

This Guide is to provide assistance regarding the use and placement of Shipping Containers.

To inform property owners, suppliers, designers and contractors of the City's requirements for the placement and use of shipping containers used for storage purposes and of the requirements to convert a shipping container to a dwelling unit.

If a shipping container is not being used for the transporting of goods and it is used to support an occupancy (ie: storage of goods/materials) then it is considered to be a building and a building permit is required. The requirements of the City of Maple Ridge Zoning Bylaw and BC Building Code must be followed. The shipping container may need alterations involving an architect and other registered professionals to meet BC Building Code requirements.

The City of Maple Ridge Zoning Bylaw regulates the use of shipping containers on private property. The following is the wording under Part 4, Section 402 (14) of the Zoning Bylaw;

7184-2015 **SHIPPING CONTAINER** means an enclosed unit used or intended to be used for storing and transporting goods via ship, rail or truck, whether or not it is actually being used for such a purpose.

7184-2015 **(14)** A shipping container may be used:

- a) as a temporary use for office or equipment storage in all zones, during a phase of construction in progress, subject to issuance of a current and valid building permit. Security must be posted to cover the cost of removal of the structure within 30 days of the closing or expiry of the building permit.
- b) as accessory to an institutional use where enclosed behind a continuous landscape screen.
- c) as accessory to an industrial use where enclosed behind a continuous landscape screen.
- d) as accessory to an agricultural use. Demonstration of need would be required, along with farm status from BC Assessment Authority.

Where permitted, a shipping container shall only be used, placed, stored, repaired, cleaned, upgraded, or modified to comply with the requirements of the zone as if it were a building or structure. Maximum height shall not exceed 4.5 meters.

The following shall not be stored in a shipping container:

- a) Gasoline, propane, or any flammable, combustible liquid or compressed gas; or
- b) Explosive as defined in the Maple Ridge Fire Prevention By-law No. 4111-1988.

Shipping containers are only permitted on;

- Institutional zoned properties (P-1 thru P-6),
- Industrial zoned properties (M-1 thru M-5), and
- Agricultural zoned properties (A-1 thru A-5). For these zones only where they have farm status and the use is for the farming portion of the property. Other zones that may permit agricultural use (i.e. RS-3) are not permitted to have shipping containers.

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"This information is provided for convenience only and is not a substitution of applicable City Bylaws, Provincial or Federal Codes or Laws. You must satisfy yourself that any existing or proposed construction or other works complies with such Bylaws, Codes or other laws."

No other zoned properties are permitted to have shipping containers installed for either permanent or temporary use except in compliance with (14)(a) above. The only other location where you may have a shipping container on site is for the loading or offloading of goods and materials only. In these cases a 48 hour time period is provided for this to be achieved and then to be removed from the property.

Based on the zoning bylaw wording these containers are permitted only as accessory to the underlying use. If there is no primary industrial or agricultural use on the property then the container cannot be installed.

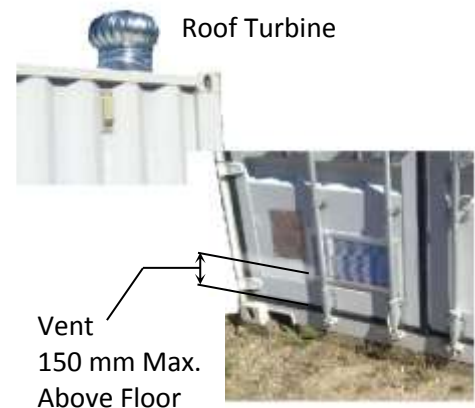
Building Permit Requirements:

- [Commercial, Industrial, Institutional and Multifamily Permit Application](#)
- Site plan showing location of container, setbacks from property lines & required “**landscape screening**”,
- Layout of the containers interior (if changes are proposed to the container),
- Should the container be planned as office use then a man door will be required to be installed serving the container,
- List of materials to be stored in the container plus vents installed per MR Fire Department Bulletin,
- Separate electrical permits required, and
- Where electrical is being used even if only supplied through extension cords (if permitted under the electrical safety act) the container will need to be grounded which will required an electrical permit.

Note: As a part of the permitting process, the fire department will review the proposal.

Ventilation Requirements

- One vent within 150 mm of the floor in the container door.
- One vent within 150 mm of the top of the container on the opposite end from the door for cross ventilation.
- Minimum size of vents to be 300 mm x 300 mm for containers 6 m or less in length. Vents to be minimum 500 mm x 500 mm for containers greater than 6 m in length.
- Higher opening to have a wind vent device (i.e. turbine) to generate a venturi effect during low wind speeds and can't be directed towards a structure.
- See the City of Maple Ridge Fire Department Bulletin “Intermodal Container Storage” for more information.
[Intermodal Container Storage MRFD](#)



Shipping Container used as a Dwelling Unit

To convert a shipping container to a dwelling unit Registered Professionals (Architect & Engineer) are required to verify the construction complies with the requirements of the BC Building Code. The application would be submitted as an alternative solution in compliance with Division C of the BC Building Code with sealed drawings and applicable Schedule B's from the required disciplines. Alternatively, the conversion to a dwelling would need to occur in a factory certified to the CSA A277 Standard with the building being certified to the same standard.

Documents required with [Building Permit Application](#):

- [Letter of Authorization](#) AND [Owners Acknowledgement of Responsibility Letter](#)
- [Single Family Dwelling Building Permit Guide](#)
- [Single Family Dwelling/DGS Checklist](#)
- a site plan showing all buildings on site,
- a floor plan showing the size and use of all spaces,
- schematic drawings of plumbing, electrical and HVAC systems,
- details of wall, floor and roof assemblies,
- elevations showing the size and locations of all doors and windows (for spatial calculations)
- letters of assurance from an architect, mechanical, electrical, fire suppression and geotechnical engineers may be required depending on the size, use and complexity of the project,
- Structural drawings for the building including the foundation / anchorage, structural supports and design criteria signed and sealed by a structural engineer with letters of assurance.