

**ZONING
INFORMATION
BULLETIN NO 3**

Watertown Charter
Township
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Accessory Buildings in Watertown Charter Township

Accessory buildings can include pole barns, sheds, detached garages, and other similar buildings. They do not include farm structures such as barns unless they are being used for non-agricultural purposes. For more information on farm structures, or accessory buildings in commercial and industrial zoned districts, please contact the Planning and Zoning office, or see section 28-559 in the Zoning Ordinance.

The Basics:

Accessory buildings over 200 square feet require building and zoning permits.

Accessory buildings are not permitted in the front yard. They must be ten feet from the principal structure on the property, and the drip edge must be at least five feet from the side and rear property lines. They can't exceed 18 feet in height.

Accessory buildings are not permitted without a principal structure, like a home, business or industrial facility. They are only permitted incidental to the primary use of the property. You can't put a pole barn on an otherwise vacant lot.

The size of accessory building you may erect depends on two factors: the size of your lot, and the lot coverage requirements.

The total area of all accessory buildings can't exceed the following:

For lots 10,000 square feet or less: 1,280 square feet

For lots 10,000 square feet to one acre: 1,600 square feet

For lots one acre to five acres: 2,000 square feet

For lots over five acres: No restrictions, except that lot coverage requirements must be maintained.

Lot coverage requirements:

The square footage of all of the permanent structures on the lot combined is known as lot coverage. Each zoning district has a maximum lot coverage requirement:

AP, AG (Agricultural) and Rural Residential: 10%

R-1, R-2: 15%

Village Service Center: 25%

B-1, B-2 (Commercial): 40%

LI (Industrial): 50%

For example, if you owned a one-acre lot in the AG zoning district, the total combined square footage of the structures on your property could not exceed 4,356 square feet. (One acre = 43,560 square feet)

Accessory buildings must be designed and constructed to coordinate aesthetically with the main building. Accessory buildings may not be used as a dwelling.

A note to those non-farmers who live in agricultural zoning districts:

Many people believe that if they live in the country and are zoned agricultural, they can build an "ag building" without securing a building permit. This is NOT the case.

Agricultural buildings are certainly allowed without a building permit (*though zoning permits are required*) if you are **actively involved in agriculture** and are using the facility to store such things as farm machinery, livestock, seed, feed or other agriculturally related materials.

Accessory buildings which will be used primarily to store items such as boats, RV's, recreation equipment like snowmobiles and jet skis, additional personal vehicles, motorcycles, and general personal storage like tools, bikes and lawn and gardening supplies, etc., do not qualify as agricultural buildings and require building and zoning permits.