

BUILDING INFORMATION SHEET

Tiny Homes

A Breath of Fresh Air

Tiny homes is an umbrella term which encompasses habitable structures that are smaller than typical residential dwellings and may be prefabricated for placement on-site or constructed on site.

The applicable building standards for a dwelling, is Volume Two of the National Construction Codes Series (NCC), as published by the Australian Building Codes Board, this requires a building to be classified according to its purpose and comply with all the appropriate requirements for its classification. Prospective purchasers of prefabricated tiny houses need to ensure the product specifications are compliant with the NCC prior to purchase or installation.

A Certificate of Design Compliance with a statement regarding compliance with the NCC must be signed by a registered building surveyor and issued by a building surveying contractor. A building permit is required before undertaking any site or construction works associated for or with a dwelling. All habitable buildings must be designed to comply with the NCC and obtain a building permit under the *Building Act 2011*.


**THE FOLLOWING ARE SOME OF THE
MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS
FOR A DWELLING TO SHOW DESIGN COMPLIANCE**

	REQUIRED FACILITIES: Class 1 building must be provided with a kitchen sink and facilities for the preparation and cooking of food; and a bath or shower; and clothes washing facilities, comprising at least one washtub and space in the same room for a washing machine; and a closet pan; and a washbasin.								
	ROOM HEIGHTS: Must be not less than 2.4m in a habitable room. (Living room, Bedroom, Theatre, Games, Movie etc). Must not be less than 2.1m in Kitchen, bathroom, hallway or the like.		HABITABLE ROOMS (Living room, Bedroom, Theatre, Games, Movie etc.)						
	ENERGY EFFICIENCY: A NatHERS energy efficiency assessment report to 7 stars and a compliant Whole of Home energy report is required.		NATHERS Nationwide House Energy Rating Scheme				COMPLIANT WHOLE OF HOME ENERGY REPORT 		
	SITE CLASSIFICATION REPORT: Generally used to identify the site classification and wind classification.								
	STRUCTURAL ENGINEERING: Certification of structural elements such as footings, slab, framing, roof, tie-downs, connections to suit site specific requirements.								

Recommendations:

Many advertised and imported expandable container homes are unable to demonstrate compliance with the minimum requirements of the NCC. In many cases, the documentation provided has been insufficient to verify compliance with Australian building standards, particularly in relation to structural adequacy, wind classification, energy efficiency, waterproofing, and certification of building materials.

Before making any purchases or deposits of a tiny home, expandable sea container style, or imported building, it is strongly recommended that you obtain comprehensive documentation from the manufacturer or supplier demonstrating compliance with the NCC and relevant Australian Standards.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Can I build a tiny home dwelling as an owner-builder?

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Yes. Owner-builders are permitted to construct tiny home dwellings.

- If the value of construction exceeds \$20,000, you must apply to the Building and Energy Division of the Department of Local Government, Industry Regulation and Safety (LGIRS): [LGIRS Forms](#) for an Owner-Builder Certificate.
- A Building Permit cannot be issued for works valued over \$20,000 unless an Owner-Builder Certificate has been received or a registered builder has been contracted to carry out the work.

For more information, please visit the [Department of Local Government, Industry Regulation and Safety \(LGIS\)](#) website, which outlines:

- The owner-builder approval process, and
- When a registered builder is required.

How long will my Building Permit application take to process?

Provided all required documentation is submitted and no further information is requested:

- Certified Applications (BA1): Processed within 10 working days from the date of lodgement.
- Uncertified Applications (BA2): Processed within 25 working days from the date of lodgement.

If additional information is requested, applicants will be notified and required to provide the information before the application can be determined.

What are the required setbacks for tiny home dwelling?

Residential Properties

- Tiny home dwellings are not generally permitted within the front setback area (front yard).
- The minimum front setback distance is determined by the primary street setback listed under Column 7, Table B of the [Residential Design Codes \(R-Codes\)](#).
- On corner properties (Secondary Street boundary), a tiny Dwelling must be set back in accordance with Column 7, Table B of the [Residential Design Codes \(R-Codes\)](#) for the relevant density coding.
- Side and rear setbacks must comply with Table 2a of the R-Codes, calculated based on wall length and height.

If you wish to propose setbacks less than the above, you must apply to the [Shire's Planning Department](#) for a setback variation.

Additional fees will apply in accordance with the [Planning Fees and Charges](#) schedule.

Fire Separation Requirements

- All Class 1a tiny home dwelling must comply with Part 9 of the ABCB Housing Provisions of the *National Construction Code Series 2022 – Building Code of Australia (Volume 2 – Amendment 2)*. [NCC 2022 Volume Two and ABCB Housing Provisions Standard](#)
- For more information, please contact the [Shire of Harvey's Building Department](#).

Bushfire Requirements

Construction in bushfire-prone areas in WA requires compliance with the Building Code of Australia and the relevant Australian Standard 3959 "Construction of Buildings in Bushfire Prone Areas" (AS3959).

Bushfire-prone areas are lands likely to be affected by bushfires due to surrounding vegetation. These areas are formally designated by the Fire and Emergency Services Commissioner under Section 18P of the Fire and Emergency Services Act 1998 and are shown on the Map of Bushfire Prone Areas maintained by DFES

See attached link to confirm if your property is in a bushfire prone area [Map of Bush Fire Prone Areas](#)

A Bushfire Attack Level (BAL) report will be required by an accredited BAL assessors to determine the relevant BAL for the proposed structure on the property. The Fire Protection Association Australia provides a list of accredited assessors.

See attached link for accredited Bushfire Assessors:

https://www.fpaa.com.au/Web/Web/Registers/BPAD_register.aspx

The assessed BAL will establish the construction requirements applicable to the proposed structure in accordance with AS 3959.

For more information, please contact the [Shire of Harvey's Building Department](#).

Disclaimer

This information sheet is provided as generalised information. While the Shire of Harvey aims to keep the content of this document current and accurate, the Shire accepts no responsibility or warranties for actions taken based on the information provided.

The Shire of Harvey encourages you to seek professional advice before acting on any information contained in this document.

Please contact the [Shire of Harvey](https://www.harvey.wa.gov.au) if you have any questions.

18th August 2026