

A QUICK GUIDE TO PERMITTING YOUR SHIPPING CONTAINER PROJECT

There is a lot of excitement and interest in re-use of metal shipping containers as buildings. Innovative and compact, these projects do require careful forethought as well as approvals, such as Permits.

Who can apply for a Building Permit?

Building Permits may be issued to either the property owner or a licensed & identified contractor.

Electrical & HVAC permits may be issued to either the property owner for their primary residence or a licensed and identified contractor.

Search for contractors that are properly identified with the department here: [Business License Record](#)

Other Approvals:

A building permit evaluates a project for conformance with the Kentucky Building Codes. In Louisville Metro there are additional regulations that may apply to your project.

Zoning:

Important zoning information may be relevant for the location of your shipping container. That information is held within the Land Development Code in the link and chapters referenced below: [Land Development Code](#)

Unit number, building size for zoning districts – Chapter 3

Building height and location – Chapter 5

Front, side, and rear yard setbacks – Chapter 5

Fence height and location – Chapter 4

Site Information

To learn the zoning and form district, as well as other useful geographic information about your property, you may use LOJIC mapping: [Lojic online](#)

Preservation Districts and Overlays:

Projects in the local Preservation Districts and Overlays require review and approval prior to issuance of a building permit. Find out if your property is in a preservation [Preservation Districts and Overlay](#)

Unique considerations for container buildings:

Shipping containers are simple metal boxes used for shipping products – they are not fabricated as buildings therefore must demonstrate compliance with building code requirements including snow and roof loads, interior live loads, lateral stability, energy code compliance, and interior systems.

As there is no specific standard in the current codes for converting these containers into buildings we rely heavily on the professional design community – architects and engineers – to provide the necessary analyses to confirm code compliance.

Primary modification items include: foundations, openings for doors and windows, roofs, attached patios and decks, interior finishes and equipment, electrical and HVAC systems, insulation and energy code requirements, utility connections. These must all be documented prior to issuance of a building permit.

Note: These are general comments only; your site may have additional requirements based on site specific conditions.

Utility Easements:

Your property may contain utility easements which may prohibit construction. Confirm the existence of any easements as you plan your project.

Metropolitan Sewer District (MSD):

MSD has requirements regarding flood plain, sewer connections, storm drainage, & erosion control.

Small Cities:

Smaller cities within Louisville may require review of projects within their city limits. Be sure to check for such requirements as you plan your project.

Applications:

Applications are available in our office or online at: [Building Permits](#)

A submittal should include a completed application form and drawings to explain the project. Refer to the residential checklist:

[Residential Building Permit Checklist](#)

Fees are noted on the promulgated fees and regulations chart and posted on our website at: [Promulgated Permit Fees](#)

Plumbing:

Permits are obtained from the State Department of Housing, Buildings, & Construction Division of Plumbing. Their forms, regulations, and contact information can be found on their website: [Division of Plumbing](#)

Inspections:

All permits require inspections by our department to ensure that all applicable code requirements have been met and that the project has been constructed according to the approved plans. The number of inspections varies according to each project but generally occur at foundation stage, framing or "rough-in" stage, and a final inspection. It is the responsibility of the permit holder to notify the department when the work is ready for inspection

Contractor issued permits

Building/HVAC/Electrical inspections can be requested either online by using the [Accela Citizen Portal](#) or call us 502.574.4400

Homeowner with your own permit [email us your request.](#)