

Administrative Policy

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Contact: Building Official

Building_official@tucsonaz.gov

520-791-5550

Policy Title: Building Code Standards for Accessory Dwelling Units
(replacing previous policy titled Separate Utilities for Accessory Dwelling Units)

Applicable Code Sections:

Unified Development Code (UDC)

- **11.3.7.A.6** Accessory Dwelling Unit
- **11.4.13** Lot

2018 International Residential Code (IRC) Section:

- **R202** Accessory Structure
- **R302** Fire Resistant Construction

City of Tucson Ordinance

- **10463** Inclusive Home Design
- **10549** Solar Preparation
- **11089** Residential Gray Water

Purpose: To establish the building code standards associated with accessory dwelling units (ADUs) as it relates to separate utilities, residential ordinances, fire separation, and similar criteria typically assigned to single family residences. Accessory Dwelling Units are accessory to a primary residential structure serving as the principal use on the lot. Many of these units will be used as a guest house occupied by friends or family members or function to support multi-generational living arrangements, while others will serve as a rental unit to individuals unrelated to the occupants of the primary structure. ADUs must be designed to accommodate any configuration of these living arrangements in accordance with the currently adopted International Residential Code as locally amended.

Definitions:

- Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) are defined in the City of Tucson Unified Development Code (UDC) per Section 11.3.7.A.6 as: “A dwelling unit that is either: (a) detached, located on a lot with a primary single-family dwelling, or (b) attached to a single-family dwelling.

Accessory dwelling units are independent units and may include a kitchen, bedrooms, bathrooms, and a sitting room.”

- Lot is defined in the City of Tucson Unified Development Code (UDC) per Section 11.4.13 as: “A tract of land bounded on all sides by property lines, of sufficient size to meet minimum zoning standards, with legal access to a public street.”
- Accessory Structure is defined in the 2018 International Residential Code Section R202 as “a structure that is accessory to and incidental to that of the dwelling and that is located on the same lot.”
- Newly Constructed is a term that refers to new buildings. This does not include renovated portions of existing buildings.

Policy:

Fire Separation:

- All accessory dwelling units shall be provided with sufficient fire separation in accordance with the currently adopted building code. ADUs attached to another dwelling unit shall be provided with no less than one-hour fire-rated assemblies for buildings without an automatic fire sprinkler system. Existing structures and buildings modified to serve as an ADU shall be improved as necessary to provide fire separation, IRC R302.
- Buildings with a roof area (including carports and porches) equal to or greater than 3,600 square feet require a fire review and may be required to have an automatic fire sprinkler system, IFC Appendix B, Table B105.1(1).

Utility Connections:

- Separate utility requirements do not apply to accessory structures, including ADUs. ADUs may share utilities with the primary structure on the parcel or may be served by separate utility meters.
- All utility supply components shall be sized in accordance with the currently adopted building code for the demand specified on the appropriate flow and/or load calculation. Utility sources, meters, and discharge components shall be sized to accommodate all load demands for all buildings and structures served. Permit applicants are responsible to provide sufficient information to justify the sizing of all utility components.

Inclusive Home Design Ordinance:

- All newly constructed ADUs shall meet the requirements of the Inclusive Home Design Ordinance 10463.

Gray Water Ordinance:

- All newly constructed ADUs with clothes washing machines located in rooms with walls common to the exterior shall be provided with gray water piping per Ordinance 11089. ADUs are not required to provide segregated gray water piping below finished grade.

Electric Vehicle Charging:

- Separate electric vehicle charging infrastructure is not required for ADUs.

Future Solar Preparation:

- All newly constructed ADUs shall be provided with future solar preparation per Ordinance 10549.

DIRECTOR APPROVAL

Koren Manning, Director

Date