

County of Shenandoah



DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
Shenandoah County Government Center
600 N. Main St., Suite 107
Woodstock, VA 22664
(540) 459-6185

DETACHED ACCESSORY STRUCTURES GUIDELINES

Zoning: Zoning approval is always required for any structure being placed on your property. If your property is outside of the town limits, you are required to apply for a Zoning Permit with our office prior to the construction or placement of the accessory structure. You are required to fill out the attached site plan and turn in when you apply for the permit. If you are inside the town limits, approval from the town is required and approval must be sent to this office. Please contact the town for more information regarding their requirements and fees.

Building Permit Exemptions: A Building Permit is not required for one story detached accessory structures used as tool and storage sheds, playhouses or similar uses, provided the floor area does not exceed 256 square foot (18m²) and the structures are not classified as a Group F-1 or H occupancy.

Foundation Requirement Exemptions: One-story detached accessory structures used as tool and storage sheds, playhouses and similar uses, not exceeding 256 square feet (23.7824m²) of building area, provided all of the following conditions are met:

1. The building eave height is 10 feet or less above final grade.
2. The maximum height from the finished floor level to grade does not exceed 18 inches.
3. The supporting structural elements in direct contact with the ground shall be placed level on firm soil and when such elements are wood they shall be approved pressure preservative treated suitable for ground contact use.
4. The structure is anchored to withstand wind loads of 90 mph as required by this code.
5. The structure shall be of light-framed construction with walls and roof of light weight material, not slate, tile, brick or masonry.

Used as a Garage: R309.1 from the 2012 IRC, floor surface. Garage floor surfaces shall be of approved noncombustible material. The area of floor used for parking of automobiles or other vehicles shall be sloped to facilitate the movement of liquids to drain or move toward the main vehicle entry doorway.

Common Questions Regarding Storage Buildings and Pre-Engineered Structures

Q. Do pre-fabricated metal carports require a building permit?

A. Yes. According to the definition given from the 2012 IRC, a one story detached accessory structure that is used as tool and storage sheds, playhouses or similar uses, provided the building area does not exceed 256 square feet and the structures are not classified as a Group F-1 or H Occupancy is exempt from a building permit. Keep in mind that these types of structures would also require to meet the foundation requirements.

All accessory structures, no matter the size require a zoning permit from either the town or county prior to the permit being issued. This is to ensure that you are meeting the required property set-backs.

Q. Does my building need to be anchored down?

A. Yes. All buildings requiring a building permit must be anchored down to withstand 90 mph wind loads based on the 2012 IRC. This can be accomplished by using mobile home tie downs that can typically be purchased at your local home improvement store. The tie downs shall not exceed 12 foot between them when being installed or per the manufacturer's installation instructions. This is verified by our Building Inspector at the final inspection.

Q. What do I need to provide to receive a building permit with Shenandoah County?

A. Our office requires two sets of drawings for all structures. The drawings need to show how the structure is built as well as meeting the design criteria such as 90 mph wind load & 40psf ground snow loads. Zoning approval is required as previously mentioned. Pre-engineered sheds and carports shall have the engineered stamp by a VA licensed Engineer or Architect.

Q. What types of inspections are required?

A. If the structure is required to be set on a permanent foundation, the footings shall be inspected prior to placement of concrete. This is to verify the width and depth of the footing to ensure code compliance. Once the footings have been approved and the concrete is poured, the building can be constructed or placed on the footings, anchored down accordingly, and a final inspection can be performed. If electric is installed for receptacles or lighting, then a rough in inspection would need to be performed as well as a final electrical inspections.

These are the most common questions our office receives and if at any time you have questions or our requirements are not clear, feel free to contact our Plans Examiner, Mark Griffey, at 540-459-6187 or mgriffey@shenandoahcountyva.us and he will be happy to answer your questions.