

Understanding “tiny homes & tiny houses” in WA & Chelan County

- A. For a ***site built (stick built) structure*** per the current WA state adopted code and subsequently by Chelan County please see the following applicable sections of the 2015 IRC (International Residential Code):

R304.1 Minimum area.

Habitable rooms shall have a floor area of not less than 70 square feet.

Exception: Kitchens.

R304.2 Minimum dimensions.

Habitable rooms shall be not less than 7 feet in any horizontal dimension.

Exception: Kitchens.

R304.3 Height effect on room area.

Portions of a room with a sloping ceiling measuring less than 5 feet or a furred ceiling measuring less than 7 feet from the finished floor to the finished ceiling shall not be considered as contributing to the minimum required habitable area for that room.

**Please note these dimensions do not include areas used for sanitary services such as toilet and shower rooms., Those dimensions are based on required clearances to an individual fixture. Please review IRC Section R307.1 Space, required for applicable clearances.

Fixtures shall be spaced in accordance with Figure R307.1, and in accordance with the requirements of Section P2705.1.

- B. Note that these referenced codes ***above do not apply to Park Model RV's*** as defined per WAC Chapter 296-150P

Note that these regulations may change per WA state legislature Bill ESSB 5383

Per RCW 19.27.031 the State Building Code Council must adopt building code standards specific for tiny houses by December 31,2019. Appendix Q of the International Residential Code is recognized by the Legislature as a potential basis for the adoption of new building code standards for tiny houses.

- C. ***For any structure that is build off site on a chassis, wheels, or skids and then planned to be brought to a jurisdiction*** to be placed on a piece of property you must first contact L&I (Labor & Industries). As they are the WA state building department for the construction of tiny houses that are ***built at offsite locations, such as a factory or even a back yard***. L&I reviews these plans and conducts the inspections for structure components of tiny houses built offsite from where they will be eventually placed in a local jurisdiction. L&I can only approve the construction of RV's, PMRV's and modular buildings; not how they are used or where they can be located.

To get a tiny house approved through L & I:

First, you would need to download and review the tiny house information packet. It includes the standards to which you need to design, plan, and build your tiny house.

You will need 3 copies of your plans. Plans must be stamped by a Washington professional engineer (PE) or architect.

Next, fill out the following applications:

- Tiny House Plan Approval & Insignia Request form (F623-039-000): This is your basic application and gets the insignia for the L&I inspector to place on your tiny house. The insignia is also important when talking with your local building department when you place the residence.
- Notification to Local Enforcement Agency (F623-013-000): This is included with a copy of your plan that is sent to the local building department upon L&I approval.

******Note: all of this information is found on the L & I website: <https://lni.wa.gov/licensing-permits/manufactured-modular-mobile-structures/tiny-homes/#building-a-tiny-house>***

For more information on What you need to know about “Tiny Homes” vs a Tiny House please see the following link from L & I: https://demo-public.lni.wa.gov/licensing-permits/docs/TinyHomeTinyHouse.pdf?language_id=1

Once Chelan County has received the NLEA you can then apply to Chelan County Community Development to have the structure permitted and placed through a Manufactured Home Building Permit Application. The Chelan County Community Development department will review the application and supporting documentation for land use regulations (e.g. setbacks and associated requirements) along with all requirements from the Building department for the placement of the structure (e.g. blocking, tie down, skirting, and so on).