

Accessory Structures



Overview

The 2020 NGBS Scope and Administration allows for the certification of “Accessory Structures.”

101.2 Scope. The provisions of this Standard shall apply to the design, construction, alteration, enlargement, and renovation of (1) all residential buildings, (2) residential portions of mixed-use buildings, or (3) mixed-use buildings where the residential portion is greater than 50% of the gross floor area. This Standard shall also apply to subdivisions, building sites, building lots, and accessory structures.

In the 2020 NGBS Definitions section, the Accessory Structure definition aligns with the ICC International Building Code (IBC) and the ICC International Residential Code (IRC), but also confers the Adopting Entity flexibility in what buildings are treated as accessory:

ACCESSORY STRUCTURE. A structure, the use of which is customarily accessory to and incidental to that of the residential building; the structure is located on the same lot or site as the residential building; the structure does not contain a dwelling unit or a sleeping unit; and (1) is classified as Group U – Utility and Miscellaneous in accordance with the ICC International Building Code, or (2) is classified as accessory in accordance with the ICC International Residential Code, or (3) is classified as accessory to the residential use by a determination of the Adopting Entity. [underline added]

The 2020 NGBS Appendix C sets out the Conformance Criteria for Accessory Structures. In short, it allows Accessory Structures to attain a *conforming* designation if compliant with NGBS criteria.

Compliance Questions

Can a stand-alone commercial establishment, located on the same site as a multifamily community, earn an NGBS conforming designation when the residential buildings are being designed and constructed, or remodeled with a goal of earning NGBS Green certification?

Yes. For the purposes of NGBS Green certification, Home Innovation allows such a building to earn a conforming designation.

What conformance criteria should be used?

The Accessory Structure should be documented using the green scoring tool. Exceptions to the green practices that do not apply due the features and use of the accessory structure will be considered by Home Innovation on a case-by-case determination. Guidance is provided below.

Interpretation by Home Innovation Research Labs for Green Certification

When applied for, Home Innovation will accept any type of building as an Accessory Structure for NGBS Green certification under the authority provided by the 2020 NGBS definition with the following conditions:

1. Accessory Structure must be located on the same lot for tax and permitting purposes as the residential buildings.
2. Residential buildings must be seeking NGBS Green certification.
3. Accessory Structure square footage should be less than 49% of the total square footage of the residential buildings on the lot.

Certification Process Guidance

For accessory structures, Lot Design (Chapter 5) points claimed should reflect the characteristics of the lot on which the accessory structure was built. In some scenarios, the points will be nearly identical to those awarded for the linked single-family home or multifamily building. Points should not reflect the community characteristics generally.

The Accessory Structure must achieve the Bronze-level point threshold in Chapter 7. If plumbing is installed with potable water, the structure must achieve the Bronze-level point threshold in Chapter 8.

For most Accessory Structures, the structure is required to achieve the minimum point thresholds in Chapter 6, 9, and 10 and mandatory practices must be met, if applicable.

Points earned only for the accessory structure shall not be used for certification of the residential or mixed-use building.

For Accessory Structures that are commercial in nature, the 2020 NGBS Chapter 13 offers more relevant practices for compliance.