



**BUILDING CODE MANUAL
COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS
BUILDING AND SAFETY DIVISION
Based on the 2014 LACBC**

**#018
312
Article 1
09-15-14
Page 1 of 3**

GREENHOUSE (HORTICULTURAL STRUCTURE) NOT FOR PUBLIC USE

A greenhouse is a Group U occupancy structure with a glass or plastic roof and frequently glass or plastic walls. The structural frame is made of aluminum, galvanized steel, or redwood. It is used for the production of fruits, vegetables, flowers, and any other plants requiring special temperature conditions. These structures range in size from small sheds to very large buildings. One of the largest greenhouse complexes in the world is in Almeria, Spain, where it covers almost 50,000 acres.

The structure shall not be used as a place for human habitation nor shall it be a place used by the general public. If the general public has access to the greenhouse used as a retail or wholesale nursery, then it shall be classified as a Group M occupancy.

Acceptance Criteria

As an exception to all the requirements of the Building Code, a greenhouse structure classified as a Group U occupancy shall comply with all the requirements listed below:

1. The structure shall be used exclusively as a greenhouse building as defined above and shall not be designed, equipped, or intended for human occupancy.
2. The structure is a detached, single story building with a maximum height of 20 feet, measured from the grade plane up to the highest roof ridge, and a maximum building area of 5,500 square feet.
3. The structure shall maintain a fire separation distance of 10 feet measured from the building face to all of the following:
 - a) The closest interior lot line.
 - b) To the centerline of a street, an alley, or public way.
 - c) To an imaginary line between two buildings on the property.
4. Membrane and interior liner material shall comply with Section 3102.3.1.
5. The structure is not exempted from Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone requirements, unless it complies with Section 701A.3.
6. The manufacturer's specification of a pre-manufactured structure, including foundation design, shall be reviewed, signed, and stamped by a licensed civil/structural engineer or architect. Such review shall include a design of the structural frame to resist a wind load of 16 pounds per square foot unless an analysis is provided, and if applicable, a snow load in accordance with BCM 1608 Article 1 (BCM #095) (seismic design is not required). In addition, the structural frame shall be designed to carry a 100 pound minimum

concentrated load, in addition to a live load of 12 pounds per square foot. Otherwise, a complete structural design of the structure is necessary for submittal.

7. The means of egress for a greenhouse building shall comply with the applicable provisions of Chapter 10, based on an occupant load factor of 300-square-feet of gross floor area. The maximum travel distance from any point in the building to an approved exit shall not exceed 300 feet.
8. When applicable, the general accessibility for entrances, exits, and paths of travel of a greenhouse shall comply with the provisions of Chapter 11B.

Crop Protection Shelters

Membrane-covered frame structures providing seasonal (temporary – 180 days or less) protection less than 8 feet high do not require building permits.

Agency Referrals


Applicable agency approvals, such as the Regional Planning Department, Fire Department, and the Drainage and Grading Section of the Building and Safety Division may be required prior to permit issuance.

Supersedes BCM 312 Article 1 dated 08-23-11

WRITTEN BY: JONATHAN LAM
Civil Engineer

REVIEWED BY: POLICY COMMITTEE

APPROVED BY:



HASSAN ALAMEDDINE
Principal Engineer