



## COUNTY OF LAKE

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT Code Enforcement Division

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# OPEN AND OUTDOOR STORAGE, WHAT IS ALLOWED? "CODE ENFORCEMENT CORNER"

In an area like Lake County there are many older or modified houses and businesses that have limited storage space. Some houses have no garage or only a one-car garage and often businesses begin small and expand. This leaves very little space for storage of "stuff," those items you may never need again but cannot bare to get rid of or items used in business ventures that seem to pile up. Unfortunately, a great number of citizens and businesses store their stuff out of doors. Most of this storage is not allowed because it is not screened and/or exceeds the amount allowed outdoors, hence the phrase, "open and outdoor storage".



All residential zoning districts in Lake County require most things stored outdoors to be screened from all exterior property lines and any public roadway. Even the amount of screened open and outdoor "stuff" is limited based on the size of the land. For residential zoned parcels one (1) acre or less in size, the total amount of screened open and outdoor storage allowed is no more than one hundred (100) square feet. Additional storage is allowed on parcels larger than one acre, and on rural and agricultural zoned parcels, but there are still rules to follow.

All outdoor storage must be screened from public view by fences, hedges or other effective means. Outdoor storage is not allowed within required front yard setback areas (typically 20 feet from front lot line) in all zoning districts and it must also be three (3) feet from the side lot lines. Additionally, no outdoor storage is allowed within the front one-half of residential zoned lots ("SR", "R1", "R2" & "R3"). Securely fastened tarps

may be utilized for screening of open storage areas of one hundred (100) square feet or less. Building materials stored outdoors during authorized, permitted construction are allowed, as is firewood that is neatly stacked.

Commercial zoning districts have more complex codes requiring a major or minor use permit to allow outdoor storage of equipment, products and sales displays. It is best to check with the Lake County Planning Division if you are planning outdoor storage on commercial property.

Did you know that inoperable motor vehicles are open and outdoor storage? Most of us have seen them, know people who have them or have a few ourselves. Many times these vehicles may be worth very little, however people cannot stand to get rid of them. People say "Someday I am going to turn that heap into a classic car," or "I want to leave these to my grandkids." Open storage of inoperable motor vehicles is prohibited on residential zoned lots. However one inoperable motor vehicle may be stored on lots within the following zoning districts: "RR", "RL", "A", "APZ" & "TPZ" if it conforms to the open and outdoor storage regulations. Also remember that these regulations apply to lots that have a primary residential use. Open and outdoor storage is not allowed on vacant or unimproved land.



If you need further information regarding the rules that most Lake County residents are in compliance with, call the Lake County Planning Division at 263-2221 or the Code Compliance Division at 263-2309. We are happy to answer any questions you may have and encourage you to ask questions before you decide to haul that "stuff" onto your property, as this could save you time and money. There are informational flyers available that address the ten most frequent code violations.

These articles reference codes enforced within the unincorporated area of Lake County, the Cities of Lakeport and Clearlake have their own Code Divisions. For Code issues in Lakeport phone 263-3056 for Code issues in the Clearlake phone 994-8201.