

HIGHLIGHTS FROM ONTARIO'S NEW BUILD OR BUY A TINY HOME GUIDE

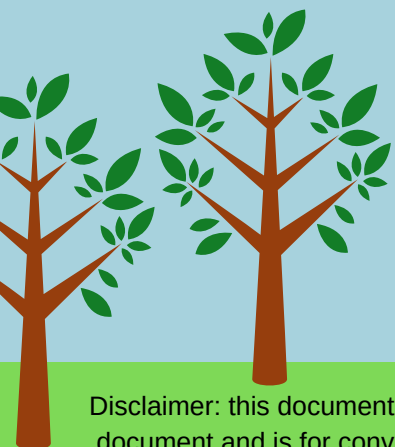
This document provides an overview of some of the key elements of the guidance document released by the **Ontario Government in 2019 "Build or Buy a Tiny Home"** to help those who are looking to invest in a new tiny home in Ontario which is intended for year round use.

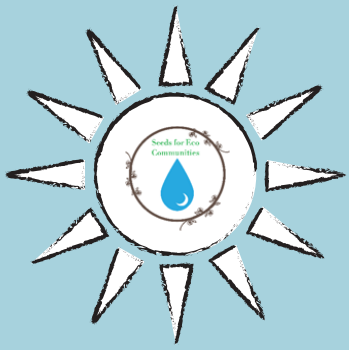
3 Key Requirements To Build or Buy a Tiny Home

- 1) **Property Suitability** - ensure your local zoning by-laws can accommodate your new tiny home, consider lot size, set backs, access to emergency services as well as other local rules.
- 2) **Inspection Requirements** - if purchasing a tiny home, look into which Canadian Standards Association (CSA) certifications may be needed to ensure the necessary Building Code inspection and monitoring requirements have taken place during the build of your new home.
- 3) **Warranty Protection** - check out the Ontario Builder Directory administered by Tarion, you can find information on the Tarion website outlining the types of homes covered and not covered and this website is also a resource to see if your builder is registered.

Tiny homes built in Ontario must be a private self contained unit with a living and dining area, kitchen, bathroom and sleeping area.

Despite their size, tiny homes must comply with the health and safety requirements of Ontario's Building Code, municipal zoning and other local by-laws.





Size of Tiny Home - size requirements vary from municipality to municipality depending on standards set out in local zoning by-laws. Some have minimum size requirements while others have maximums, in all cases it must be at least 17.5 m² (188 ft²), which is the minimum size in Ontario's Building Code.

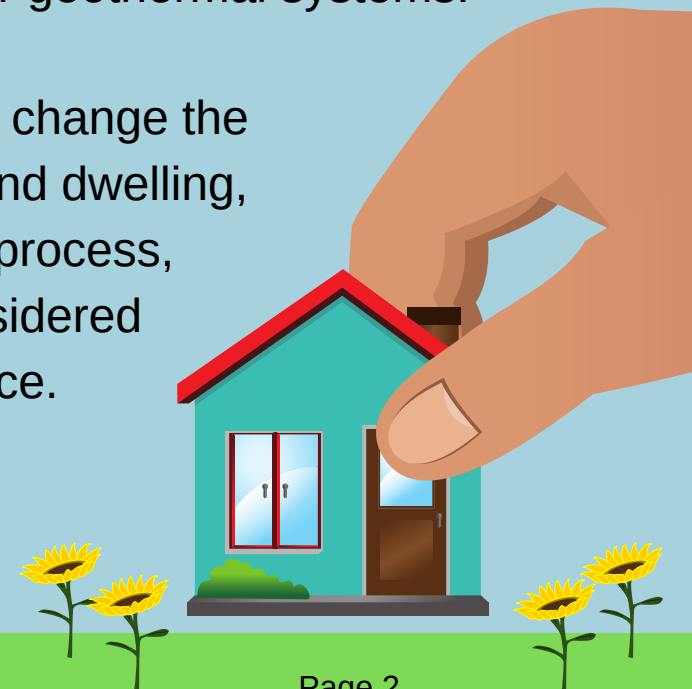
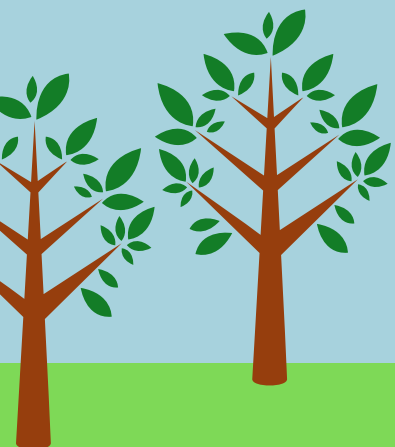
Consideration of Local Authorities

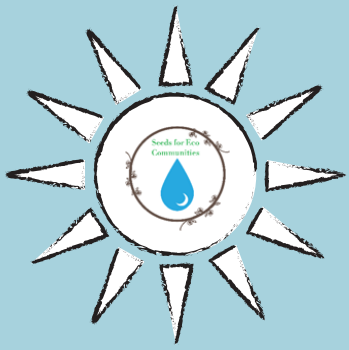
Municipal zoning by-laws should be assessed early in your project, speak to your local office as they set out the rules on the kind of buildings that can be built in your area. They can cover a wide range of considerations such as lot area, size and height of home, water and sewage services, permitted land uses, lot coverage and setbacks, parking, landscaping, etc.

In general, the Building Code sets out minimal requirements and municipalities may add additional requirements. Some rural areas rely on the **regional health unit** or the local **Conservation Authority** to enforce septic system requirements.

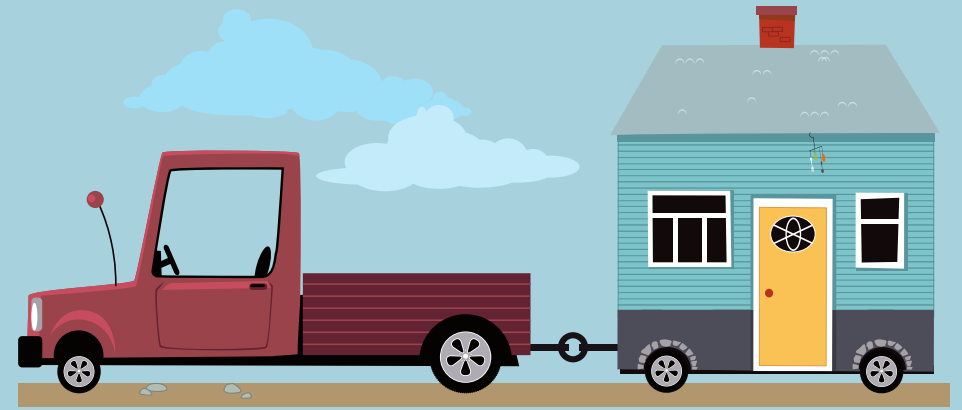
Essential Services (water, sewer and utilities) - depend on your location e.g., if municipal water and sewage services are unavailable - you may be able to connect to a well and have a compost toilet, septic system and/or leaching bed. In areas with no electrical service, off-grid buildings are permitted, see Building Code rules for solar panels or geothermal systems.

Variations - if you can't meet the zoning by-laws you can apply to change the zoning e.g., for small adjustments to setbacks, to allow for a second dwelling, etc. - work with your municipality early in the process, community engagement and input will be considered in the decision on your proposed variance.





Tiny Home on Wheels - are permitted, they are treated like a permanent building and there are rules to consider when you are transporting your tiny home.



Building Code, Permits and Inspections

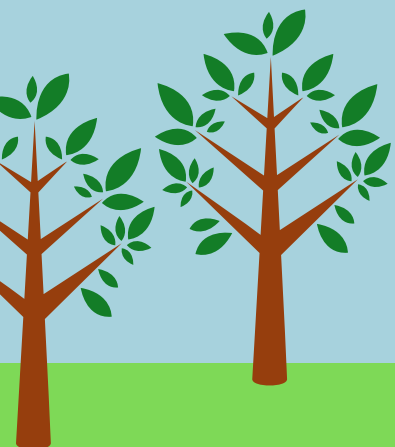
A **building permit is required** regardless if you buy a factory built tiny home or if you build one on site, in addition you must meet all technical requirements of the **Building Code** as well as other applicable laws which can be found in the Building Code e.g., municipal zoning by-laws.

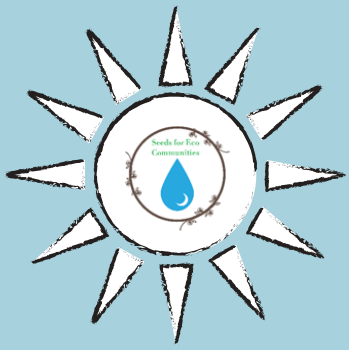
An on site building permit for a tiny home is similar to that of a single-detached home with variances for things like size of the rooms and related heating requirements for the space. For factory built homes check with your local office on permit requirements and ensure you purchase a home that is Building Code compliant.

To obtain a permit you will need to pay a fee and submit a completed application with supporting documentation, including construction drawings, most municipalities require 2 sets. Some municipalities also require a licenced contractor to do the work.

After your permit is issued and construction has begun, **municipal building inspectors** must review the work at various construction stages e.g., check framing, insulation, plumbing, interior finishes and other applicable Building Code items.

Don't forget it is **your responsibility** to inform the building inspector when different stages of construction are ready for inspection. Even factory built tiny homes require inspection of foundation, stairs, services, etc.





Building Code Specifics

Stairs, Guards and Handrails - ladders are not Building Code compliant, if you have 2 stories, stairs are required.

- Relevant Building Code provisions - Division B, Subsections 9.8.3 and 9.8.4

Room Size and Floor Area - the Building Code sets out minimum room sizes on dwelling units which varies depending if a wall is in place or not, permitted area can be smaller when using an open concept design

- See Table 1: Minimum space requirements for open-concept design and Table 2: Minimum sizes for separated spaces - on pages 11 and 12 of the Build or Buy a Tiny Home guide
- Relevant Building Code provisions: Division B, Subsections 9.5.4. to 9.5.9. and 9.31.4.2

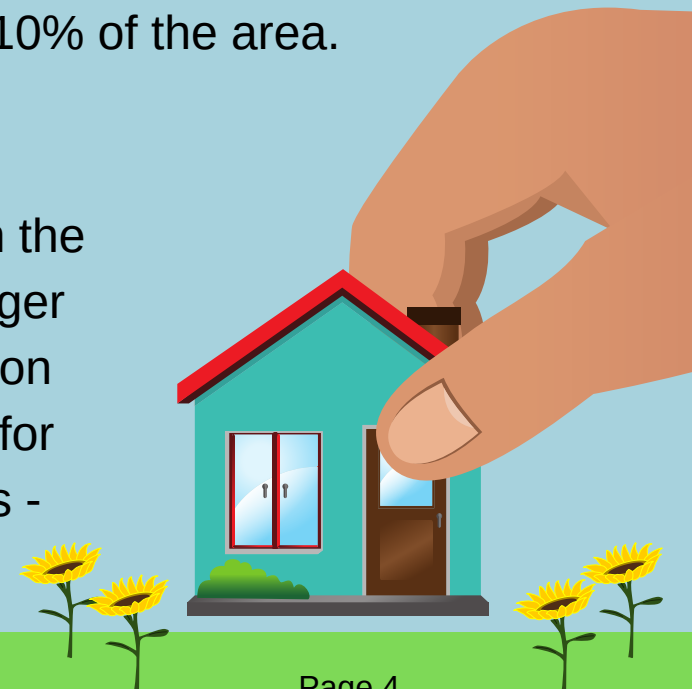
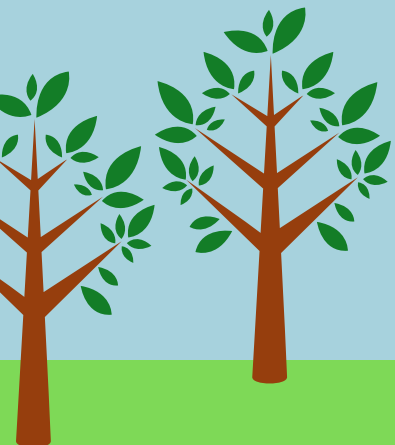
Ceiling Heights - the Building Code outlines minimal building heights for your various rooms, see Table 3: Minimum ceiling height - on page 13 of the Build or Buy a Tiny Home guide for further details.

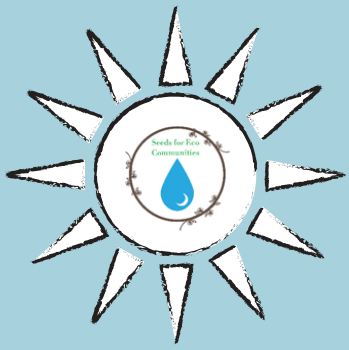
- Relevant Building Code provisions - Division B, Articles 9.5.3.1. and 9.5.3.2

Loft or Partial Second Floor (Mezzanines) - second floors are often used as a sleeping area in tiny homes. These mezzanines cannot be greater than 40% of the floor area of the tiny home and it must have a guard/handrail to prevent falls. If the mezzanine has walls all around it, then the size of the mezzanine cannot be greater than 10% of the area.

- Relevant Building Code provisions - Division B, Article 9.10.4.1

Windows - window size requirements depends on the size of your tiny home, larger units will require larger windows. See Table 4: Minimum window area - on pages 14 of the Build or Buy a Tiny Home guide for more details. Relevant Building Code provisions - Division B, Article 9.7.2.3.



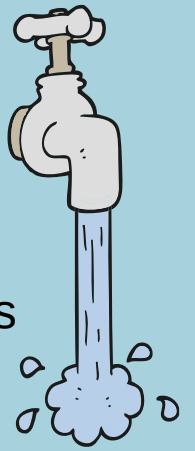


Hallway and Doorway Widths - the Building Code requires most hallways to be 860 mm (2'10") wide if a tiny home has two distinct spaces, however, some tiny homes will not have hallways because they will be open-concept. In some cases a separate exit door is also required. The exterior door of a tiny home must be at least 810 mm (2'8") wide swing-type door (not sliding), bathrooms must have doors at least 610 mm (24") wide - these can be folding, swinging-type or sliding doors.

- Hallways - relevant Building Code provisions - Division B, Subsection 9.5.10
- Doorways- relevant Building Code provision - Division B, Article 9.5.11.1

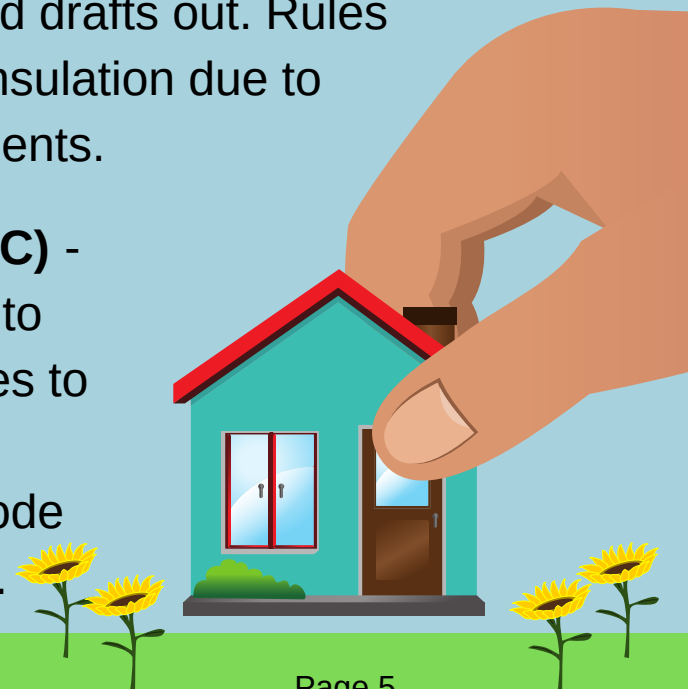
Plumbing - the Building Code requires your tiny home to have a hot and cold water supply as well as a sink in the kitchen and a sink, bathtub or shower, toilet or drainless composting toilet in the bathroom, installed by a qualified plumber.

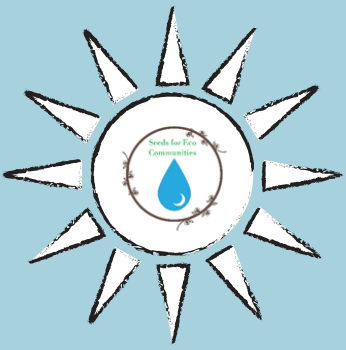
- Relevant Building Code provisions - Division B, Articles 9.31.4.1. to 9.31.4.3



Energy Efficiency and Electricity - Building Code requirements will ensure your home is designed with the right amount of insulation to keep moisture and drafts out. Rules vary by region, in general more northern locations requires more insulation due to colder climates. Work with a designer familiar with these requirements.

Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning (HVAC) - hire a professional to design your HVAC system to conform to the Building Code. Consider alternatives to a furnace such as a ductless split system or a baseboard heating systems. Relevant Building Code provisions - Division B, Sections 9.32.and 9.33.





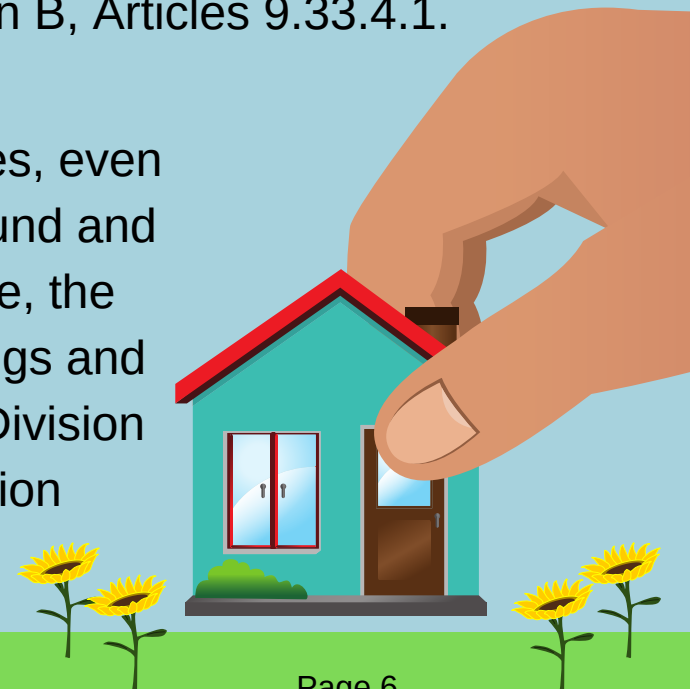
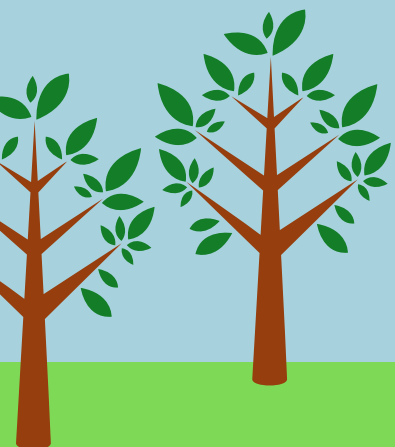
Furniture - the Building Code does not regulate furniture, consider unique ways to maximize your space such as multi-purpose couches, bunk beds or a fold away murphy bed for your tiny home!

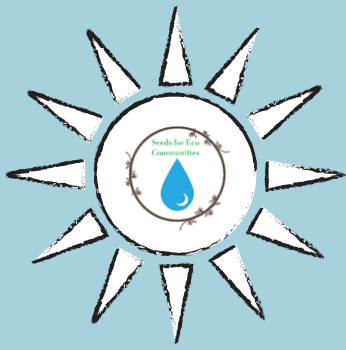
Safety - many of the same safety requirements for a regular home apply to tiny homes e.g., ensuring an unobstructed access route on the property for emergency services. Most single story tiny homes only require one exit door, however, if the sleeping area in your tiny home is located on a different level - the second level must have an exit e.g., door or window accessible from the inside and able to stay open on its own, specific size, etc.

Smoke alarms must meet the CAN/ULC S531 standard, depending on your layout several may be required. Carbon monoxide alarms are also required if your tiny home has an appliance (e.g., furnace, water heater or boiler) that uses natural gas, propane, other similar fuels or a wood burning appliance.

- Fire Safety - relevant Building Code provision - Division B, Article 9.10.20.3
- Exiting - Relevant Building Code provisions - Division B, Article 9.9.7.4
- Second Floor Exit - Relevant Building Code provisions - Division B, Article 9.9.10.1
- Smoke Alarms - Relevant Building Code provisions - Division B, Subsection 9.10.19
- Carbon Monoxide - Relevant Building Code provisions - Division B, Articles 9.33.4.1. and 9.33.4.2

Foundation, Anchorage and Grading - tiny homes, even if on wheels, must be attached securely to the ground and land must to graded to slope away from the home, the Building Code has detailed requirements for footings and foundations. Relevant Building Code provision - Division B, Section 9.15. and Article 9.14.6.1 and Division B, Articles 9.15.1.3. and 9.23.6.3.





Moving Your Home on Wheels - make sure your home is structurally suitable to be moved and the roads leading to the new location are suitable to withstand its transport, special transportation permits may be required from MTO. Check in on local applicable rules before your home is relocated.

Electricity - Building Code requires tiny home to have a light at the entrance and a light and switch in every room and space. Tiny homes must meet the same Electrical Safety Code as a typical home. See Ontario's Electrical Safety Authority for additional requirements including obtaining a separate electrical permit to do the electrical work as well as an ESA inspection, contact ESA directly at 1-877-ESA-SAFE or 1-877-372-7233 for more information. Hire a licensed electrical contractor to do the work, they can also assist you in obtaining an electrical permit and arranging for required inspections.

- Relevant Building Code provisions - Division B, Articles 9.34.2.1. and 9.34.2.2

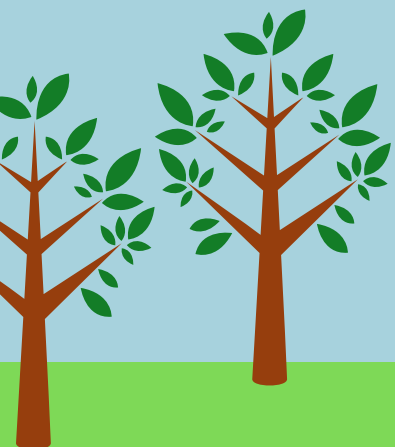
Factory Built Tiny Homes

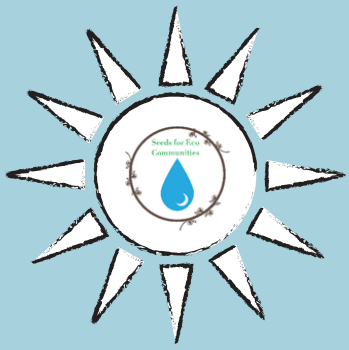
Check your local municipality to make sure a tiny home is allowed on your property and if any rezoning is required. Your factory-built tiny home must meet one of the two following CSA certification standards in the Building Code for factory-built buildings:

- CSA-Z240.2.1-09 Structural Requirements for Manufactured Homes
- CSA A277-08 Procedure for Factory Certification of Buildings

It is important to ensure your tiny home is suitable for your regional climate, consider temperature, wind, snow, rain and earthquake resistance.

Do not buy a tiny home that meets the CAN/CSA-Z241 Series-03 Park Model Trailers standard - as this only applies to seasonal buildings. Relevant Building Code provisions - Division B, Articles 9.1.1.9.





Useful Tools and Resources Moving Forward

Regardless of your project scope, there are many experts, tools and resources that can help you along the way. It is also important to contact a registered insurance broker to obtain the necessary coverage for your new home.

Consider the type of expertise you require for a successful build that is compliant with all provincial and local rules. For example think about hiring a Building Code designer registered with the Ontario government and ensure you get professional expertise from an engineer, architect and planner.

Other Useful Resources

- Ontario's new guide to "Build or Buy a Tiny Home", 2019 with Tiny Home Checklist:
https://files.ontario.ca/mmah_tiny_homes_en_20191129.pdf
- Additional Information on Ontario's Building Code:
<https://www.ontario.ca/page/ontarios-building-code>
- Ontario's Planning Act: <https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/90p13>
- Citizens Guide To Land Use Planning:
<https://www.ontario.ca/document/citizens-guide-land-use-planning>
- For more information on the qualifications of a provincially registered Building Code designer visit:
<https://www.quarts.mah.gov.on.ca/BCINSearchWeb/search.html>

Good luck with you project!

