



# FACT SHEET

## SHIPPING CONTAINERS AS STORAGE

### Preamble

When a shipping container is no longer used for its original purpose (i.e. shipping or storage of freight) and is permanently placed on private property for use as storage, it is then considered to be a *building* as defined in the *Ontario Building Code Act*. When a shipping container becomes a *building* and it occupies an area greater than 10 square meters, a Building Permit is required. Shipping containers used for temporary storage remain subject to Parts 4.28 and 4.31 of Zoning By-law #2018-65.

The Town of The Blue Mountains Zoning By-law regulates the use of buildings on properties within the municipality. A shipping container placed on a property for the purposes of permanent storage is considered an *Accessory Building* and is subject to the provisions of the Zoning By-law for accessory buildings and uses.

Photo for illustration purposes only



### What is an Accessory Building?

An accessory building is a detached building, the use of which is incidental to the main use or building, located on the same lot and that is not used for human habitation.

### Zoning By-law #2018-65

(Reference Part 4.0, Section 4.3)

Unless otherwise specified elsewhere in the Zoning By-law, accessory uses, buildings and structures are permitted in all zones subject to provisions generally as follows:

#### Accessory Buildings shall not:

- be erected on a lot prior to the erection of the main building on the lot
- be used for human habitation or as a *home industry* or *home business* (unless expressly permitted elsewhere in the Zoning By-law)
- be located within an easement in favour of a public authority
- be located any closer to the front or exterior side lot line than the main building in the R1, R2, R3, C1, C2, C3, C4, C5, C7, M1 or M2 zones
- be located any closer to the front or exterior side lot line than the minimum front yard and exterior side yard requirement for the main building in the M3, A, SA, RU, I, REC, P, or OS zones
- be located in the front yard unless the lot abuts \*Georgian Bay and the building or structure is a minimum of 2.5 meters from the front lot line and no closer than 1.2 meters from an interior side lot line

### General Zone Standards

In addition to the foregoing information, Accessory Buildings shall be setback from all property lines a distance of not less than that indicated below:

Location	Minimum Setback Distance
Front Yard	Not permitted unless abutting Georgian Bay * (see foregoing information)
Interior Side Yard	1.2 meters from interior side lot line
Rear Yard	1.2 meters from rear lot line and 1.2 meters from interior side lot line

**Maximum Height in all Zones (except detached garages):** 4.5 meters  
**Maximum Height for Detached Garages:** 5 meters

**Maximum Lot Coverage – all accessory buildings on a lot:** 10%

### What is a Shipping Container?

A shipping container means a freight container used for transportation and storage of good, does not have wheels or include a motor vehicle or transport trailer.

### Temporary Shipping Container Use

The temporary placement, not exceeding 30 days in a calendar year, of one shipping container is permitted per lot in a Residential Zone provided the container is located on the driveway, is setback a minimum of 1.0 meters from any lot line, does not exceed 2.5 meters in height and width, and does not exceed a maximum length of 6.0 meters. Please contact Building Services for a temporary use permit.

### Building Permit Requirements

- Building Permit Application form
- Schedule 1 – Designer Information <sup>(1)</sup>
- Owner’s Authorization form
- Site Plan
- Construction Drawings including foundation design

Please click this hyperlink – [Accessory Buildings Permit Guide](#) – to access a standard permit guide that provides detailed information on the requirements for permit application submission.

(1) A homeowner may take responsibility for their own drawings so long as sufficient information has been provided in accordance with the *Ontario Building Code Act* and Building By-law in effect. Section D of Schedule 1 shall cite basis for exemption as “Homeowner”

### Questions?

Building Services – Town Hall (Second Floor)  
32 Mill Street, Thornbury, ON  
Telephone: 519-599-3131 ext. 290

Website for [Town of The Blue Mountains](#)  
Inquiries: [zoninginfo@thebluemountains.ca](mailto:zoninginfo@thebluemountains.ca)