

Agricultural Exempt Building Permits

What are Agricultural Exempt Buildings?

Agricultural Exempt Buildings are structures that comply with Appendix "C" of the current California Building Code. Agricultural Exempt Buildings shall qualify for an "exempt building permit" if they are located on a parcel of land that is at least 20 acres or is zoned AG- 20. Agricultural Exempt Buildings shall be limited to structures designed and constructed to house farm implements, hay, grain, poultry, livestock or other horticultural products. An Agricultural Exempt Building or structure shall not be a place for human habitation, or a place of employment where agricultural products are processed, treated, or packaged nor shall it be a place used by the public.

Special Provisions:

- Agricultural Exempt Buildings must comply with the building setback requirements contained in the current California Building Code and Sacramento County Zoning Code and in no circumstance shall be less than fifty (50) feet (15.24M) from property lines and other buildings.

How do I get a permit?

Please apply online at <https://actonline.saccounty.gov/>

How long does it take to get the permit?

In most circumstances, Agricultural Exempt Permits for structures less than 5000 square feet can be issued within (3) business days. However, under certain circumstances, additional time may be needed to verify information or facts. Agricultural Exempt permits for structures greater than 5000 square feet will require a structural review.

What are the permit fees?

Agricultural Exempt Buildings have reduced permit fees due to their design. A processing fee for the Exempt Building Permit is paid by the applicant to cover the required application, initial site check and on-site inspection to verify building location on the property. Structures greater than 200 square feet and less than or equal to 500 square feet will be invoiced at 2 hours. Structures between 501 and 5000 square feet and pole barns up to 10,000 square feet will be invoiced at 2.5 hours. Structures between 5001 and 10,000 square feet will be invoiced at 5.0 hours. This fee is charged at the current billing rate for a Building Inspector II, Range A. An additional fee for structural review, if required, will accrue on an hourly basis at the current invoice rate for an Associate Civil Engineer.

NOTE: These reduced fees shall not apply to structures constructed without permits or in violation of State or County regulations.

Any structure, including pole barns with floor areas greater than 10,000 square feet shall be appropriately classified as to their use and type and are not to be considered Agricultural Exempt structures. Appropriate building permits and plan review fees shall be required.

Please note, any change in use will require a full alteration permit. For example, a hay storage barn cannot be later used as a commercial riding stable unless a building permit for change of use is applied for, approved and issued by Sacramento County.

When are structural reviews and structural inspections required?

Structures 5000 square feet or less will not require a formal plan review but they will require two inspections: 1) a setback inspection on the foundation and 2) a final inspection. Structures greater than 5000 square feet and less than 10,000 square feet will require a formal structural plan review and a minimum of three inspections: 1) setback inspection on the foundation, 2) all required structural inspections and 3) a final inspection. Please note: Projects can differ substantially, therefore, we advise you to discuss which inspections are required with the Counter Technician at time of submittal.

Exception: Pole Barns less than 10,000 square feet will not require a structural review or structural inspection. Pole barns, unless designed, shall be open on at least three sides, or may have light frame siding installed on more than one side as long as the siding does not cover more than 50% of the open area on any given side.

What types of plans do I need?

If you want to construct your own wood building, you can use the conventional light frame provisions of the California Building Codes and no engineering is required. You may draw your own plans that require they are drawn to scale and dimensioned. The plans shall contain the following information:

- Detailed plot/site plan showing the locations of all structures on the site including the distances between structures and property lines and minimum setback distances. The location of utilities, wells and septic systems must also be included.
- Roof plan showing pitch of roof, roof materials and framing members.
- Elevation plan showing the four orientations and type of siding, if applicable, and framing members.
- Floor plan indicating spaces and electrical and/or plumbing if applicable.

If the building is greater than 5000 square feet plans showing compliance with the conventional construction provisions of the California Building Codes are required. If the building is greater than 5000 square feet and does not meet the conventional construction provisions of the California Building codes, the structure shall be designed by an licensed California engineer.

Electrical, plumbing and mechanical permits

If you are planning to install electrical, plumbing, or mechanical in an Agricultural Exempt building you will need to obtain a separate permit. An additional permit fee is required, and additional inspections may also be required. Please discuss these requirements with the Counter Permit Technician.

Other Department Approvals

Agricultural Exempt Buildings are not exempt from requirements set forth by other County Departments and Divisions:

- Planning Department will need to approve the distances between structures and property lines and minimum setback distances.
- Technical Resources approval may be required for any Public Utility Easements.
- Fire Department approval may be required. Check with your local Fire District.
- If this project is in a flood zone, it will not be considered Agricultural Exempt and will need Water Resources approval.

For more information regarding Agricultural Exempt Building Permit requirements please contact our office at 916-875-5296.