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Storage Sheds

The 2012 Virginia Uniform Statewide Building Code dictates the requirements for permits and foundations for detached storage shed type buildings built on site. The guidelines below are a compilation of the applicable code sections, and we provide them in an effort to help you make an informed decision when purchasing or constructing a storage shed.

Definition of Detached Accessory Structure (Residential):

A one-story, detached accessory structure used as a tool or storage shed, playhouse, and similar uses complying with these conditions:

1. The structure shall not be used for any sort of habitable space
2. The structure is detached with a maximum eave height of 10 feet.
3. The maximum height from finished floor to grade does not exceed 18 inches.
4. 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.
5. The structure is anchored to withstand wind loads as required by code.
6. The structure is made of light-frame construction or manufactured plastic panels.

When is a permit required?

If the structure complies with the definition of shed and does not exceed 256 square feet it does not require a building permit. However, a zoning permit is required to check setbacks and easement requirements. The following conditions apply:

- The shed must be anchored to the ground at each corner of the structure.
- If it has electricity, it will require an electrical permit
- The shed must comply with Zoning Ordinance setbacks from all property lines. Prior to placing or constructing the structure on the lot, contact the Planning Department at: (540) 994-8619 for setback and easement requirements. No buildings shall be placed in a flood plain.
- ❖ **All pre-manufactured storage sheds and carports shall have a copy of the manufactures installation instructions submitted to the building department at the time of permit application. These instructions shall include detailed installation and anchorage requirements.**

What permits do I need?

The following permits are required:

- A Building permit is all that typically is required. The person who assumes ultimate responsibility, either the homeowner or the contractor, must apply.
- An electrical permit will be required if the structure will have electricity
- A mechanical or gas permit may be if the structure will be heated mechanically.
- A plumbing permit will be required if the structure will have water.

Sheds larger than 256 square feet, carports and light-framed garages all require building permits. If the shed, carport or garage is constructed on site the following requirements shall apply:

❖ 256-600 square feet in area:

A) A permit is required, including separate permits for electrical, mechanical or plumbing if applicable.

B) The construction documents shall include:

1. One copy of the plat showing the location of the structure in relationship to the house and the property lines. **Note: If structure is 5 feet or closer to a property line the requirements of fire-resistant construction will apply.**
2. One set of the construction drawings providing the following information:
 - a) Dimensioned floor plan.
 - b) Details of structure framing members sizes and spacing.
3. The structure must sit on continuous foundation walls or grouted masonry piers (if manufacturer's plans allow). The foundation walls or piers must be anchored to permanent footings at least 12" below finished grade. Typical permanent foundations include concrete piers (12" X 12" X 8") or a continuous concrete footings (12" wide X 8" thick) and leveled to grade. Provide details showing how the structure will be anchored. Auger type anchors or other suitable tie-downs may be secured to the concrete footings.

C) The following inspections will be required:

1. Setback
2. Footing inspection
3. Slab inspection (prior to pour) if structure is set on a concrete slab
4. Rough framing and final framing inspection may be scheduled together if interior framing is not concealed
5. Mechanical, electrical, and/or plumbing may also be done at the same time provided the interior is not concealed
6. Final

❖ **600 square feet and larger:**

A) A permit is required, including separate permits for electrical, mechanical or plumbing if applicable

B) The constructions documents shall include:

1. One copy of the plat showing the location of the structure in relationship to the house and the property lines. **Note: If structure is 5 feet or closer to a property line the requirements of fire-resistant construction will apply.**
2. One set of the construction drawings providing the following information:
 - a) Dimensioned floor plan,
 - b) Details of structure framing members' sizes and spacing.
3. The structure must sit on continuous foundation walls with permanent footing or turndown slab at least 24" below finished grade. Provide $\frac{1}{2}$ " diameter anchor bolts embedded into the masonry foundation walls at least 7" – anchor bolts shall begin within 12" of the ends of each sill plate and a maximum spacing of 6' on center. Provide details showing how the structure will be attached to the continuous concrete footings. Piers, augers, straps, etc. are not permitted.

C) The following inspections will be required:

1. Setback
2. Footing inspection
3. Slab inspection (prior to pour) if structure is set on concrete
4. Rough framing and final framing inspection may be scheduled together if interior framing is not concealed
5. Mechanical, electrical, and/or plumbing may also be done at the same time provided the interior is not concealed
6. Final