


# BC BUILDING CODE INTERPRETATION COMMITTEE

A joint committee with members representing  
**AIBC, EGBC, BOABC**

**File No: 18-0265**

**INTERPRETATION**

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Interpretation Date:	July 19, 2023
Building Code Edition:	BC Building Code 2018
Subject:	Use of Containers as a Building for Storage
Keywords:	Shipping containers, building, storage
Building Code Reference(s):	Division A, Subclause 1.1.1.1.(2)(f)(ii), Subsection 1.4.1.2.
<b>Question:</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Can a shipping container, or group of shipping containers, be used for temporary storage on private property without having to meet all the requirements of the building code?</li><li>2. Can a shipping container, or group of shipping containers, be used for permanent storage on private property without having to meet all the requirements of the building code?</li></ol>
<b>Interpretation:</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Yes (with permission of the authority having jurisdiction) Subclause 1.1.1.1.(2)(f)(ii) waives the requirements of the building code to seasonal storage buildings if acceptable to the AHJ. If there is a group of storage containers, the AHJ may require the owner to demonstrate that the group of containers does not constitute a safety hazard.</li><li>2. Yes (some provisions of the building code may not apply) A shipping container that is used for permanent storage does meet the definition of “building” in Subsection 1.4.1.2. as indicated below: <i>“Building means any structure used or intended for supporting or sheltering any use or occupancy”.</i> So, shipping containers that are used for permanent storage would have to meet the applicable requirements of the building code. The specific requirements should be reviewed with the authority having jurisdiction.</li></ol> <p> _____ Patrick Shek, P.Eng., CP, FEC, Committee Chair</p>
<p>The views expressed are the consensus of the joint committee with members representing AIBC, EGBC and BOABC, which form the BC Building Code Interpretation Committee. The Building and Safety Standards Branch, Province of BC and the City of Vancouver participate in the committee’s proceedings with respect to interpretations of the BC Building Code. The purpose of the committee is to encourage uniform province wide interpretation of the BC Building Code. These views should not be considered as the official interpretation of legislated requirements based on the BC Building Code, as final responsibility for an interpretation rests with the local <i>Authority Having Jurisdiction</i>. The views of the joint committee should not be construed as legal advice.</p>	

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For an unheated permanent storage shipping container, some of the building code requirements may not apply.

The AHJ may require the owner to demonstrate compliance to the applicable portions of the building code, and to identify which portions of the building code are not applicable.



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Patrick Shek, P.Eng., CP, FEC, Committee Chair

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