



DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

621 Sheridan Street, Port Townsend, WA 98368

Tel: 360.379.4450 | Fax: 360.379.4451

Web: www.co.jefferson.wa.us/communitydevelopment

E-mail: dcd@co.jefferson.wa.us

BROCHURE YURT

WHAT IS A YURT?

Yurts are typically round fabric membrane covered structures (tents), often constructed on a raised platform. Yurts are not to be confused with round houses which are of a similar size and shape but constructed of durable materials and more traditional construction.

CAN A YURT SERVE AS A FULL TIME RESIDENCE?

Typically not, yurts are regarded as temporary, recreational structures such as a tent and are therefore not intended for permanent residence. In order to qualify as a dwelling, it must meet the standards of building and energy codes adopted by the County. Plumbing, sanitation and electrical are not permitted in these structures. [Washington State Energy code](#) cannot be applied to these structures and an occupancy certificate cannot be issued.

CAN A YURT BE AN ADU?

Accessory dwelling units are an additional dwelling that can be added to some properties, provided that they meet certain conditions for zoning and septic capacity requirements. Yurts are not considered a dwelling so they do not comply. Examples of an ADU include tiny homes, mother in law houses, round houses, bunk houses, manufactured homes, and guest cottages.

WHAT DOES TEMPORARY MEAN?

As the purpose of these structures is for temporary recreational use, the erection of the support structure fabric membrane is 180 days and less than 500 sq./ft. The platform may require a building permit and may be left as a permanent structure. To review additional requirements for temporary membrane structure you can refer to [International Building Code Chapter 3102](#).

YURTS ARE ALLOWED, BUT NOT AS A DWELLING. SO, WHAT CAN I DO WITH MY YURT?

You may use your yurt as a temporary non-commercial camping structure or as a storage building.

WHAT IS THE DEFINITION OF “NON-COMMERICAL CAMPING”

Overnight and short duration (not in excess of 180 days) occupancy occur when:

- 1) No fee is paid or charged for such occupancy; and |
- 2) Such occupancy is in conformance with any applicable State or Federal regulations; and
- 3) No permanent structure is installed and no permanent changes are made to the property; and
- 4) Adequate sanitation is available. Contact Environmental Health M-F 9:00-10:30am 360-385-9444 to learn what is required for short term sanitation.

WHAT ABOUT THE PLATFORM?

Deck construction up to 400 square feet is allowed without a permit if the following criteria is met, deck is not more than 30” off of the ground and is independently supported. NO plumbing or electrical work is included in this provision. This means a yurt platform roughly 22.5” in diameter not more than 30” off the ground, and used for storage or recreation (deck) would not require a permit. Construction needs to be built to current IRC prescriptive building codes. Platforms larger than 400 sq. ft and/or more than 30” off of the ground require a permit and review through DCD. If your platform does not meet the above requirement contact our office M-F 9:00–4:30 at 360-379-4450 or dcd@co.jefferson.wa.us for permit requirements.

ARE THERE ANY OTHER REGULATIONS THAT I NEED TO BE AWARE OF?

Yes. Other regulations that may influence your project include, but are not limited to, Zoning Regulations (such as setback requirements), Critical Areas, Noise, Sanitation, Road and Driveway Regulations, and Outdoor Lighting Regulations. Contact planning@co.jefferson.wa.us to see if your property has any land use restrictions or schedule a [Customer Assistance Meeting meeting](#).