

*St. Louis County Department of Public Works  
Division of Code Enforcement*

**SMOKE HOUSES & SIMILAR STRUCTURES**  
**BUILDING PERMIT REQUIREMENTS**

This guideline is intended to provide the homeowner/contractor with the basic information needed to apply for a building permit to construct or erect a residential smoke house or similar structure. A permit is required for all residential smoke houses and similar structures regardless of size. Smoke houses on residential property are restricted to a maximum size of 25 square feet in area and 8 feet in height and may only be used for cooking (smoking) food for the family living on the premises.

1. Fill out and sign application for a building permit. Indicate on both the application and plans that the structure is a smoke house.
2. Submit four (4) separate copies of your plot (site) plan drawn to scale showing all structures including the proposed smoke house and its perpendicular distances to the lot lines and from other structures on the lot, including the residence.  
Site plans must show water run-off (use arrows to indicate flow of water). The location of the smoke house cannot obstruct any swales or natural water run-off.
3. Obtain zoning approval from the St. Louis County Department of Public Works (if unincorporated) or from municipality. In municipalities site plans must be marked "Approved" and Municipal Approval Form submitted prior to permit issuance.
4. Submit four (4) separate complete sets of detailed building construction plans drawn to scale containing the following:
  - a. Slab (or other Support Base) and Floor Plan @ 1/4" = 1'-0"
  - b. Building Elevations @ 1/4" = 1'-0"
  - c. Sections and Details @ minimum 3/4" = 1'-0"
5. For prefabricated metal sheds being used as smoke houses, include 2 copies of manufacturer's brochure and/or assembly instructions in addition to the above building construction plans.
6. Obtain approval from the St. Louis County Health Department. The Health Department's Residential Smoke House Application Form shall be submitted by the applicant to the Health Department together with one copy of the plans. A copy of the application with Health Department approvals must be provided to Public Works prior to issuance of the

building permit. Applicants should be aware that the Health Department also requires a new application for each subsequent smoking process.

7. The owner or lessee shall be responsible for contacting the fire district/department for their requirements prior to beginning construction. Some fire districts/departments only allow smoke houses constructed entirely of non-combustible materials.

NOTE: Many Subdivisions have deed restrictions that prohibit utility sheds, smoke houses and similar structures. Consult your Subdivision Trustees.

Refer to the following requirements and attached drawings for typical information and requirements that need to be indicated on your building construction plans.

### **Usage**

Include a statement on the plans that the food cooked (smoked) will be only for the family living on the premises.

### **Maximum Size**

Structures located on residential property shall not exceed 25 square feet in area or 8 feet in height. Provide dimensions on the plans for the width, length, and height of the proposed structure.

### **Fire Separation From Lot Lines and Other Buildings**

Provide dimensions to all lot lines and to other buildings or structures, including sheds, on the lot. The minimum distance required is indicated under Type of Construction below. Be aware that zoning regulations may require more restrictive setbacks.

### **Type of Construction**

#### **Non-Combustible or Masonry Wall Structures**

Structures constructed entirely of non-combustible materials or of masonry walls with combustible materials for the roof structure shall be located a minimum of 15 feet from property lines and from any other structure or building on the site. For property lines adjoining a street or alley the distance may be measured to the centerline of the street or alley. The door shall be a metal door.

#### **Combustible Structures**

Structures constructed of combustible wall and roof materials shall be located a minimum of 50 feet from property lines and from any other structure or building on the site. When the property line adjoins a street or alley the distance may be measured to the centerline of the street or alley. The charcoal, wood chips, etc. used for the cooking (smoking) shall be contained within a non-combustible curbed area or pit (max. 2'x2' and min. 8" high/deep) or shall be contained within a metal receptacle having equivalent maximum/minimum dimensions. The

containment area or receptacle shall be centered within the structure.

**Note:** Some Fire Districts/Departments prohibit smoke houses constructed of combustible materials. Check with your local Fire District/Department for their requirements.

### **Concrete Slab or Other Support Base**

The structure shall be placed on a concrete slab (minimum 3 ½" thick) or other approved solid non-combustible support base. Anchorage to the slab or approved support base shall be provided. Indicate the method of anchorage on the section drawing.

### **Structural Requirements**

The plans shall reflect wall and roof construction to the detail necessary to verify that the structure will be stable with respect to wind and snow loads. Indicate the materials used for the wall system on the section drawing and, if studs are used, include the spacing. Indicate materials used for the roof system including size and spacing of purlins, rafters, ceiling joists, and/or ties on the sections and details.

### **Weather Resistant Exterior**

The structure shall have weather resistant exterior materials for the walls and roof. Indicate materials used on the elevation and section drawings.

### **Doors**

Metal door is required on non-combustible and masonry wall structures. Indicate the door type and size on the floor plan and elevation drawings.

### **Ventilation Openings Generally Prohibited**

The Health Department requires that the smoke from the smoke house be contained within the unit; thus ventilation openings are generally prohibited.

### **Secure Against Unauthorized Entry**

The structure shall be kept secure against unauthorized entry. Indicate the type of lock used on the access door.

The preceding requirements apply to most projects, however, the Plan Reviewer may determine that unusual circumstance dictate the need for additional information on any particular project.

**RESIDENTIAL SMOKE HOUSE APPLICATION**

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Re: Public Works Application No.: \_\_\_\_\_

Municipality: \_\_\_\_\_

Applicant's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone No.: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address:

\_\_\_\_\_

Address of Proposed Smoke House:

\_\_\_\_\_

Prior to approval by the Saint Louis County Health Department for the proposed Residential Smoke House, detailed plans for such structure shall be submitted to the Health Department. After reading this document, the applicant shall sign it and submit it to the Health Department for appropriate approvals, along with a check or money order for \$50 to cover the processing fee.

After approval, a permit will be issued. The permit is in effect for thirty (30) days after the beginning of the smoking process. An application must be resubmitted each time the smoking process occurs. The smoking process shall comply with Saint Louis County Ordinances that require any objectionable odors and smoke from the smoke house be contained on the property wherein the smoking occurs. The smoke from the smoke house will be contained within the unit.

No raw meat shall be stored on the property either before or after the processing occurs. The meat shall be purchased from a licensed meat retailer, and an invoice shall be made available if requested. Appropriate insect-proof and rodent-proof trash receptacles shall be made available for any bones and other meat waste, and shall be disposed of within twenty-four (24) hours after the preparation of the meat for processing is completed. The amount of meat processed shall be for the use of the property owners only.

I agree to comply with the requirements stated above.

\_\_\_\_\_ Applicant

Air Pollution Control:

Approved by: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Food & Environmental:

Approved by: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

**Division Director:**

Approved by: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

The \$50 processing fee should be mailed or delivered, along with this application, to:

Saint Louis County Health Department  
Attn: Accounts Receivable  
111 South Meramec Avenue  
Clayton, Missouri 63105