

Mobile Food Unit Water and Wastewater Permit Guidelines

What is a mobile food unit?

Mobile food units can include food trucks, trailers, and carts which were envisioned to be fully self-contained and mobile (registered with the Department of Motor Vehicles to travel over roads). A temporary structure, such as a shed or container, may fall under different permitting and regulations, continue reading to learn more.

Are you a food truck or trailer owner?

Most food trucks have self-contained potable water and wastewater storage and move frequently; therefore, they are not likely to need a wastewater permit. If you decide to make your mobile food unit stationary or want to hook up to an external water supply or wastewater system, keep reading to understand the rules and regulations you need to know.

Are you thinking of continuously parking your food truck in one location?

If your food truck is no longer able to readily move at any time, it may be considered a permanent structure and would require a permit under Vermont's Wastewater System and Potable Water Supply (WW Rules) <https://bit.ly/vtwwrules>.

Below are some questions to ask yourself:

- If connected to any external potable water and/or wastewater components, is my mobile food unit parked continuously (24-hours/day), for a total of more than 12 days per year and/or 4 consecutive days?
- If not connected to water and sewer, am I parking continuously (24-hours/day) at a location for a total of more than 28 days per year?
- Am I attaching a deck, stairs, skirting, insulation, or a foundation to the mobile food unit?
- Can I no longer easily move locations, or is anything preventing the mobile food unit from being driven to service the water and wastewater tanks, such as: removal of wheels, need for a special permit for travel on Vermont roads, lack of vehicle registration, or lack of a current inspection sticker?

If you answered YES to any of these questions, you may need a wastewater and water supply permit, continue reading for more information.

What does this have to do with a wastewater/drinking water permit?

Wastewater and water systems on mobile food units are designed to be self-contained, limited, and emptied and filled on a regular basis. Making a mobile food unit unmovable, and increasing the number of people you can serve, requires increases in water demand and waste generation. Page 2 details the operation and permitting requirements for water and wastewater permits regarding mobile food units and the properties on which they are parked.

What information does my designer need for my wastewater permit application?

- Permit application fee.
- Location and/or remote base(s) of operation and documented approval by landowner.
- Description of the food service and potable water and wastewater needs (number of food service employees, dishwashing, patron seating, etc.).

- A list of equipment and activities at the service base and/or remote base(s) (such as potable water source, wastewater disposal, and kitchenware washing).
- A plan for where and how potable water will be obtained and where wastewater disposal will occur, including:
 - Documentation regarding existing uses of the properties that provide these services.
 - Existing (permitted/unpermitted) capacities of potable water supplies and wastewater disposal systems.
 - Anticipated potable water supply and wastewater disposal flow quantities on a maximum daily basis.
 - Required expansion of capacities of either potable water or wastewater services if needed, along with full engineering plans and documentation, if applicable.
- Contingency plans for provisions of potable water and wastewater disposal.

What's next? You'll need to do a few things after you receive your permit:

- Provide a copy of your permit to the Vermont Health Department and Department Liquor & Lottery, if applicable.
- Ensure that your installation certification is submitted by your Designer to the Drinking Water Groundwater Protection Division.
- Record the permit and installation certification with the town record department.
- Retain a copy for your records.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

1. Why are the potable water and wastewater permits associated with the property and not the food truck?

The treatment and dispersal capacities of the property where the mobile food unit is operating need to be confirmed. Potable water supply and wastewater systems may need to be designed and submitted with a permit application. Once a permit is issued, the system(s) needs to be installed prior to use of the property to protect public health and environmental quality.

2. Can I avoid a permit if I use external water tanks and wastewater tanks connected to the mobile food unit by hoses?

No. External water connections must be from a private or public water supply as outlined in the WW Rules. External wastewater holding tanks for commercial sinks, drains, and other food preparation wash water are not allowed under the WW Rules.

3. Where can I get a copy of the WW Rules? A copy of the rules is available online at:

<https://bit.ly/vtwvrules>.

4. Who can prepare a Permit Application? A state of Vermont Licensed Wastewater/Water Supply Designer must prepare and submit a permit application. For a list of designers please go to:

<https://bit.ly/vtlicenseddesigner>.

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.

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