



Steel Storage Containers

What is a Steel Storage Container?

Steel storage containers (also known as shipping containers, steel cargo containers, sea cans, etc.) are not manufactured based on a regulation or standard that is referenced in the British Columbia Building Code (BCBC).

Temporary Use

A steel storage container may be used on a temporary basis and may be exempt from bylaw requirements when:

- There is a valid *building permit* for a principal dwelling on the property, and is being used in relation to the *building permit*. The steel storage container must be removed 2 months after occupancy is granted.

Permanent Use

For permanent storage use throughout the RDCO they are considered an *accessory structure*. In this case, a steel storage container is required to meet *accessory structure* regulations.

Contact Information

- Visit rdco.com/planning for Planning and Land Use information.
- Visit rdco.com/building for more information and to apply for a building permit if required.

This bulletin is for informational purposes only. Please refer to the relevant bylaws for more information: [Building Bylaw No. 1482](#), [Zoning Bylaw No. 871](#) and [Joe Rich Rural Land Use Bylaw No. 1195](#).

Zoning Bylaw No. 871 Regulations

[Zoning Bylaw No. 871](#) regulates building height, setbacks, site coverage and other development standards. Regulations relevant to steel storage containers include:

- No *accessory structure* shall be permitted unless a principal dwelling is established on a parcel.
- No *accessory structure* shall be used for residential purposes.
- No *accessory structure* is permitted in a *front* or *corner side setback*.
- An *accessory structure* may be located within a *rear* or *side setback*, but if it exceeds 2m in height it shall have a minimum of 1m *setback* from the *rear* or *side parcel line*.

Additional Information

- Modification or stacking of containers is not permitted without direction from a structural engineer and an approved *building permit*.
- All buildings must meet all fire codes for storage of flammable or combustible materials and liquids.
- Within the Agricultural Land Reserve, steel storage containers are generally allowed where their use is directly [associated with agricultural activities](#). Otherwise, they are not permitted unless the Agricultural Land Commission considers them to be [necessary for a residential use](#).
- A [Development Permit](#) may be required prior to altering land or placing a steel storage container in a hazardous or environmentally sensitive area.