



City of Long Beach
Department of Development Services

**Cargo Containers Used as Storage in
Industrial Zones**

Information
Bulletin

BU-030

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It is not the intent of this Information Bulletin to address containers located within the Port of Long Beach, used as temporary storage at construction sites, or used as construction materials for buildings or structures (see Information Bulletin BU-031 / Cargo Containers Used as a Building Material).

Transport cargo containers (containers), commonly used on ocean going vessels, may be used for incidental storage when all of the applicable Zoning and Building Code regulations are satisfied. The purpose of this Information Bulletin is to clarify pertinent sections of the Long Beach Municipal Code (LBMC) that regulates the use and location of containers and establish the minimum conditions and requirements when the containers may be considered as a piece of equipment and not a building or structure for the purpose of Building Code regulation.

ZONING CODE REGULATION:

LBMC Chapter 21.33 – Industrial Districts states that outdoor storage containers require a Conditional Use Permit when located in any industrial zones. No other zones within the City address the use of containers.

BUILDING CODE REGULATION:

Applicants that intend to use containers for storage will need to obtain a building permit and satisfy all of the following criteria:

A. Plot Plan

1. The location of all existing buildings and parking spaces on the lot and the size and location of the proposed container(s) with respect to the buildings, property line, and/or parking lines shall be drawn to scale on the plot plan form furnished by the Development Permit Center.

B. Requirements and Restrictions

1. The containers shall be constructed of steel or aluminum with a minimum 14-gauge thickness (a wood floor within the metal shell is acceptable).
2. Containers shall not be used for human occupancy.
3. Containers shall be maintained in good condition and free of graffiti at all times.
4. Containers shall not be stacked on top of each other or joined in any manner.
5. Containers shall not have any electrical, plumbing, heating, or air conditioning systems.
6. Containers shall not be used to store hazardous materials unless approved by the Fire Code Official or food related products unless approved by the Health Official.

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7. The use of containers as storage may be denied if the Building Official or Fire Code Official determines such a request causes a violation of the LBMC, a hazardous situation, or an unsafe condition for the occupants of adjacent buildings or properties.

C. Location and Size

1. The containers shall be located at least 5 feet from all property lines adjoining adjacent properties and 10 feet from any buildings where exterior openings (e.g., doors, windows, etc.) occur.
2. The location of the containers shall not block, obstruct, or reduce any required exits, open spaces, windows, vent shafts, or required parking spaces (including access driveways) of the existing buildings on the lot.
3. Each container shall not exceed 10' (height) x 10' (width) x 40' (length) and shall have no wall openings except for an access door opening.

D. Accessibility Requirement

1. Containers shall not be used for human occupancy and is, therefore, exempt from the State's Accessibility Regulation in Title 24, Part 2, of the California Code of Regulations (i.e., California Building Code, Chapter 11B).