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This Assistance Bulletin only applies to property within unincorporated Snohomish County and does not apply to property within incorporated city limits.

Assistance Bulletin

Home Occupations

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Keyword: Assistance Bulletins

Q: Can I run a home business out of my home or on my property?

A: Snohomish County Code states the following:

“Home occupation” means an occupation conducted within a dwelling unit by a member or members of a family residing therein under the conditions outlined in SCC 30.28.050. A home occupation may also be conducted within a residential accessory building and/or an attached garage within certain zones in accordance with SCC 30.28.050 (3) and (4).

Home Occupation Regulations per SCC 30.28.050:

SCC 30.28.050 (1) Home Occupation General Requirements:

- a. Not more than one person outside the family shall be employed;
- b. The occupation shall be secondary to the use of the dwelling for dwelling purposes;
- c. There shall be no external display of merchandise. No sales or fees for the use of merchandise except that produced by the inhabitants shall be made in the dwelling or on the premises;
- d. The maximum nameplate horsepower rating of any single piece of mechanical equipment used in the home occupation shall be five horsepower and no equipment shall be three-phase motors. The electrical service for the home occupation shall not exceed 200 amps;
- e. Not more than one-fourth of the total square footage of the dwelling may be used in the occupation;
- f. Signs in connection with the occupation shall be unlighted, shall not exceed two square feet, and shall be attached flat to the building;
- g. The home occupation shall in no way affect the appearance of the building as a residence; and
- h. The home occupation shall be fully enclosed within the residence with no outside storage of equipment or materials.

This bulletin is intended only as an information guide. The information may not be complete and is subject to change. For complete legal information, refer to Snohomish County Code.

SCC 30.28.050 (2) Winemaking in detached accessory structures shall be permitted as a home occupation in the R-9,600 zone, provided that the winery complies with the following:

- a. The home occupant operates under and maintains annual renewals of a valid domestic winery license originally issued by the Washington Department of Licensing, Business and Professionals Division pursuant to the rules and regulations of the state Liquor Control Board before November 1, 2003;
- b. The existing detached accessory structure is located on a lot at least 0.5 acres in size;
- c. The accessory structure does not exceed 2,500 square feet in gross floor area;
- d. The accessory structure meets a minimum setback of five feet from the property line;
- e. The accessory structure meets a building separation of at least 10 feet;
- f. The winery complies with SCC 30.28.050(1)(f). The remaining provisions of SCC 30.28.050(1) do not apply.
- g. Temporary outside storage of materials and equipment used in the production and transport of wine is outside of the setback area; and
- h. A certificate of occupancy is obtained from the department. The certificate of occupancy shall be subject to an annual inspection and renewal pursuant to SCC 30.53A.060.

Use of Accessory Buildings:

SCC 30.28.050 (3) Use of Accessory Buildings. Home occupations may be conducted in an accessory building and/or an attached garage in accordance with the following:

- a. The provisions of SCC 30.28.050(1)(a), (c), (d), and (f) shall be met;
- b. A minimum lot size of one acre is required;
- c. SCC Table 30.28.050(3)(c), as outlined below, identifies the maximum allowable combined accessory building and attached garage area and the minimum required building setback for the garage and/or the accessory building from adjacent residentially zoned properties according to the home occupation lot or parcel size; except that in the rural business zone the requirements of the table shall not apply, and a maximum allowable combined accessory building and attached garage area of 1,000 square feet shall be permitted, and the minimum building setback from adjacent residentially-zoned property shall be 30 feet.

Table 30.28.050(3)(c)
HOME OCCUPATION MAXIMUM FLOOR AREA / MINIMUM SETBACK

	One Acre	Two Acres	Three Acres	Four Acres	Five or more acres
Area (sq. ft.)	500	600	700	800	900
Setback (ft.)	30	40	50	60	70

- d. The home occupation shall in no way affect the appearance of the accessory building and/or attached garage as accessory to the residential dwelling;
- e. The home occupation shall be fully enclosed within the accessory building and/or the attached garage including no outside storage of equipment or materials;
- f. The home occupation shall not create a level of noise vibration, smoke, dust, odors, heat, light, or glare beyond that which is acceptable in a residential area;

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- g. The following activities, including any similar activities, are prohibited as home occupations: minor or major automobile, truck or heavy equipment fueling, maintenance or repair; auto-body work or painting; parking or storage of heavy equipment; and any Group H occupancies as defined in the Uniform Building Code except for woodworking and spray finishing in conjunction with woodworking activities;
- h. The home occupation hours of operation shall be limited to: 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m., Monday through Friday; and 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Saturday and Sunday; and
- i. A certificate of occupancy shall be obtained from the department prior to commencing the home occupation to ensure building and fire code compliance. The certificate of occupancy shall be subject to an annual inspection and renewal pursuant to SCC 30.53A.060.

Resource-Based and Rural Home Occupations:

SCC 30.28.050 (4) Resource-based and rural home occupations. Home occupations that are related to mineral, agriculture or forestry resources, or related to rural residential land uses may use the provisions of this subsection instead of the provisions of SCC 30.28.050(3). When the provisions of this subsection are used, the provisions of SCC 30.28.050(3) shall not be used and all provisions of this subsection shall be met. Home occupations shall be subject to the following :

- a. A resource related home occupation shall be a resource-based business that is dependent upon mineral, agriculture, or forestry resources for its existence;
- b. A home occupation related to a rural residential land use shall be a rural residential-based business that either provides a service or creates a product primarily used in a rural area;
- c. The provisions of SCC 30.28.050(1)(f) shall be met;
- d. The home occupation shall in no way affect the appearance of the accessory building and/or attached garage as accessory to the residential dwelling;
- e. The home occupation hours shall be limited to: 7:00 AM to 8:00 PM, Monday through Friday; and 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM, Saturday and Sunday;
- f. A certificate of occupancy shall be obtained from the department prior to commencing the home occupation to ensure building and fire code compliance. The certificate of occupancy shall be subject to an annual inspection and renewal pursuant to SCC 30.53A.060;
- g. Except for the outside storage area permitted in SCC 30.28.050(4)(j), the home occupation shall be fully enclosed within an accessory building and/or an attached garage;
- h. A minimum lot size of one acre is required;
- i. SCC Table 30.28.050(4)(i), as outlined below, identifies the maximum allowable combined accessory building and attached garage area and maximum allowable outside storage area that may be used for the home occupation, and minimum side and rear yard setback required for the garage and/or accessory building from adjacent residentially-zoned properties:

Table 30.28.050(3)(i)
HOME OCCUPATION MINIMUM SETBACKS & MAXIMUM ALLOWED AREA

	One Acre	Two Acres	Three Acres	Four Acres	Five Acres	Ten or More Acres
Building Area (sq. ft.)	1,000	2,000	3,000	4,000	5,000	7,000
Storage Area (sq. ft.)	2,500	2,500	3,000	4,000	5,000	7,000
Setback (ft.)	40	50	60	75	85	100

- j. Outside storage shall be enclosed with a solid fence or landscaped with a sight-obscuring vegetative screen effective in screening the area from adjacent properties and public roads;
 - k. The combined accessory building and attached garage area used for the home occupation shall not exceed 7,000 square feet. Any accessory building 4,000 square feet or larger used for a home occupation pursuant to this subsection shall be screened from adjacent rural residential properties by Type A landscaping consistent with SCC Table 30.25.020(1) provisions along the length of the building when any portion of the building is within 100 feet of a property boundary or public right-of-way;
 - l. The parking area for any commercial vehicles used in the conduct of the home occupation and all but three vehicles of persons employed in the home occupation shall be located either indoors or within the outside storage area specified in SCC 30.28.050(4)(j);
 - m. The home occupation shall comply with applicable county code pertaining to maximum noise levels, drainage and dust control, and shall shield outdoor lighting and glare from adjacent residential properties;
 - n. The home occupation shall not employ more than three persons outside the family who perform work on the site; and
 - o. The following activities, including any similar activities, are prohibited as rural home occupations: processing of minerals, sawmills, retail or wholesale sale of motor vehicles, major and minor automobile repair (except repair of vehicles and equipment used in a rural residential based or resource-based home occupation business), motor vehicle body work or painting, and any Group H occupancies as defined in Uniform Building Code, except for woodworking and spray finishing in conjunction with woodworking activities.
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