



Planning & Public Works

Building and Code Enforcement

Jeffrey L. Rowe, CBO, Pierce County Building Official

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Tiny Homes in Pierce County

What is a tiny home?

Typically, a tiny home is between 100 and 400 square feet.

Can I build a tiny home in Pierce County?

Yes, subject to a building permit and all other applicable codes:

- Zoning
- Stormwater management
- Critical areas
- Fire flow
- Sewage disposal
- Water source

What construction standards apply?

The standards for construction are one of the following:

- International Residential Code (IRC) for structural, and all other health and safety elements. A tiny home that is IRC compliant will have the same standards as a larger home and receive an Occupancy Permit when inspections are completed.
- The Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Standards administered by Washington State Labor and Industries under their Factory Assembly Structures program. A tiny home built as a factory assembled structure under the HUD program will have a label to identify the use.

[More information about factory assembled structures](#)

What if the structure can't meet all regulatory requirements of the IRC?

Due to the reduced size, the structure may not be able to meet some of the prescriptive requirements of the International Residential Code. The Building Official has the authority to approve alternative methods or materials which meet the intent of the International Residential Code standards.

A word of caution

There are tiny homes available that do not meet either of the above standards. It is difficult to obtain permits for these structures since they may have not been built to code or inspected while under construction. Please confirm the standards before you purchase your tiny home.

One final note

For guidance and potential alternative methods, you can refer to Appendix Q of the 2018 International Building Code on Tiny homes. This Appendix has not been adopted by Pierce County, but it provides options that could be approved by the Building Official as an alternative method.