



JEFFERSON COUNTY
DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

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<http://www.co.jefferson.wa.us/260/CommunityDevelopment>

BROCHURE CARGO SHIPPING CONTAINERS

Cargo containers, also known as intermodal freight containers, are standardized, reusable portable vessels that were originally designed for use in intercontinental traffic of freight and designed to be mounted on a rail car, truck or ship. When such containers are used as a building or structure, they are subject to the provisions of the building code as adopted and modified by Jefferson County.

Accordingly, a building permit is required when a cargo container is modified or altered beyond its manufactured specifications, or used for commercial purposes. The site and building construction plans shall be adequate to demonstrate compliance with zoning, building, and fire regulatory standards. Structural calculations are required for altered or structurally connected containers.

Engineering and calculations will be required for the following:

1. If the container will support any additional loads other than itself,
2. Any alteration or change to the container: create openings for windows or doors, etc.

Before purchasing or placing a container on your parcel, please contact our office regarding the zoning regulations and permitting requirements as they change according to your zoning. Cargo shipping containers must meet all critical area setbacks, even when used for storage. Customer Assistance Meeting can be scheduled here:

<https://www.co.jefferson.wa.us/Facilities/Facility/Details/DCD-Staff-Consultations-3>

Exemptions:

- Buildings or structures used for the storage of belongings, not designed for human habitation, and not used for commercial purposes. These structures shall not be a place of human habitation or a place of employment, nor shall it be a place used by the public. Storage buildings shall be exempt when less than 400 square feet, and

Exempt structures as noted above shall:

- Comply with all other building and planning site requirements as determined appropriate,
- Meet required setbacks and fire code access,
- Be separated by at least 10' from all other buildings or structures,
- Be non-heated without plumbing.

Code References:

- 2015 Internal Building Code Sect. 105.1- Permit Required
- Jefferson County 18.20.020 2(g)



Photographs are for example only and not necessarily permitted as shown.

*Each example shown will require engineering and calculations for the containers as they have been altered (cutting the container to add windows/doors, or supporting the roof structure.)

Containers that are freestanding, not supporting any additional loads, that have not been altered, do not require engineering and calculations.

MISCELLANEOUS STORAGE STRUCTURES



*2 cargo containers supporting a roof structure.

- A building permit is required for the cargo containers, the area between the containers, attic, loft, or 2nd floor as designated on plans.



- Self-supported roof structure over 2 containers or single container.
- Building permit is needed for placement of the container and roof/patio/carport.

RESIDENTIAL

Containers converted into a residence shall meet all of the Building Code, Energy Code, Plumbing and Mechanical Code requirements.

Building permits are required for each of the following to use a container for residential purposes.



*Container supporting a roof structure.



A building permit is required for the container and patio area. Note: The patio roof is freestanding with support in the front and rear of the container.