

Total Cost of Ownership Checklist

The costs that derail portable structure budgets rarely show up in a quote. Use this checklist to find them before you commit.

Acquisition & Deployment

What it costs to get into service.

Delivery & Logistics

Confirm whether the quote covers logistics coordination, including vetted drivers and oversized permits.

Site Preparation & Foundation

Budget for gravel or concrete pads to prevent structural stress and door misalignment.

Utility Connections

Account for the "hookup"—trenching, electrical tie-ins, and plumbing from source to unit.

Permitting & Inspections

Include engineering stamps and inspection requirements, which vary significantly by jurisdiction.

Customizations

Identify necessary upgrades like electrical capacity or climate-appropriate insulation to avoid budget friction.

Installation & Setup

Plan for crane or forklift rental fees and the labor required for final setup.

Operation

What it costs to run.

Relocation Frequency

Account for the structural wear and transport costs that accumulate with each relocation.

Environmental Exposure

Factor in how high-corrosion environments or extreme heat zones accelerate maintenance cycles and increase utility consumption.

Material & Thermal Performance

Account for how insulation performance and local climate conditions affect long-term energy costs.

Maintenance

Budget for regular HVAC and seal servicing to avoid the higher cost of emergency field repairs.

Downtime Costs

Calculate the lost productivity when a unit is out of service for repairs or between project phases.

Insurance & Coverage Gaps

Check if site-specific risks like flood zones or high winds increase your premiums or deductibles.

Exit & Lifecycle

What it costs to move or retire.

Utility Disconnection

Factor in the specialized labor needed to safely cap and reset high-voltage and plumbing lines.

Destination Prep & Logistics

Remember that moving to a second project requires repeating the site prep and transport costs of Phase 1.

Redeployment Downtime

Account for the operational gap while the structure is in transit and being re-commissioned at a new site.

Refurbishment Costs

Budget for refreshing interior finishes or flooring between projects to maintain the asset's utility.

Residual or Resale Value

Is the unit a sunk cost or an asset? Steel structures typically retain higher value for the secondary market.

Storage or Disposal

If not redeployed, factor in the costs of secure storage or the fees associated with decommissioning and scrapping.

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