Washington County Health Department
Requirements for Mobile Food Units

Washington County Health Department occasionally receives requests concerning food code requirements for mobile food units. The requirements for mobile food units depend on whether the units are to be used only for temporary food events such as festivals or whether they are to be used on a more regular basis or separately from temporary food events. The requirements for temporary food events can be found in the handout titled “Guidelines for Temporary Food Events”.

The 2013 Missouri Food Code can be accessed on the Missouri Department of Health & Senior Services web site at www.dhss.mo.gov/FoodCode. Some of the requirements specific to mobile food units which are not operating solely under the guidelines for temporary food events are listed below:

All new food establishments are required to submit an application and obtain approval before opening.

8-301.11 Prerequisite for Operation.
(A) A person may not begin operation of a new food establishment, as of the effective date of this rule, without obtaining a written approval to open issued by the regulatory authority.
(B) The operator of a food establishment must obtain written approval from the regulatory authority before beginning an extensive renovation of an existing food establishment.

Food establishment operations including the storage of food and the cleaning of utensils and equipment cannot occur in the living quarters of a private home. Food would have to be stored in the mobile food unit or in a commissary. Some mobile food units are operated in connection with a separate food establishment. It may also be possible to set up a portion of a building which would provide storage space and perhaps cleaning equipment that would be used as part of the mobile food unit operation. The portion of the building used for food establishment operations would have to meet the requirements of the food code.

2-103.11 Person in Charge. The person in charge shall ensure that:
(A) Food establishment operations are not conducted in a private home or in a room used as living or sleeping quarters as specified under § 6-202.111;

6-202.111 Private Homes and Living or Sleeping Quarters, Use Prohibition. A private home, a room used as living or sleeping quarters, or an area directly opening into a room used as living or sleeping quarters may not be used for conducting food establishment operations. P
Drinking water must be obtained from an approved source. It could be obtained from a public water supply or from a well meeting construction requirements. The drinking water supply must be free of Coliform bacteria.

5-101.11 Approved System. Drinking water shall be obtained from an approved source that is:
(A) A public water system; P or
(B) A private water system. P

5-102.11 Standards.
(A) Well and Water Supply Standards.
(1) Public water systems shall:
   (a) Be in compliance with 10 CSR 60 - Safe Drinking Water Commission; P and
   (b) Non-community water supplies shall have a valid permit to dispense water from the Department of Natural Resources (DNR). A current copy of the permit must be available to the regulatory authority. P
(2) Private well water supplies shall:
   (a) Be located and constructed in accordance with 10 CSR 23 - Division of Geology and Land Survey. P
   (b) The well casing shall extend a minimum of twelve inches (12”) above grade; P and
   (c) The top of the casing and well seal shall be free of openings that may allow the entry of contaminants. P
(B) Standards. Except for non drinking water:
(1) Water supplies that serve food establishments shall provide safe drinking water; P
(2) Contaminate levels and monitoring shall be accordance with Chapter 10 CSR 60-4; P and
(3) Bacteriological, chemical, and radiological contaminants shall be within levels acceptable to the department. Supplies deemed unsafe by the department or DNR shall not be used as a potable water supply. P

5-104.11 System. Except as specified in § 5-104.12, water shall be received from the source through the use of:
(A) An approved public water main; or
(B) A private water main, water pumps, pipes, hoses, connections, and other appurtenances that shall be constructed, maintained, and operated according to law.
(C) Hauled water and water transportation tanks shall not be used as a primary water supply.

5-104.12 Alternative Water Supply. Water meeting the requirements specified under Subparts 5-101, 5-102, and 5-103 shall be made available for a mobile facility, for a temporary food establishment without a permanent water supply, and for a food establishment with a temporary interruption of its water supply through:
(A) A supply of containers of commercially bottled drinking water;
(B) One (1) or more closed portable water containers;
(C) An enclosed vehicular water tank;
(D) An on-premises water storage tank; or
(E) Piping, tubing, or hoses connected to an adjacent approved source.
There must be sufficient water capacity and hot water must be available. It must be under pressure. Food grade hoses must be used. The water tank must be properly constructed.

5-103.11 Capacity.
(A) The water source and system shall be of sufficient capacity to meet the peak water demands of the food establishment. P
(B) Hot water generation and distribution systems shall be sufficient to meet the peak hot water demands throughout the food establishment. P

5-103.12 Pressure. Water under pressure shall be provided to all fixtures, equipment, and nonfood equipment that are required to use water except that water supplied as specified under § 5-104.12 to a temporary food establishment or in response to a temporary interruption of a water supply need not be under pressure.

5-301.11 Approved. Materials that are used in the construction of a mobile water tank, mobile food establishment water tank, and appurtenances shall be:
(A) Safe; P
(B) Durable, corrosion-resistant, and nonabsorbent; and
(C) Finished to have a smooth, easily cleanable surface.

5-302.11 Enclosed System, Sloped to Drain. A mobile water tank shall be:
(A) Enclosed from the filling inlet to the discharge outlet; and
(B) Sloped to an outlet that allows complete drainage of the tank.

5-302.12 Inspection and Cleaning Port, Protected and Secured. If a water tank is designed with an access port for inspection and cleaning, the opening shall be in the top of the tank and:
(A) Flanged upward at least one-half inch (0.5”); and
(B) Equipped with a port cover assembly that is:
   (1) Provided with a gasket and a device for securing the cover in place, and
   (2) Flanged to overlap the opening and sloped to drain.

5-302.13 "V" Type Threads, Use Limitation. A fitting with "V" type threads on a water tank inlet or outlet shall be allowed only when a hose is permanently attached.

5-302.14 Tank Vent, Protected. If provided, a water tank vent shall terminate in a downward direction and shall be covered with:
(A) Sixteen (16) mesh to one inch (1”) screen or equivalent when the vent is in a protected area; or
(B) A protective filter when the vent is in an area that is not protected from windblown dirt and debris.

5-302.15 Inlet and Outlet, Sloped to Drain.
(A) A water tank and its inlet and outlet shall be sloped to drain.
(B) A water tank inlet shall be positioned so that it is protected from contaminants such as waste discharge, road dust, oil, or grease.
5-302.16 Hose, Construction and Identification. A hose used for conveying drinking water from a water tank shall be:
(A) Safe;
(B) Durable, corrosion-resistant, and nonabsorbent;
(C) Resistant to pitting, chipping, crazing, scratching, scoring, distortion, and decomposition;
(D) Finished with a smooth interior surface; and
(E) Clearly and durably identified as to its use if not permanently attached.

5-303.11 Filter, Compressed Air. A filter that does not pass oil or oil vapors shall be installed in the air supply line between the compressor and drinking water system when compressed air is used to pressurize the water tank system.

5-303.12 Protective Cover or Device. A cap and keeper chain, closed cabinet, closed storage tube, or other approved protective cover or device shall be provided for a water inlet, outlet, and hose.

5-303.13 Mobile Food Establishment Tank Inlet. A mobile food establishment's water tank inlet shall be:
(A) Three-fourths inch (3/4”) in inner diameter or less; and
(B)Provided with a hose connection of a size or type that will prevent its use for any other service.

5-304.11 System Flushing and Sanitization. A water tank, pump, and hoses shall be flushed and sanitized before being placed in service after construction, repair, modification, and periods of nonuse.

5-304.12 Using a Pump and Hoses, Backflow Prevention. A person shall operate a water tank, pump, and hoses so that backflow and other contamination of the water supply are prevented.

5-304.13 Protecting Inlet, Outlet, and Hose Fitting. If not in use, a water tank and hose inlet and outlet fitting shall be protected using a cover or device as specified under § 5-303.12.

5-304.14 Tank, Pump, and Hoses, Dedication.
(A) Except as specified in ¶ (B) of this section, a water tank, pump, and hoses used for conveying drinking water shall be used for no other purpose.
(B) Water tanks, pumps, and hoses approved for liquid foods may be used for conveying drinking water if they are cleaned and sanitized before they are used to convey water.
Wastewater must be disposed in an approved wastewater treatment system.

5-403.11 Approved Sewage Disposal System. Sewage shall be disposed through an approved facility.
(A) On-site wastewater treatment systems serving food establishments which generate three thousand (3,000) gallons or less of wastewater per day and are maintained in a subsurface treatment and disposal system shall be regulated by the DHSS. P
(1) Any on-site wastewater treatment system installed after January 1, 1996, shall be constructed according to 19 CSR 20-3.060 Minimum Construction Standards for On-site Sewage Disposal Systems or applicable local ordinance. P
(2) On-site wastewater treatment systems shall be maintained and operated to preclude surfacing or discharging effluent, production of odors or the creation of a habitat for insect breeding, contamination of surface water or groundwater or creation of a nuisance or health hazard. P
(3) Malfunctioning systems shall be renovated according to 19 CSR 20-3.060 Minimum Construction Standards for On-site Sewage Disposal Systems or applicable local ordinance. P

Wastewater tanks must be properly constructed and operated.

5-401.11 Capacity and Drainage. A sewage holding tank in a mobile food establishment shall be:
(A) Sized fifteen percent (15%) larger in capacity than the water supply tank; and
(B) Sloped to a drain that is one inch (1”) in inner diameter or greater, equipped with a shut-off valve.

5-402.10 Establishment Drainage System. Food establishment drainage systems, including grease traps, that convey sewage shall be designed and installed as specified under ¶ 5-202.11(A).

5-202.11 Approved System and Cleanable Fixtures.
(A) A plumbing system shall be designed, constructed, and installed according to law. P

5-402.11 Backflow Prevention.
(A) Except as specified in ¶¶ (B), (C), (D), and (E) of this section, a direct connection may not exist between the sewage system and a drain originating from equipment in which food, portable equipment, or utensils are placed. P
((B), (C), and (D) would not apply to mobile food units. (E) states As otherwise approved by the regulatory authority. To further explain: There cannot be a direct connection between the warewashing sinks and the sewage disposal system and between the food prep sinks and the sewage disposal system. The indirect connection is usually achieved in one of two ways. 1. A smaller pipe leading from the three-compartment sink empties into a larger pipe without the two pipes being connected together. A trap would have to be present in the wastewater plumbing to prevent sewage gases from entering the structure. Any wastewater that backs up would flow out onto the floor rather than into the sinks. 2. A drain from the warewashing and food preparation sinks may empty into a floor drain sink which is constructed below floor level. A trap must be present between the floor drain sink and the sewage disposal system. The floor drain sink sometimes has a trap built in. Please contact the health department if there is an issue with installing an indirect connection.)
5-402.13 Conveying Sewage. Sewage shall be conveyed to the point of disposal through an approved sanitary sewage system or other system, including use of sewage transport vehicles, waste retention tanks, pumps, pipes, hoses, and connections that are constructed, maintained, and operated according to law.

5-402.14 Removing Mobile Food Establishment Wastes. Sewage and other liquid wastes shall be removed from a mobile food establishment at an approved waste servicing area or by a sewage transport vehicle in such a way that a public health hazard or nuisance is not created.

5-402.15 Flushing a Waste Retention Tank. A tank for liquid waste retention shall be thoroughly flushed and drained in a sanitary manner during the servicing operation. A three-compartment sink and a separate handsink would be required.

4-301.12 Manual Warewashing, Sink Compartment Requirements.
(A) Except as specified in ¶ (C) of this section, a sink with at least three (3) compartments shall be provided for manually washing, rinsing, and sanitizing equipment and utensils.
(B) Sink compartments shall be large enough to accommodate immersion of the largest equipment and utensils. If equipment or utensils are too large for the warewashing sink, a warewashing machine or alternative equipment as specified in ¶ (C) of this section shall be used.

5-204.11 Handwashing Sinks. A handwashing sink shall be located:
(A) To allow convenient use by employees in food preparation, food dispensing, and warewashing areas; and
(B) In, or immediately adjacent to, toilet rooms.

5-202.12 Handwashing Sink, Installation.
(A) A handwashing sink shall be equipped to provide water at a temperature of at least one hundred degrees Fahrenheit (100°F) through a mixing valve or combination faucet.

Ventilation may be required if there is a build-up of grease vapors in the unit.

4-301.14 Ventilation Hood Systems, Adequacy. Ventilation hood systems and devices shall be sufficient in number and capacity to prevent grease or condensation from collecting on walls and ceilings.

Protection from insects and the elements.

6-202.16 Exterior Walls and Roofs, Protective Barrier. Perimeter walls and roofs of a food establishment shall effectively protect the establishment from the weather and the entry of insects, rodents, and other animals.