



## Act 250 Explained For Vermont Small Businesses

**Fact:** Act 250, Vermont's Land Use Planning Law, has regulated certain categories of commercial development since 1970. Of the 600-700 applications per year, over 80% are processed without a hearing, over 60% are issued in less than 60 days, and 95% are approved, with conditions. The Vermont Environmental Board administers Act 250.

### Q. How do I know if my business needs an Act 250 permit for my project?

A. Act 250 is a comprehensive law that evaluates the impact of a development project under a number of environmental criteria (see the 10 Criteria below). An Act 250 permit is required for commercial construction of improvements on more than one acre, or ten acres (if the town has permanent zoning **and** subdivision regulations). Check to see if your project is located in an Act 250, "10 Acre or 1 Acre town" (for a list of these see: Environmental Board website at: [www.state.vt.us/envboard/](http://www.state.vt.us/envboard/)). For a determination on Act 250 jurisdiction, contact the [Act 250 District Coordinator](#) (see Regional Office list, next page).

### Q. What are the "10 Criteria" of Act 250?

A. The [10 Criteria](#) are the standards, which the District Commission uses to evaluate a development project. These criteria include such issues as air pollution, waste disposal, wetlands, erosion control, traffic, impact on schools and municipal services, and conformance with town and regional plans. In order to obtain an Act 250 permit, a project must satisfy the 10 criteria.

### Q. Where can I get a copy of the Act 250 application forms?

A. The application forms can be downloaded from the [Publications Page](#) of the Environmental Board website. They are also available at the five [Regional Act 250 Offices](#) located around the state as well as the [Environmental Board office](#) in Montpelier. You can stop by to pick up a copy of the application or request that one be sent to you in the mail. You can also purchase a copy on floppy disk by contacting Denise Wheeler at the Environmental Board (802-828-5441).

### Q. Where can I get assistance filling out the Act 250 application?

A. If you are new to the Act 250 process or if you have questions about filling out the Act 250 application, applicants are encouraged to schedule a pre-application meeting with the [District Coordinator or Assistant District Coordinator](#) to discuss your project and how to fill out the application forms. Private Act 250 consultants are also available (for a fee) if you feel that you need more extensive assistance.

## Tips For Obtaining Your Act 250 Permit:

- **Start Early!** Act 250 and related environmental permits can take time. Call the Act 250 Coordinator, as well as the Permit Specialist for your area – other state or federal permits may be required.
- Businesses located on town water and sewer may have less permitting issues. Always consider the environmental permitting issues associated with a commercial property prior to purchase.
- Neighbors can be a key factor. Discuss your project early with all adjoining landowners, and address any of their concerns.
- When filling out an Act 250 application, if a criteria or question is not applicable, briefly explain why.

Disclaimer: This fact sheet is designed as an educational tool, intended to help businesses identify potential Act 250 issues, prior to property purchases with planned construction. It is not intended to take the place of expert advice or the regulations themselves, nor can it be totally comprehensive. It is incumbent on the business owner to acquire the knowledge of pertinent regulations and permits, and ensure that these regulations are met. Please take advantage of the free state assistance resources below.

## VT-ANR: [Permit Specialists](#) & Act 250 Regional Offices:

### Districts 1 & 8

450 Asa Bloomer State Office Bldg.  
Merchants Row  
Rutland, VT 05701-5903  
Permit Specialist 786-5907  
Act 250 786-5920  
ANR Permits 786-5900

### Districts 4, 6, & 9

111 West Street  
Essex Junction, VT 05452  
Permit Specialist 879-5676  
Act 250 879-5614  
ANR Permits(Dist #4,6) 879-5656  
ANR Permits(Dist #9) 786-5900

### Districts 2 & 3

100 Mineral St. #303  
Springfield, VT 05156  
Permit Specialist 885-8850  
Act 250 885-8855  
ANR Permits 885-8855

### Districts 3A & 5

5 Perry Street, Suite 80  
Barre, VT 05641  
Permit Specialist (Both) 476-0195  
Act 250 (Dist # 3A) 885-8855  
Act 250 (Dist # 5) 476-0185  
ANR Permits (Both Dist) 476-0190

### District 7

1229 Portland St-Ste 201  
St. Johnsbury, VT 05819  
Permit Specialist (Tues) 751-0127  
Mon., Weds., Thurs., Fri. 476-0195  
Act 250 751-0120  
ANR Permits 751-0130