

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 or Structure 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 definitions and Part 4, Section 402.25 of the Zoning Bylaw;

SHIPPING CONTAINER means the Use of an enclosed unit used for 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. Refer to Section 402 (Shipping Containers) of this bylaw.

402.25 Shipping Containers

1. A *Shipping Container*, when not used for shipping purposes, shall be permitted subject to the following provisions:
 - a. as a temporary *Building* or *Structure* for *Office Use* or equipment storage in all *Zones* during a phase of construction in progress, subject to issuance of a current and valid Building Permit. Refer to Section 402 (Temporary Buildings and Structures) of this Bylaw;
 - b. as an *Accessory Building* or *Structure* to an *Industrial Use* and located behind a continuous *Landscape Screen*. Refer to Section 405 (Landscape Screen and Landscape Strip Requirements) of this Bylaw;
 - c. as an *Accessory Building* or *Structure* to an *Institutional Use* and located behind a continuous *Landscape Screen*. Refer to Section 405 (Landscape Screen and Landscape Strip Requirements) of this Bylaw; and
 - d. as an *Accessory Building* or *Structure* to an *Agricultural Use*. Demonstration of need is required on a *Lot* classified as "Farm" under the British Columbia Assessment Act.
2. Where permitted, a *Shipping Container*, when not used for shipping purposes, shall:
 - a. only be used for, placed, stored, repaired, cleaned, upgraded, or modified to comply with the requirements of the *Zone* as if it were a *Building* or *Structure*;
 - b. be ventilated in compliance with the Maple Ridge Fire Department Bulletin - Intermodal Container Storage; and
 - c. not exceed a maximum Height of 4.5 metres as measured from the *Natural Grade*.
3. Refer to Section 401 (Prohibited Uses of Land, Buildings and Structures) for materials that shall not be stored in a *Shipping Container*

401.3 Prohibited Uses of Land, Buildings and Structures

- i. storage of the following in any *Shipping Container*:
 - (i) gasoline, propane, or any flammable, combustible liquid or compressed gas; and
 - (ii) explosives, as defined in the Maple Ridge Fire Prevention Bylaw No. 4111-1988.

PLEASE TURN PAGE OVER 

"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."

Shipping containers are only permitted on;

- Institutional zoned properties (P-1 thru P-6),
- Industrial zoned properties (M-1 thru M-5),
- Agricultural zoned properties (A-1 thru A-5) for support of the agricultural operation only, and
- R zones that permit agriculture as a primary use on the property (RS-1, RS-2 and RS-3) for support of the agricultural operation only on lots classified as “Farm” under the British Columbia Assessment Act.

NOTE: Properties located within the ALR are not required to demonstrate farm status.

No other zoned properties are permitted to have shipping containers installed for either permanent or temporary use except in compliance with (1)(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.

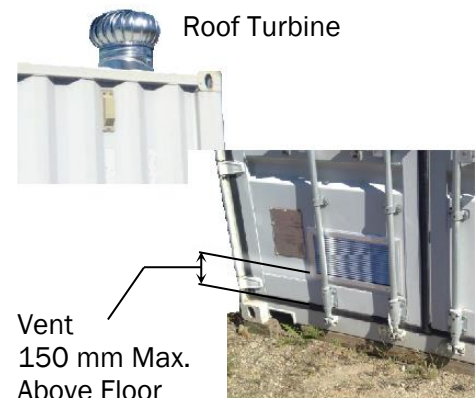
Building Permit Requirements:

- Commercial, Industrial, Institutional and Multifamily Permit Application
- Site plan showing location of container, setbacks from property lines & required “**landscape screening**”,
- Surface treatment below container,
- Layout of the containers interior (i.e. benches, shelving, racking, etc.),
- 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](#)



PLEASE TURN PAGE OVER →

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.