Utility Sheds in Residential Districts

CITY OF SALINAS
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT
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What is a Utility Shed?

A utility shed is a one-story accessory structure that is enclosed on at least three sides, measures at least four feet in height, and does not exceed 120 square feet in area.

Utility sheds are allowed on lots with a single-family detached dwelling unit in the A, R-L, R-M, and R-H zoning districts, subject to the requirements of the Salinas Zoning Code.

Accessory structures that do not meet the definition of a utility shed are subject to the applicable accessory structure requirements of the Zoning Code.

What are the Requirements for Utility Sheds?

Utility sheds must comply with the following requirements:

1. **Size.** A utility shed may not exceed 120 square feet in area, measured from the projected roofline. The total area of all utility sheds on a lot may not exceed 240 square feet.

The area of utility sheds is included in, and is not in addition to, the maximum area permitted for residential accessory structures under the Salinas Zoning Code.

2. **Separation from Other Structures.** A minimum separation of 36 inches from other structures, excluding fences, must be provided on at least three sides of the utility shed. The shed must not impede emergency access.
3. **Location.** Utility sheds may not be located within a required front or corner side yard and may not project beyond the front or corner side yard façade or building line of the principal structure.

Utility sheds may be located within other required yards. However, within the front half of the lot, a minimum one-foot setback from an interior property line is required.

4. **Height.** The maximum height of a utility shed is seven feet when located within one foot of a property line. The roof may slope away from the adjacent property up to a maximum height of nine feet within required yards.
5. **Rain Runoff.** Utility shed roofs located within five feet of a property line must be equipped with a rain gutter or otherwise designed to prevent roof runoff from draining onto adjacent property.
6. **Plumbing.** Internal plumbing is prohibited within a utility shed.
7. **Other Requirements.** Utility sheds must comply with all other applicable City codes and requirements. An exemption from a Building Permit based on the size of a shed does not exempt the structure from other permits or City approvals that may be required.

Can Exceptions to Utility Shed Standards Be Granted?

Yes. The Planning Commission or City Planner may grant minor exceptions from certain utility shed height requirements in accordance with the Salinas Zoning Code.

Exceptions may be considered when:

1. The utility shed is screened by existing landscaping or natural features; or
2. The utility shed is screened by an adjacent legal fence.

In no case may the height of a utility shed exceed the maximum height permitted for accessory structures in the applicable zoning district.

The process for considering a minor exception is provided in Section 37-60.490(a) of the Salinas Zoning Code.

What is the Approval Process for a Utility Shed?

Utility sheds are allowed on lots with a single-family detached dwelling unit in the A, R-L, R-M, and R-H zoning districts when they comply with the applicable requirements of Section 37-50.010 of the Salinas Zoning Code.

Property owners are encouraged to contact the Community Development Department before installing a utility shed to confirm applicable zoning, setback, Building Permit, and other requirements.

Are Other Permits Required?

Depending on the size, design, location, and features of the proposed shed, additional permits or approvals may be required.

Building Permit requirements are governed by the currently adopted California Building Standards Code and applicable City regulations. Property owners should contact the Community Development Department to determine whether a Building Permit or other approval is required before construction or installation.

Private subdivisions may also be subject to covenants, conditions, and restrictions (CC&Rs) or other private property restrictions. The City does not enforce private deed restrictions.

How to Obtain More Information

For additional information regarding utility sheds or other residential accessory structures, contact the City of Salinas Community Development Department at (831) 758-7206.

Refer to **Section 37-50.010, Accessory Uses and Structures**, of the Salinas Zoning Code for current utility shed requirements.