Regulations for Lakeside Yards

The lakeside yard is the rear yard area between the dwelling and the lake. Improvements like accessory buildings and fences are restricted in size, height and placement in the lake side yard. These improvements are regulated in order to maintain the lakefront views.

Detached accessory buildings in the rear yard must:

- Not exceed 8 feet in height, measured from the average grade to the top of the roof.
- Not exceed 80 square feet in area.
- Be setback a minimum of 10 feet from the side property lines and three feet from the lakeside (rear) property line.

Fences in lakeside (rear) yard must:

- Not exceed 48 inches in height.
- Be constructed of chain-link, split rail or wire.
- No permit is required for lakeside fences.

03/14

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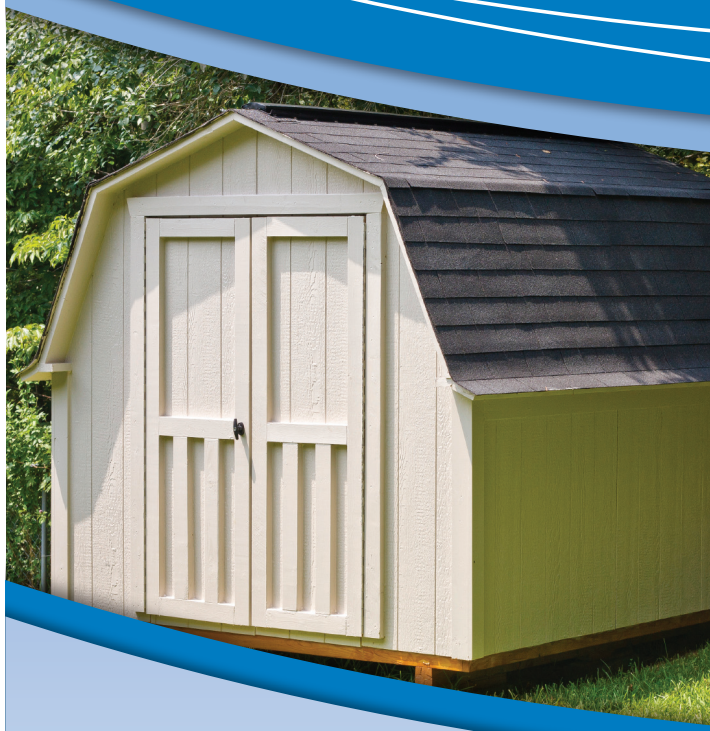
Department of Community Development
7900 South Westnedge Avenue
Portage, MI 49002

Guidelines for Accessory Buildings on Residential Property



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Requirements for All Residential Accessory Buildings

The dwelling is generally the main or principal building on residentially zoned property. Any other improvement on the property, either attached or detached to the dwelling, is an accessory building or structure.

1. A permit is required to build an accessory building.
2. A dwelling must generally exist on the zoning lot in order to build an accessory building or structure.
3. All setback measurements are taken from the property lines. A property survey may be necessary or even required prior to construction to ensure property line location and accurate measurement of the setbacks.
4. All buildings (main and accessory) may cover a maximum of 25 percent of the area of the zoning lot.
5. The total area of accessory buildings, (attached and detached) may not exceed the ground floor living area of the dwelling unless the property is unplatted, over two acres and Planning Commission approval is obtained.
6. A 10-foot separation must exist between all main buildings and detached buildings and structures such as pools.

Additional Standards for DETACHED Accessory Buildings

1. Detached accessory building setbacks cannot be less than three-feet from side and rear property lines if located completely in the rear yard.
2. Detached accessory buildings and structures located in the side or front yards must meet the minimum setbacks established on the property.
3. Detached accessory buildings may not exceed 14-feet in height, measured from the average grade to the roof midpoint.
4. A detached accessory building may cover up to 20 percent of the required rear yard. The required rear yard is determined by multiplying the required dwelling setback of 40 feet by the width of the property. A 100-foot wide lot would permit the following maximum detached accessory building size:

   (100 ft. x 40 ft.) x .20 = 800 square feet.

Property not meeting the minimum lot area or width requirements for the zoning district may include the entire rear yard area between the dwelling and rear property line in determining detached accessory building maximum size.

Additional Standards for ATTACHED Accessory Buildings

1. Setbacks are the same as those established for the dwelling. See One-Family Residential Zoning Regulations brochure for setback information.
2. Building height can not exceed 25 feet for lots less than 80 feet in width. Building heights of up to 40 feet may be permitted on lots 80 feet wide or greater. Building height is measured from average grade to the midpoint of the peak and eaves for a sloped roof.

Additional Standards for Accessory Structures

Pools and decks also require building permits and have separate requirements which may be obtained from the Department of Community Development. For more information, contact:

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