



# On Farm Guide: How to Get Your Greenhouse\* Permitted \*or other garden/farm structure

Last revised December 2025



**Are you a New Orleans grower trying to build a greenhouse, hoophouse, shed, or other “accessory structure”?**

This guide is for you! We hope it makes the process clearer and simpler.



## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### How should I start?

Think about the goal of your project. Is this a small shed, hobby greenhouse, large-scale greenhouse, or other structure? The bigger the project, the more documentation you'll need and the cost will likely increase drastically. Ensure you're prepared and have the necessary funds and support before diving in.

We've heard of costs ranging from \$4,000 to \$40,000, including supplies, labor, and permit costs. The lower end was for a small hobby greenhouse from a kit and the higher end was for a large (24' x 72') greenhouse.

### Where do I apply?

Go to [onestopapp.nola.gov](http://onestopapp.nola.gov). Select 'Apply' then click 'Start' under 'Accessory Structure'. Log in or create an account, if this is your first time using One Stop. As you complete the permit application, if you have any specific questions, please reach out to Safety & Permits. You can also email [urbanag@nola.gov](mailto:urbanag@nola.gov) (or call 504-658-4957) for additional support.

### How long does the process usually take after I submit my application?

This is highly dependent on the size and scope of the project, as well as the backlog in current permit requests. For some people, it's taken less than a month and for others it's taken many months.





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## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### **I participate in NORA's Growing Green program. Am I allowed to build an accessory structure on the lot I lease?**

You aren't permitted to construct any permanent (no foundations) or habitable structure on the lot. Limited permission is granted for temporary accessory structures and furniture ancillary to approved Growing Green activities. Approved structures may include garden sheds, benches, and fences. See NORA's lease agreement for more details (#10): [Growing Green](#) and email [Leslie.McCann@nola.gov](mailto:Leslie.McCann@nola.gov) with questions.

### **I want to construct the greenhouse/structure myself. Do I need to hire a licensed contractor?**

If your costs are under \$7,500, you do not have to hire a licensed contractor.

If your costs are over \$7,500, you do have to hire a licensed contractor.

### **Do I need to pay an engineer for professional plans for review?**

Most of the time – yes. Here are a couple of situations that may qualify you for an exemption:

- If you are using a greenhouse/shed kit
- If your structure is small enough, under 100 square feet (ex. Hobby greenhouse)

For both scenarios, you'll still need to be able to (1) provide wind ratings, (2) proof of tie downs, and (3) ensure poles are 2 feet deep to demonstrate the structure can withstand hurricane conditions. Note that you'll likely have to pay the company you purchased the kit from for reviewed plans.

### **If you're going to install electricity, plumbing, or gas, you still must hire a licensed professional to do that work for safety reasons.**

More info here: [https://www.lslbc.louisiana.gov/wp-content/uploads/LSLBC\\_Brochure.pdf](https://www.lslbc.louisiana.gov/wp-content/uploads/LSLBC_Brochure.pdf)

For some smaller greenhouses, growers have installed solar panels rather than getting an electrical pole. You still have to hire an electrician to install solar panels and get that permitted through Safety & Permits.

### **What is the wind rating required for a greenhouse or other accessory structure?**

The structure must be able to withstand a basic design wind speed of 140 MPH.



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## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### **I'm a renter. Am I able to get an accessory structure permitted?**

Unfortunately, to get any structure permitted on a lot, you need approval from the landowner. Since this is immovable property, you need to provide a **notarized affidavit** from the landlord.

### **Am I required to get a Certificate of Occupancy?**

It depends on what the structure is. For a commercial greenhouse, you are. For a smaller hobby greenhouse or hoophouse, you are not. You'll be prompted to get a Certificate of Occupancy at the end of your permitting process. If a Certificate of Occupancy is not applicable, you're still required to get a Certificate of Completion.

### **Am I able to build a greenhouse (or other accessory structure) on my lot if there is no primary structure (ex. house) on it?**

Yes! If agriculture is a permitted use, you can get a permit on a site without a primary structure. **Here are the steps:**

- Look up your lot in the property viewer to find out the zoning: <https://property.nola.gov/> . If agriculture is a permitted use, you still need to let the city know it will be the principal use (rather than a residence or a vacant lot).
- Apply for change of use to agriculture as principal use.
- Go to One Stop > Apply > Renovation (Non-Structural) > Description – type in Change of use from vacant/residential to agriculture. If there are any existing sheds or structures on the vacant lot, make sure to include that in the description section.
- Once Change of Use Permit is approved (technically called Renovation - Non Structural), apply for Accessory Structure Permit



**Example of a hoophouse**



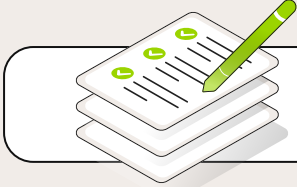
**Example of a greenhouse**





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## DOCUMENT CHECKLIST

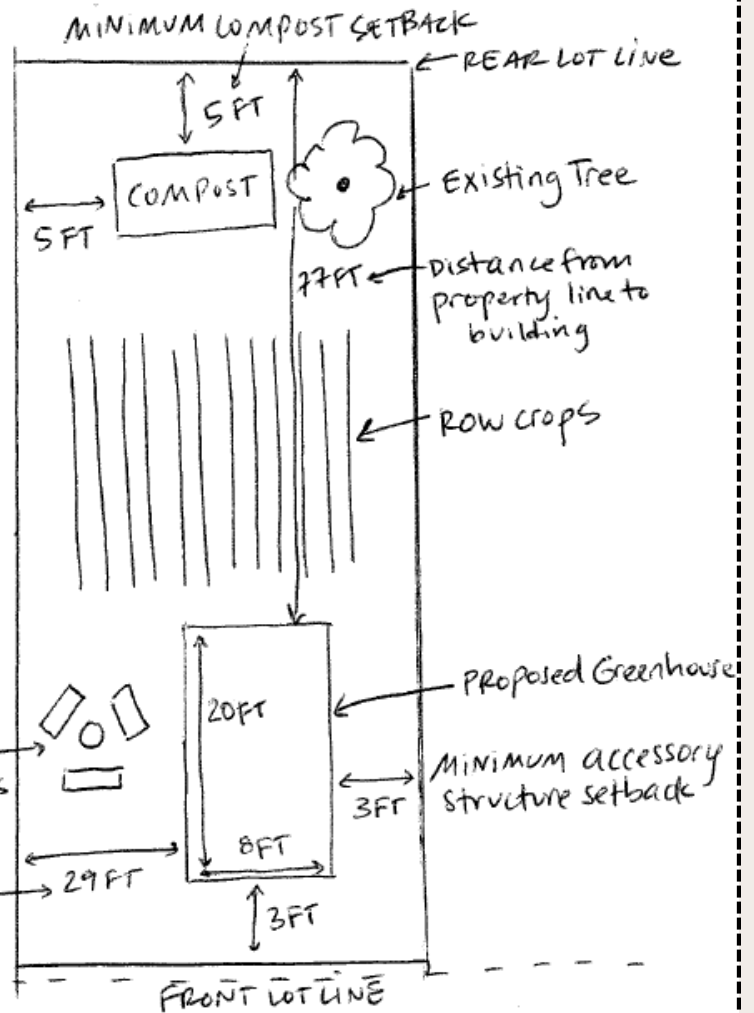


**Plot Plan** – reflecting all dimensions of the lot and all structures, setbacks to property lines and the location and dimensions of off-street parking spaces. These can be done by the applicant. **See the sample plot plan below.**

### SAMPLE PLOT PLAN

- **Draw your site**
  - Property lines (clarify front and rear of lot)
  - Sidewalks
  - Required setbacks for structures, compost, and other items
  - Include address
  - \*Structure can't be located in front of the abutting structure's front or side building line
- **Include all existing and proposed items**
  - Structures
  - Fences
  - Driveways
  - Water access
  - Trees
  - Compost
  - Benches
  - Paths
  - Row crops (you don't need to include details)

*Neighboring Lot*



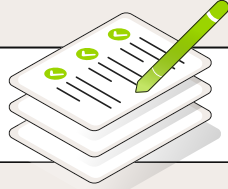
Sidewalk →

123 Main St.





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## DOCUMENT CHECKLIST



**Recorded Act of Sale** (if property has changed ownership in the last year)  
**For Renters:** you must provide a notarized affidavit from the property owner granting you permission to build a structure.



**Sketch or completed plans** - stamped with live seals from a LA licensed architect or civil engineer, if required  
\*\*May not be required if using a greenhouse kit or if structure is 100 square feet or less.



**Executed contract or approved estimate** with the scope of the work to be performed, costs inclusive of labor and materials **with signatures, printed names and titles of both the owner and contractor.** If the property is owned by a business, please provide proof of signatory authority.



**Foundation drawings** detailing the foundation of the proposed structure, with live, original seals, stamped by a Louisiana registered architect or civil engineer, if required  
Required for any substantial permanent structures that are part of the development.  
\*\*Installing a gravel floor wouldn't be considered a substantial permanent structure but pouring concrete would. Not required for greenhouse kits.



**Previous/current use and proposed use of the structure** - This can be a statement in the form of a simple letter.



**Number of floors or levels in the structure**





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## DOCUMENT CHECKLIST



**If the improvement is roofing related and the property is within a local historic district or is a designated landmark**, fill out the Roof Certificate of Appropriateness Application



**Benchmark Certificate**, completed by a registered land surveyor, on the City's three-part form, with live seals, and dated within the last six-months  
\*\*Only required if structure will have a bathroom. Not required for storage structures or greenhouses.



**Contractor's license information.**

\*\*If the project is owner-occupied residential, State Exemption Form R-1364 may be submitted in lieu of contractor license information. This State Exemption Form only applies to a structure that is your primary residence and not relevant for greenhouses/hoophouses.



**Residential Generator Acknowledgment**, if you are installing a generator on residential property.

