

## Camping & Outdoor Stay Drinking Water/Wastewater System Guidelines

Are you thinking of using websites or apps like Hip Camp\*, Tentrr\* or The Dyrtr\* to host vacationers on your property? Read on to learn important information related to drinking water and wastewater requirements.

### Camping & Outdoor Drinking Water/Wastewater Permitting Questions

#### What is a campsite?

An area available for overnight vacation or recreational purposes, including areas for tents, yurts, tepees, lean-to, cabins, or recreational vehicles (RVs). Primitive camping is not regulated (see FAQ section). Campsites may need water, toilet facilities, and/or a dumping station.

#### Are you considered a campground?

The State of Vermont defines a campground as four (4) or more campsites on a lot for vacation or recreational purposes. You can be considered a campground even if you don't charge any money.

#### What do campsites/campgrounds have to do with wastewater and drinking water permits?

Campgrounds and campsites may be regulated under Vermont's Wastewater and Water Supply rules. The regulations are called the Wastewater System and Potable Water Supply Rules (<https://bit.ly/vtwwrules>). You will need a wastewater/water supply permit if you are operating, creating, or modifying a campground or if you host campers for more than twelve (12) nights a year. If you need help in determining if your land falls under these rules, please contact a Vermont licensed wastewater and water supply designer (see FAQ section for designer contact list link).

#### What is considered wastewater?

Wastewater can include things like human waste (urine and/or feces) toilet water, bathing water, water after handling or preparing food, cleaning dishes, or washing your hands or equipment. If you have a question about wastewater, contact the Drinking Water and Groundwater Protection Division.

#### Campsites may still require a water supply/wastewater permit?

If you have more than four (4) campsites, then you will need to contact a Vermont licensed wastewater/water supply designer to evaluate your wastewater/water supply needs and VT WW Rule/permit requirements. Using existing water/wastewater systems or creating new systems may also require a permit.

#### Why regulate campsites/campgrounds?

Great question! Just like homes, The State wants to make sure we are properly disposing of human waste or other contaminated wastewater to protect human health and the environment. If not done properly, wastewater can contaminate nearby water bodies like rivers or lakes. After all, we all live downstream.

#### If you are considered a campground, you may need a permit and may need to meet these requirements:

- Have a potable water supply and wastewater system that meets the VT WW Rules.
- Campsites need toilet facilities within 400 feet (these can be water carried toilets with either septic systems or sewer connections, vault privies, composting toilets, or incinerating toilets).
- One toilet is needed for each group of 10 or fewer campsites.
- A water faucet must be within 400 feet of any campsite. Common drinking vessels are not allowed.
- One waste dumping station is needed per campground, unless:
  - All campsites have individual sewer service lines, or the campground consists entirely of tent sites and does not allow use of camping units with interior plumbing.
- Each dumping station in a campground:
  - Can serve no more than 100 campsites
  - Must have a concrete catchment that slopes to the sewer inlet; and have pressurized water to flush and clean the catchment after each use.

No wastewater/water supply permit is needed if:

- There are fewer than four (4) campsites;
- No more than twelve (12) nights of camping at a campground per year;
- Sites are not connected via pipe to water or sewer services;
- There is no discharge of wastewater to the ground;
- The campground or campsite meets WW Rule exemptions; and
- Site is used only for vacation or recreation.

### Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

How do I get a wastewater system and potable water supply permit?

Contact a State of Vermont licensed wastewater and water supply designer. They can help you understand the requirements and assist you in applying for a permit. Please reference this link to find a nearby professional: <https://bit.ly/vtlicenseddesigner>.

What can I use at a campsite for wastewater disposal?

All campground wastewater systems require a VT WW permit. Portable toilets can be used if the property has fewer than four (4) campsites. If independent from a building's water system, composting toilets, incineration toilets, and vault privies can be used for campsites and campgrounds.

Do I need to provide potable water for a campsite/campground?

Potable water needs to be provided for campgrounds, which requires a VT WW permit. Contact a State of Vermont Licensed Wastewater/Potable Water Supply Designer with additional questions.

What is 'primitive camping'?

Camping that involves temporary overnight occupancy in a natural setting without a potable water supply, a wastewater system, picnic tables, or other developed structures or facilities and that is left in its original condition so there is no, or minimal, evidence of human visitation.

**Learn more about Vermont's wastewater and water supply program at:**

<https://dec.vermont.gov/water/ww-systems>

**Check out your wastewater and water supply permit at:**

<https://bit.ly/vtwwpermitsearch>

**This fact sheet is not a replacement for professional advice. If you have questions, please contact the Department of Environmental Conservation Drinking Water and Groundwater Protection Division's Regional Office Program. Need to know your Regional Office? Go to this website <https://dec.vermont.gov/water/ww-systems#romap> or call (802)-828-1535 for assistance.**

**\*The State of Vermont does not endorse the use or legitimacy of these apps. Names are provided for reference only.**

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