



Catawba County Planning and Parks  
100-A Southwest Blvd.  
P.O. Box 389  
Newton, NC 28658

Phone: 828-465-8380  
Fax: 828-465-8484

## **HOW TO OBTAIN A ZONING PERMIT FOR AN ACCESSORY DWELLING UNIT/GUEST HOUSE**

The Catawba County Unified Development Ordinance allows one house per lot. If you are proposing a second house on your property, you may apply for a permit to construct an accessory dwelling unit/guest house. The definition of an accessory dwelling unit/guest house is a detached house permitted on the same property as the main house, but significantly smaller. An accessory dwelling unit/guest house is allowed as a permitted use with supplemental regulations in all residential districts. (See UDO Sec. 44-631)

### **Steps to follow to obtain a permit to construct an accessory dwelling unit/guest house:**

- (1) Check with a representative of the Catawba County Planning Department to see if the house you are proposing would meet the definition of an accessory dwelling unit/guest house. You may contact the Catawba County Planning Department at 828-465-8380, Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. or email us at [planning@catawbacountync.gov](mailto:planning@catawbacountync.gov).
- (2) If the proposed house meets the criteria as an accessory dwelling unit/guest house, you will need to submit an 8½ x 11 inch or 8½ x 14 inch drawing, prepared to scale (including the footprints of proposed and existing buildings or structures on the property, setbacks, driveway, and square footage of home, etc.) showing that your request meets the supplemental requirements in Section 44-631.
- (3) **Some of the supplemental requirements that will be used in deciding an application for approval of an accessory dwelling unit/guest house are:**
  - The same person will need to own both houses and the owner of the property will need to live in one of the houses.
  - The size of the house may not exceed 50% of the size of the main house or 650 square feet, whichever is greater.
  - Stick-built homes, modular homes, singlewide or doublewide manufactured homes may be used as an accessory dwelling unit/guest house. If you propose to use a manufactured home, the home will need to be occupied by the mother, father, daughter, son, brother or sister of the property owner, meet Catawba County manufactured home appearance criteria and be located within the [Doublewide Manufactured Home- Overlay \(DWMH-O\) District](#).
  - The houses need to share a driveway and meet setbacks for the zoning

district.

- (4) You may obtain a copy of a map of your property from Catawba County's Geographic Information System at [www.gis.catawbacountync.gov/parcel/](http://www.gis.catawbacountync.gov/parcel/).
- (5) Obtain a zoning permit from the Planning Department. You may reach the Planning Department by phone at 828-465-8380, Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. or email at [planning@catawbacountync.gov](mailto:planning@catawbacountync.gov).
- (6) Submit an [application for a septic tank permit and well permit](#) to the Catawba County Permit Center. If you have questions you may call the Permit Center at 828-465-8399, Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. or email at [permit\\_center@catawbacountync.gov](mailto:permit_center@catawbacountync.gov).
- (7) Submit an [application for a building permit](#) to the Catawba County Permit Center. If you have questions you may call the Permit Center at 828-465-8399, Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. or email at [permit\\_center@catawbacountync.gov](mailto:permit_center@catawbacountync.gov).

If you have questions concerning an accessory dwelling unit/guest house, where they may be located or obtaining a permit for your property, please call the Catawba County Planning Department at 828-465-8380, Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. or email us at [planning@catawbacountync.gov](mailto:planning@catawbacountync.gov). Please know that we are here to assist you throughout the process.

---

*The purpose of this information sheet is to assist you with the process of obtaining permits and approvals associated with the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO). Before proceeding with any project or spending any funds, you are strongly encouraged to contact staff of the Catawba County Planning Department at 828-465-8380, Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. or email us at [planning@catawbacountync.gov](mailto:planning@catawbacountync.gov) to insure awareness of all options that may exist as well as the most effective way of accomplishing a particular project.*

**08/2014**