home, on property owned and occupied by the property owner, except where a license may be required by local ordinance.
6. Even in your own home, all plumbing installed meets the requirements of the Wisconsin Uniform Plumbing Code.

Penalties can be costly!

A State Law enacted in 2005 that added direct forfeiture to the plumbing license law penalties (See s. 145.12 (5), Wis Stats.). Here's a Summary of the forfeitures:

Violation	Offense		
	1 st	2 nd	3 rd
Plumbing without the right license. No MP in charge.	\$1000	\$1500	\$2000
Plumbing without the right license. MP in charge.	\$100	\$500	\$1000
MP allowing someone to use their license to obtain a permit, without the MP assuming responsibility.	\$1000	\$1500	\$2000
MP allowing another licensed plumber to install plumbing when the MP isn't in charge.	\$500	\$1000	\$2000
MP allows an individual without the right license to install plumbing when the MP is in charge.	\$1500	\$1750	\$2000
Offering to, or superintending plumbing	\$1000	\$1500	\$2000

MP = Licensed Master Plumber

Plumbing License Laws



State of Wisconsin

Department of Safety and Professional Services

For more information:
DPS Plumbing Consultant
608-267-9421
DspsSbPlbgTech@wi.gov

Definition of Plumbing

1. All piping, fixtures, appliances, equipment, devices, and appurtenances in connection with water supply systems, water distribution systems, wastewater drainage systems, reclaimed water systems, and stormwater use systems, including hot water storage tanks, water treatment devices, and water heaters connected with these systems and also includes the installation thereof.
2. The construction, connection, installation, service, or repair of any drain or wastewater piping system that connects to the mains or other terminal within the bounds of, or beneath an area subject to easement for highway purposes, including private on-site wastewater treatment systems and stormwater treatment and dispersal systems, and the alteration of any such systems, drains or wastewater piping.
3. The construction, connection, installation, service, or repair of water service piping that connects to the main or other water utility service terminal within the bounds of, or beneath an area subject to easement for highway purposes and its connections.
4. The water pressure system other than municipal systems as provided in ch. 28i.
5. A plumbing and drainage system so designed and vent piping so installed as to keep the air within the system in free circulation and movement; to prevent with a margin of safety unequal air pressures of such force as might blow, siphon or affect trap seals, or retard the discharge from plumbing fixtures, or permit sewer air to escape into the building; to prohibit cross-connection, contamination or pollution of the water supply and distribution systems; and to provide an adequate supply of water to...

Def. of Plumbing Cont.

...provide an adequate supply of water to properly serve, cleanse and operate all fixtures, equipment, appurtenances and appliances served by the plumbing system.

State Law, Chapter 145.06

- (1) (a) No person may engage in or work at plumbing in the state unless licensed to do so by the department. A master plumber may work as a journeyman. No person may act as a plumbing apprentice or pipe layer unless registered with the department.
- (b) No public utility shall engage in or perform plumbing unless exempted by sub. (4).
- (2) No person shall install plumbing unless at all times a licensed master plumber is in charge, who shall be responsible for proper installation. Licenses shall be issued only to individuals and no license shall be issued to or in the name of any firm or corporation. No such license shall be transferable. It is unlawful for any licensed master plumber to allow the use of his or her license, directly or indirectly, for the purpose of obtaining local permits for others or to allow the use of his or her license by others to install plumbing work.
- (3) Each member or employee of a partnership or limited liability company or each officer or employee of a corporation engaging in the business of superintending plumbing installations shall be required to apply for and obtain a master plumber's license before engaging in the work of superintending plumbing installations.

145.06 Continued

- (4) This section shall not apply to:
 - (a) Plumbing work done by a property owner in a one-family building owned and occupied by him or her as his or her home or farm building, except where such license is required by local ordinance.
 - (b) Plumbing from the private water supply pump to and including the initial pressure tank and connection to an existing water distribution system, when installed by persons licensed under ch. 28o.
 - (c) Installation of sewer and water service piping from the main to the property lot line, when installed by authorized municipal utility employees or sewer and water utility installers under a contract with a municipality.
 - (d) Making minor repairs to faucets, valves, pipes or appliances, repair or replacement of electrical or gas energy or other automatic valves or control devices or removing of stoppages in waste or drainage pipes.
 - (e) Installation of sewer and water mains, when installed by sewer and water utility contractors and their employees.
 - (f) Installation, repair or replacement of water service piping, from the property line to the meter, including meter installation, to service any building or structure or proposed building or structure when such installation, repair or replacement is accomplished by employees of a public municipal water utility, providing such utility regularly has engaged in such installation, repair or replacement for at least 5 years prior to January 1, 1964.