MEMORANDUM

Date: February 15, 2019 (replaces October 21, 2015 Tiny Homes in North Carolina memo)

To: Code Officials, Manufacturers, Consumers, and other Interested Parties

From: C. Patrick Walker, PE
Technical Services Manager
Manufactured Building Division
Office of State Fire Marshal/NC Department of Insurance

Re: Guidelines for Tiny Homes in North Carolina

There has been a nationwide movement recently regarding the usage of “Tiny Homes” as a viable single-family dwelling. Tiny Homes are acceptable as permanent single-family dwellings in North Carolina provided they meet the following minimum requirements.

NOTE: This is not intended to be an all-inclusive list of requirements. All code references are to the North Carolina State Residential Code, 2018 edition unless otherwise noted.

Tiny Homes in North Carolina

Administrative Requirements

1. Must be permitted by the local building official having jurisdiction over the building site – Section 106.1 - NC Administrative Code and Policies, 2018 Edition
2. Must be of open construction so unit can be fully inspected by the local building official – Section 107.1 - NC Administrative Code and Policies, 2018 Edition
3. May be constructed of closed construction at an off-site location if the off-site construction is inspected and certified under the NC Modular Construction Program. NC General Statute GS § 143-139.1
4. Must meet local zoning and set-back requirements as applicable
5. Must meet community protective covenant requirements as applicable

Construction Requirements

1. Unit and its foundation must comply with the North Carolina State Residential Code, 2018 Edition – Section 101.3.2.10 NC Administrative Code.
2. Habitable Space is defined as a space in a building for living, sleeping, eating or cooking. Bathrooms, toilet rooms, closets, halls, storage or utility spaces and similar areas are not considered habitable spaces. - Section R202
3. Habitable rooms must have not less than 70 square feet (6.5 m²) of floor area - *Section R304.1* - Exceptions: Kitchens
4. Habitable rooms must not be less than 7 feet (2134mm) in any horizontal dimension - *Section R304.2*
5. Ceilings Height Effect on Room Area – Portions of a sloped ceiling measuring less than 5 ft. or a furred ceiling measuring less than 7 ft. (2134mm) from the finished floor the finished ceiling shall not be considered as contributing to the minimum required habitable area for that room. *Section R304.3*
6. Ceiling heights must be a minimum 7 foot (2134mm) in habitable spaces, hallways, bathrooms, and toilet rooms – *Section R305*
7. Every dwelling unit must have toilet facilities – water closet, lavatory, and a bathtub or shower – *Section R306.1*
8. Must have a kitchen area with a sink – *Section R306.2*
9. All plumbing fixtures must be connected to a sanitary sewer or to an approved private sewage disposal system – *Section R306.3* (Storage tanks are not acceptable)
10. Must be provided with a heating facility – *Section R303.8*
11. Must meet the means of egress requirements - *Section R311*
12. Must meet the energy conservation requirements – *Section N1101.1*
13. **IF the unit is constructed through the NC Modular Construction Program**, the unit must also meet the following minimum construction and design standards for modular homes - *NC General Statute GS § 143-139.1.1,*
   (1) Roof pitch. - For homes with a single predominant roofline, the pitch of the roof shall be no less than five feet rise for every 12 feet of run.
   (2) Eave projection. - The eave projections of the roof shall be no less than 10 inches, which may not include a gutter around the perimeter of the home, unless the roof pitch is 8/12 or greater.
   (3) Exterior wall. - The minimum height of the exterior wall shall be at least seven feet six inches for the first story.
   (4) Siding and roofing materials. - The materials and texture for the exterior materials shall be compatible in composition, appearance, and durability to the exterior materials commonly used in standard residential construction.
   (5) Foundations. - The home shall be designed to require foundation supports around the perimeter. The supports may be in the form of piers, pier and curtain wall, piling foundations, a perimeter wall, or other approved perimeter supports. (1971, c. 1099; 1989, c. 653, s. 2; 2003-400, s. 17.)
14. **IF the unit is constructed through the HUD Manufactured Housing Construction Program** the unit must also contain a minimum of 320 sq. ft. of floor area when erected. *24 CFR 3280.2 - Definition of Manufactured Home*
NCDOI NOTE: This memo addresses structures intended for use as a permanent single-family dwelling. Units that are manufactured and certified by the Recreational Vehicular Industry Association (RVIA) are considered recreational vehicles and should be treated as such.

NCDOI NOTE: See the NCDOI Recreational Park Trailer Memo for Requirements for Recreational Park Trailers (Park Models, Park Model RV’s)