

Modular (Industrialized) Buildings Information Sheet

Overview

An industrialized building consists of a structure which is wholly or in substantial part made, constructed, fabricated, formed or assembled in manufacturing facilities for installation on the building site so that concealed parts or processes of manufacture cannot be inspected at the site without disassembly, damage or destruction.

The PA Industrialized Act (12 PA Code Chapter 145) establishes uniform State standards and procedures for the identification, inspection and surveillance of the manufacture, assembly, installation, and overall quality process required for certification of industrialized buildings and components for use in communities in this Commonwealth.

Buildings or components within the scope of the Act must be manufactured from plans, specifications, and related design documents under a compliance assurance program in accordance with the requirements of the PA Industrialized Act and the regulations issued thereunder by the PA Department of Community and Economic Development (PA DCED).

The Act was originally established to address components for residential use only and was later amended to include commercial construction. [Regulations governing non-residential buildings](#) and components were published by PA DCED in February 2023.

All permit applications that include non-residential construction submitted on or after January 1, 2024, must comply fully with the program requirements established by [PA DCED](#).

Applicability

The PA Industrialized Housing Act applies to factory-built components, with the following exceptions:

- Site-built components, site-dependent components, and alterations.
- Structures or buildings classified as institutional buildings or manufactured (mobile) homes, as defined by the National Manufactured Housing Construction and Safety Standards Act of 1974.
- Residential buildings 400 sq. ft. or less in floor area, unless otherwise approved by PA DCED.
- Any relocated structure or component, unless it was originally installed under the Industrialized Housing Act within Pennsylvania and bears the required insignia.

The Act does apply to:

- Closed-wall commercial structures, regardless of size, including but not limited to guard booths and similar structures.
- Restoration of damage incurred prior to the issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy (C.O.). All such work must be completed in accordance with the approved permit documents and does not require additional permits.

Structures, components, and site dependencies that fall outside the scope of the Industrialized Housing Act must comply with all applicable requirements of the PBCOC.

All construction must comply with the Philadelphia Zoning Code and retroactive provisions of the Philadelphia Fire Code.

What is Reviewed by the Department of Licenses and Inspections (L&I)?

L&I reviews and enforces PBCOC regulations relating to the following:

- Excavations. If excavation is more than 5' below grade, a separate [excavation permit](#) shall be required.
- Site preparation.
- Foundation construction.
- Mechanical, electrical, plumbing, and fire suppression installations performed on-site, including utility connections.
- Site location, including required fire separation distance, exterior wall ratings, and exterior wall openings.
- Site and building accessibility.
- Construction, alteration or repair to the industrialized unit after installation.
- Change of occupancy classification.
- Any component added to or installed on site that was not manufactured prior to delivery on site (i.e. foundation, garages, decks, roof / wall covering, exterior stairs, distribution pipe, etc.).
- [Impacts on adjacent property.](#)
- Compliance with flood management regulations, where the installation is in the Special Flood Hazard Area.

Application Requirements

The following documents and approvals are required to be submitted with the application:

- Application information as required by Section 301.5 of the Philadelphia Administrative Code.
- Licensed Contractor information.
- Pre-requisite approvals required by Section 305 of the Philadelphia Administrative Code.
- Zoning Permit and associated site plan.
- Plans approved by third party evaluation agency certified by the PA DCED shall be provided.
 - Each page must be stamped and signed by a member of the evaluation agency and must include the date that it was reviewed.
- Soils Investigation Report.
- Plans depicting details for excavation, foundation, site-built elements, non-residential spaces, and flood protection, as required by the PBCOC.
- Manufacturer's Notice of Approval document from the PA DCED.
- A "Site Installation Inspection Report" shall be provided from the approved manufacturer.
- Electrical services, water service, and sewer connections.
- If a sprinkler system is included, hydraulic calculations with supply / demand graph sealed by a PA Professional Engineer and a completed [Water Available – Flow Test Data](#) form shall be provided.
- [Statement of Special Inspections](#) and [Special Inspection Duties and Responsibilities](#) forms, as required for excavations, foundations, site-built components, and any non-residential modular units.
- Required [Flood Protection](#) forms, if located in a Special Flood Hazard Area.
- [Structural Design Criteria](#) form, where the building includes site-built or non-residential components.
- [Energy Conservation](#) forms, where the building includes site-built or non-residential components.
- [Excavation Permit](#), if excavation is more than 5' below adjacent grade.
- Pre-Construction Survey, Monitoring Plan, and Adjacent Owner's Acknowledgement, where there are [impacts on adjacent property](#).

- Any additional documentation demonstrating compliance with requirements of Chapter 33 of the PBCOC, Safeguards During Construction.
- Any additional documentation demonstrating compliance with the Philadelphia Fire Code, including Fire Service features and Fire Watch.

Filing Methods

You can submit your permit application [online using eCLIPSE](#) or [make an appointment to visit the License and Permit Center](#) located at the Municipal Services Building to submit in-person.

- You must apply for a Residential Building Permit for one-and-two family dwellings and a Commercial Building Permit for all other occupancies.
- Indicate that the building is “modular” during the application process by selecting the appropriate box.
- You are required to enter information on electrical, water, and sewer connections and any additional detail on site installed utilities.
 - Residential New Construction for one-and-two family dwellings must be submitted through a [combination permit](#).
 - You may otherwise elect to submit site-built utility information through a combination permit or apply for separate trade permits.

Permit Fees and Review Times

- Refer to the [L&I permit fee schedule](#) for applicable fees.
- Additional permit fees: \$4.50 State surcharge; \$3 City surcharge; \$4.00 scanning / plan submitted on paper
- [Standard permit fees](#) apply to utility connections, site work, non-residential occupancies, and constructed areas

An application must include a filing fee of \$25 for one- and two-family dwellings and \$100 for all other occupancies. Balance of permit fee shall be due upon application approval.

Standard review times apply.

Inspection Requirements

Installers must comply with all regulations established under the PA Industrialized Housing Act and by the PA DCED.

The L&I inspector shall verify or inspect the following:

- Confirmation that components bear the Pennsylvania Insignia of Certification and the insignia of the inspection agency that evaluates and approves the designs, facilities, construction techniques, materials and quality assurance program used in each facility.
- Collection of completed “Site Installation Inspection Report”.
- Visual inspections for damages - no destructive testing or inspection is allowed.
- If any damage occurs prior to the issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy (C.O.), repairs must be completed in accordance with the PA DCED-approved plans. The L&I Inspector may, at their discretion, verify compliance directly or require confirmation from the third-party inspection agency.
- Inspection of building location, site-dependent conditions, and site-built components to confirm compliance with approved permit documents and PBCOC.
- Electrical service shall be inspected by a licensed third-party electrical inspection agency, as identified on the electrical permit.
- Collection and review of certifications and reports. Review the full list of [certifications](#) that may apply, including Special Inspections, Flood Protection, and Fire Watch certification requirements.