OTTAWA DEMOLITION CONTRACTORS

Heritage & Demolition Control

The Demolition Control By-law, heritage designation and listed properties.

4 Expert Answers from Demolition IQ

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Q1

Tearing down a Centretown house with no new building permit yet?

The first question is whether the property falls inside the Area of Demolition Control under By-law 2012-377. Ask the City whether it does, because that changes what you need before a contractor can start.

Demolition Control Without a Building Permit

Demolition Control By-law 2012-377 s.6(1) says no person shall demolish the whole or any part of a residential property within the controlled area without a demolition control permit. The Chief Building Official's duty to issue it applies once a building permit for a replacement building has been issued (s.7). Without one, the General Manager may issue it with conditions that can include grading, sodding, seeding and landscaping the lot, no interim use, and a registered agreement, subject to the Ward Councillor's agreement (s.8).

Separately, the City's demolition page states that you need a building permit to demolish an existing building or structure. That permit application requires the Demolition Permit Clearances Form, signed off by each utility: City water, City sewer, Enbridge Gas, Hydro Ottawa or Hydro One, Bell, Rogers, and a confirmation that any heating oil tank has been emptied. Enbridge Gas requires 44 days from time of payment to disconnect natural gas service, so that sign-off needs to be arranged well before you want work to begin.

If the property is designated under the Ontario Heritage Act or sits in a Heritage Conservation District, council consent or a heritage permit is also required before demolition. Ask the City whether either applies to this address.

Before you contract with anyone, ask how the contractor handles the designated substances list; asbestos removal is work for an abatement contractor, not the demolition crew.

Before work starts, make sure you have a written contract that sets out exactly what comes down, where the work stops, the full price, the payment schedule, who applies for the demolition permit and who arranges each utility sign-off, and the dates the contractor commits to.

Q2

Can the City of Ottawa make me sod the lot after a demolition?

Demolition Control By-law 2012-377 gives the City a direct path to require sodding. Under section 8, if you demolish a residential property inside the Area of Demolition Control and no building permit for a replacement structure has been issued, the General Manager may issue the demolition control permit with conditions. Those conditions can include that the lot be graded, sodded, seeded and landscaped, that no interim use of the lot occur, and that a

registered agreement be entered into. The Ward Councillor must also agree before the permit issues on those terms.

That condition applies specifically to properties inside the demolition control area. Whether your property falls inside it depends on the Schedule 1 map attached to the by-law, which is an image. Ask the City whether the address is inside the Area of Demolition Control before you plan the project.

Two other points narrow when this matters. First, the demolition control permit requirement applies to residential properties as the by-law defines them. Accessory buildings, meaning detached garages and sheds, are excluded from that definition, so taking down a garage or shed does not trigger demolition control. Second, if a building permit for a replacement building is already in hand when you apply, the Chief Building Official shall issue the demolition control permit.

Outside the demolition control area, we did not find a City rule that requires a homeowner to sod or seed a lot after a residential demolition. The Building By-law 2014-220 requires the permit holder to give notice within two days of completing the demolition, and the site fence must come down within 30 days of completion, but neither provision mentions landscaping.

The practical step from here is to confirm with the City's Building Code Services whether the property is inside the demolition control area, and if it is, whether a building permit for the replacement will be in place before you apply for the demolition permit.

Q3

What is the fine for demolishing without a demolition control permit in Ottawa?

Demolition Control By-law 2012-377 sets the fine at up to $50,000 for each dwelling unit demolished without a demolition control permit.

The by-law applies to residential properties within the Area of Demolition Control, a mapped boundary set out in Schedule 1 of the by-law. Ask the City whether a specific property falls inside that area before any work begins, because the map is an image and the boundary is not described in plain text.

A few things the by-law does not cover are worth knowing. A detached garage or shed is not a "residential property" under the by-law's definition, so demolition control does not apply to those structures. A partial demolition that does not reduce the number of dwelling units on the property is also exempt. Work carried out under a fire or unsafe-building order is exempt as well.

The demolition control permit is separate from the building permit the City requires to demolish any building. If a building permit for a replacement structure has already been issued, the Chief Building Official shall issue the demolition control permit. If no replacement permit exists, the General Manager may still issue one, with conditions that can include grading, sodding and a registered agreement, subject to the Ward Councillor's agreement.

Before signing, ask the contractor whether their quote assumes the demolition control permit is already in hand.

Q4

Demolishing a designated heritage house in Ottawa: what approvals come first?

Demolishing a designated heritage property in Ottawa needs council consent. Under section 34(1) of the Ontario Heritage Act, an owner needs written consent from council to demolish a designated building. If the property sits inside a Heritage Conservation District, section 42(1) requires a permit from the municipality. An owner who disagrees with council's decision has 30 days to appeal to the Ontario Land Tribunal under section 34.1.

The City's 2026 heritage permit fees are $15,655 for a Part IV, Grade 1 or Contributing property and $3,297 for a Grade 2 or Non-Contributing property. The City exempts applications related to demolishing or rebuilding buildings affected by catastrophic events.

Demolition control is a separate question. The City's Demolition Control By-law 2012-377 covers residential properties inside its Schedule 1 area, so ask the City whether the property is within the Area of Demolition Control. If it is, and no building permit for a replacement structure has been issued, the General Manager may attach conditions to the demolition control permit, including grading, sodding and landscaping the lot and registering an agreement on title.

The demolition permit application goes to the City through a My ServiceOttawa account. The application package includes the Demolition Permit Application Guidelines, a site plan, the Demolition Review Form, and the completed Demolition Permit Clearances Form signed off by every utility connected to the property. The City's first review takes about 10 business days. Starting demolition before the permit is issued on a designated heritage property carries an administrative surcharge of $3,510, separate from the permit fee itself.

The clearances form also requires sign-offs from the City's water and sewer departments, Bell Canada, Rogers, Hydro Ottawa or Hydro One (ask which one serves the property), and confirmation that any oil tank has been emptied. The City's form notes that fees may be levied by each utility, and that contacting each one is the owner's responsibility.

Ask each contractor how they handle the designated substances list before you sign.

Get the heritage consent, the demolition control decision, and every utility sign-off commitment in writing before the permit application is filed.

Disclaimer: This guide is provided for informational purposes only by Ottawa Demolition Contractors. It does not constitute professional advice. Always consult qualified contractors and your local building authority (the City of Ottawa) before any demolition. The City requires a permit to demolish a building or structure, and every utility connected to the property signs off before the permit is issued. Information is current as of November 22, 2026 and may change. Visit **ottawademolitioncontractors.ca** for the latest answers.