



DEPARTMENT OF RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

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Intermodal Shipping Containers FAQs

(Rev: 05-28-24)

The purpose of this handout is to address frequently answered questions regarding Intermodal Shipping Containers. [Shasta County Code Section 17.88.280](#), was amended to provide permitting and development standards for temporary or permanent placement of Intermodal Shipping Containers. Permanent placement of Intermodal Shipping Containers is allowed in all zone districts subject to development standards and building permit requirements.

What is an Intermodal Shipping Container?

An intermodal shipping container is a metal shipping container which was or designed to be used to transport goods and materials by truck, train, ship and/or air, and which is used for the storage of goods, merchandise, or equipment, excepting any such metal shipping container that is on a chassis.

What size Intermodal Shipping Container is allowed?

The maximum dimensions of an intermodal shipping container allowed for installation are 40 feet in length by 8 feet in width by 10 feet in height. Smaller intermodal shipping containers are allowed; however, the length, width, and height dimensions must be equal or less than the maximum allowable dimensions.

How can I place an Intermodal Shipping Container on my property?

There are three types of placements allowed: 1) temporary installation, 2) permanent installation and 3) agricultural exemption.

- 1) Temporary installation is only allowed during the construction of improvements associated with a permitted use if a temporary building permit is issued. Temporary installation is subject to Temporary Structures and Uses requirements of the [California Residential Code](#) or [California Building Code](#).
- 2) Permanent installation is allowed for intermodal shipping containers that are repurposed for use as buildings or structures, or as part of building or structures if a building permit is issued. Permanent installation is subject to the permanent building permit requirements of the California Building Standards Code.
- 3) Agricultural Exemption installation is only allowed on parcels 40 acres or greater, that are designated for full-time agriculture by the Shasta County General Plan, and if an [agriculture exemption](#) is approved.

Why do I need a building permit to place an Intermodal Shipping Container on my property?

Intermodal shipping containers were added to the California Building Code in 2022. [Title 24, Part 2, Chapter 31 Section 3115](#) provides provisions for intermodal shipping containers repurposed as buildings or structures, or as part of buildings or structures. As discussed above, permanent placement of intermodal shipping containers requires a building permit. Please consult a registered design professional regarding design compliance with Title 24, Part 2, Chapter 31 Section 3115 for your project and the Building Division for building



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application requirements and fees. A registered design professional is required because intermodal shipping containers are outside the limitation of design from unlicensed persons allowed by sections 5537, 5538, 6737.1 of the California Business and Professions Code.

How many Intermodal Shipping Containers can I have on my property?

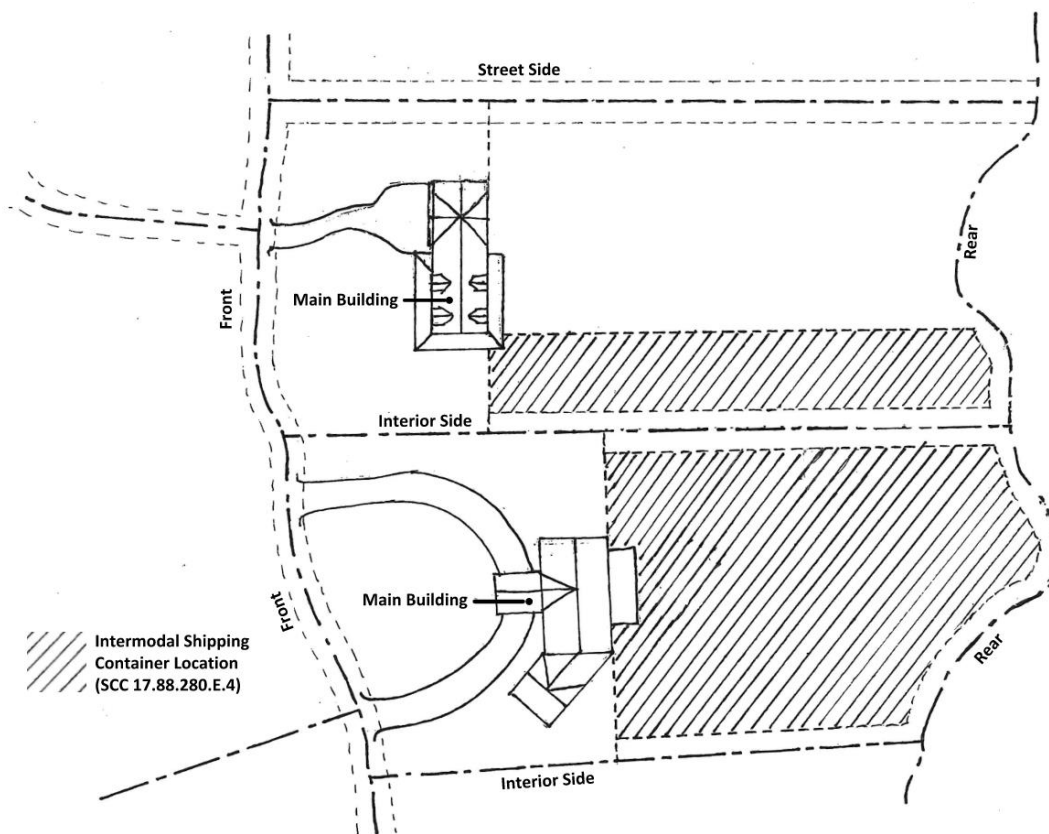
No more than one intermodal shipping container is allowed on lots of one gross acre or greater but less than five gross acres. No more than two intermodal shipping containers are allowed on lots of 5 gross acres or greater. The number of intermodal shipping containers allowed could be increased with approval of an administrative permit, if specific findings are made by the Director of Resource Management. With the approval of an administrative permit, the maximum allowed could increase from one to two on lots of one gross acre or greater but less than five gross acres, and from two to four on lots of 5 gross acres or greater. Consult the Planning Division regarding [administrative permit application](#) requirements and fees.

There is an Intermodal Shipping Container on my property now, what do I do?

A building permit is required for all cargo containers that have not been installed with an agricultural exemption or with a building permit.

Where can an Intermodal Shipping Container be placed on my property?

During the building permit process, a detailed site plan demonstrating the intermodal shipping container is located to the rear of the main building as viewed from the front lot line and, if applicable, the street side lot line is required.





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Can an Intermodal Shipping Container be stacked on top of another or installed on wheels or skids?

Intermodal shipping containers can not be placed on top or stacked. Intermodal shipping containers on wheels or on a chassis are considered Truck trailers, which cannot be permitted as a permanent building or structure but can be allowed subject to limitation in [Shasta County Code Section 17.88.280](#).

Can I modify an Intermodal Shipping Container by cutting windows or adding a roof spanning two containers?

Yes, subject to the provisions of the [California Building Code Title 24, Part 2, Chapter 31, Section 3115](#), other provisions of the California Building Code, and an approved building permit. We recommend consulting with a registered design professional regarding any proposed modifications.

My property is industrial zoned or designated or for full-time agriculture, what are my requirements?

Intermodal shipping containers may be used for storage on industrially zoned or designated parcels if screened from view, or on parcels larger than forty acres that are designated for full-time agricultural uses and appropriate building permits are issued or an agricultural exemption is issued.