CITY OF CITRUS HEIGHTS

BUILDING & SAFETY DIVISION

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Policy for the Use of Railroad Cars and Storage Containers as Structures

Purpose:
To provide guidelines for the application, review, and criteria for railroad cars, storage or cargo containers and other structures desired to be located on a private property as buildings and used for a specific purpose.

Background:
These types of large metal containers have been used for temporary storage purposes in the retail arena during the holidays and special events. However, recently, they have become more popular for year-round storage and as habitable buildings. Currently there are several companies and individuals that sell these types of containers for storage and other uses. Whether a permit is required or not, all planning, zoning and fire district requirements must be met.

Policy:
This policy addresses whether a permit is required for the use of a shipping container. A building permit may or may not be required for these containers based on the specifics of its use.

A. Whether a permit is required or not, the following is required to in both instances:

- Contact the Planning Division regarding zoning requirements (setbacks, screening, Use Permits, etc.).
- Contact Metro Fire regarding fire requirements (Use, location criteria, fire lane blockage, combustible storage, etc.)

B. PERMIT REQUIRED. The container will be considered a Type VB building with unrated exterior walls for purposes of exterior wall and opening protection (2022 CBC Chapter 7) and a building permit will be required when any of the following are involved:

- Proposed use is for human habitation.
- When any electrical, plumbing or mechanical work is involved.
- Where any alteration to the existing container structure is involved.
- When storage quantities of hazardous materials exceed those listed in CBC Chapter 3, Table 307.1(1) or 307.1(2).
- Proposed use is for refrigerated storage.
- Proposed use is a “mini-storage” type of business or food service business.
- When one or more containers are stacked upon another container.
- If additional square footage is being added to the container.
- When access is being provided to the top of the container

C. PERMIT NOT REQUIRED. A *building permit* will not be required when these containers are used solely for storage of non-hazardous materials and meet the criteria in Section A above. However, approval from the Planning Division and Metro Fire is still required. Placement of a container without clearance from Planning and Metro Fire may result in a Notice of Violation and an order to remove the container being issued.

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