

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.



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



Guidelines for Accessory Buildings on Residential Property

Department of Community Development

7900 South Westnedge Avenue • Portage, Michigan 49002
(269) 329-4477

portagemi.gov  CityofPortageMI

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 greater than 200 square feet in area. Although a permit is not required for accessory structures 200 square feet or less, the structure will need to comply with all zoning requirements.
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 30 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 plus 50% of the second story of the dwelling unless the property is unplatated, over two acres and Planning Commission approval is obtained.
6. A 5-foot separation must exist between all main buildings and detached buildings and structures.

Additional Standards for DETACHED Accessory Buildings

1. Detached accessory building setbacks cannot be less than five-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 16-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 rear yard is determined by multiplying the distance (in feet) between the dwelling and the rear property line.



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 30 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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