

Mono County Community Development Department

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Mountain View Fire Planning Frequently Asked Questions

PLANNING STAFF CONTACTS

- **April Sall (North County planner):** 760.932.5423, asall@mono.ca.gov
- General Planning: 760.924.1800 ccdcomments@mono.ca.gov

Please leave a message with your parcel address or APN and we will return your call/email as soon as we can.

For questions about building permits, including codes applicable to rebuilding and demolition permits, please contact Michael Jones at 760.924.1825 or mjjones@mono.ca.gov.

1. ***Can I live in a tiny home, recreational vehicle (RV) or trailer while cleaning up my property and rebuilding?***

Yes, no permit or fees are required to live in a tiny home, RV, or trailer on parcels experiencing loss of the primary residence. The property owner just needs to sign and return the Temporary Emergency Dwelling (TED) standards, and placement must be verified by the Environmental Health (Louis Molina 760.924.1845 lmolina@mono.ca.gov) and Building Departments (Michael Jones at 760.924.1825 or mjjones@mono.ca.gov). This provision may not be transferred to new ownership and only applies to the owner of the parcel at the time of the fire. Please be advised, however, that once the main home is rebuilt these vehicles can no longer be used as residences and can only be stored on the property except for certain land use designations, like Rural Mobile Home (RMH).

To initiate approvals, send a written request to place a TED to April Sall 760.932.5423, asall@mono.ca.gov.

2. ***Can I put a tiny home on wheels or a chassis on my property permanently?***

No, Mono County land use regulations currently do not allow a motor vehicle as a residential use and the Building Division has no means or authority to evaluate and determine the safety and livability standards of motor vehicles. Because tiny homes on wheels are licensed by the California Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV), they are considered motor vehicles and cannot 1) be distinguished from RVs, 2) be permitted under the California Building Code (CBC) to ensure public health and safety standards, or 3) converted into real property. If a process involving inspection of the tiny home on wheels during construction was available and approved by the State to certify compliance with the CBC, similar to manufactured homes, then resolutions to the above issues would be possible. However, such an inspection and certification process would be resolved at the state level and is outside Mono County's authority and control.

3. ***How long do I have to rebuild my permanent residence?***

There is no timeline on when you must rebuild. However, the TED approval to live in an RV or trailer onsite provides for up to 18 months to submit a building permit for the main residence, and then is valid for

another three years to complete construction. The timeframe to submit a building permit can be extended by the Community Development Director based on justification.

4. *What can I do with the TED or RV after my new residence is built and I have received a Certificate of Occupancy?*

Once the new residence is cleared for occupancy, the TED can no longer be inhabited on the property. It can be stored for personal travel use but not hooked up to utilities and occupied. There may be a few exceptions depending on the land use designation.

5. *What are the setbacks for my property?*

Please contact April Sall (760.932.5423, asall@mono.ca.gov) to verify setbacks for your property prior to developing rebuilding plans, and please provide your address or Assessor Parcel Number (APN). Note that setbacks on properties over an acre are governed by state fire safe standards enforced by CalFire. CalFire setbacks for properties larger than an acre are a minimum of 30 feet from all property lines. There is also a 30-foot setback from all streams, waterways, or mapped irrigation ditches.

6. *New Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) regulations*

New state law went into effect in 2020 that provides for up to three units on every residential property, as follows:

- A main residential unit.
- A junior accessory dwelling unit (JADU): An attached unit that is no larger than 500 square feet, has cooking facilities, and is contained entirely within an existing single-family structure. A bathroom may be shared with the main residence.
- A detached accessory dwelling unit (ADU): One-bedroom units under 800 square feet or two-bedroom units under 1,000 square feet require only a building permit. Larger units require an additional planning permit (Director Review or Use Permit, depending on size).

7. *What are considered "existing nonconforming" uses?*

"Nonconforming" means the existence or use of land, a building, a structure or portion thereof, that does not conform to the regulations of the land development regulations and that lawfully existed at the time the regulations with which it does not conform became effective. Common nonconforming uses include noncompliant setbacks and overhead power connections.

For a single-family home or accessory buildings destroyed beyond 50% of value (excluding intentional demolition), the nonconformance may only be reconstructed as originally built if evidence is provided that it was legally permitted. For example, power connections are required to be undergrounded, but overhead connections would be permitted if 1) a previous Director Review permitting overhead lines exists, 2) a previous building permit showing the overhead lines exists, or 3) the structure was built prior to this regulation (before 1991). To request a search of Mono County archives for any potential permitting documents, please contact April Sall (760.932.5423, asall@mono.ca.gov) or Michael Jones (760.924.1825, mjjones@mono.ca.gov).

For all other structures damaged or destroyed beyond 50% of value, the reconstruction must meet General Plan requirements or be permitted under a use permit.

For the complete regulations, please see Chapter 34 in the Mono County General Plan (MCGP) Land Use Element.

8. *What are the County fees associated with permits for the Mountain View Fire?*

County permit fees for building permits, demolition permits, and planning permits for TEDs have been waived; minor fees collected on behalf of the state are still applicable. This fee waiver only applies to the property owner who experienced a loss due to the fire. Additionally, rebuilding structures destroyed by the fire may be exempt from school district and fire district fees.

9. *Does Mono County keep building plans on file for existing homes?*

Yes, we often have digital files for existing structures, but not always. Recent homes (i.e., from the mid- to late 1990s to the present) are more likely to be on file with us while older homes (pre-1990s) often do not have plans available. Contact Mike Jones at 760.924.1825 mjjones@mono.ca.gov for assistance with document requests.

10. *What kind of powerlines can be restored to my home?*

The Mono County General Plan currently requires all electrical service to be undergrounded from the utility drop point to the pedestal at the residence or well house (Land Use Element Section 11.010.D.) The only exemptions that exist are: 1) if evidence exists that overhead power lines were approved previously via a building permit or director review permit, or 2) the previous residence had been constructed prior to 1991. Otherwise, the owner must apply for a Director Review permit requesting approval of overhead lines under one of the exceptions listed in Chapter 11 (usually economic hardship for residential units) and pay the \$495 processing fee. Temporary overhead service may be allowed via the Building Department.