



**Manitowoc County
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Mobile Restaurant Requirements and Frequently Asked Questions

What is a Mobile Restaurant?

A mobile food establishment operates from movable vehicle, push cart, trailer or boat which periodically or continuously changes location and wherein meals or lunches are prepared or sold to the consumer for immediate consumption. It does not include vehicles used for delivery of pre-ordered food prepared in a licensed food establishment, or a vehicle which is used solely to transport or deliver food or a common carrier regulated by the state or federal government, nor a movable concession stand designed to operate as a temporary restaurant or a traveling retail food establishment.

What is a Temporary Restaurant?

A Temporary Restaurant is a food establishment that operates at a fixed location for a period of no more than 14 consecutive days in conjunction with a single event or celebration such as a fair, carnival, circus, public exhibition, anniversary sale, or occasional sales promotion.

What are the Minimum Mobile Restaurant Requirements?

1. A nonhand operated handwash sink is required on all mobile units. All sinks must have hot and cold running water under pressure.
2. A 3 compartment sink with drain boards is required. The sink can be located at the service base instead of on the mobile unit only if food processing is limited to prepackaged, beverages are dispensed in single servings from covered urns or other protected equipment, and utensils are single-service.
3. All the equipment in the mobile unit shall be commercial (NSF approved).
4. Every mobile restaurant must have a service base of operations consisting of an enclosed building of sufficient size for servicing, cleaning, inspection & maintenance unless it is demonstrated that lack of such a building will not interfere with the servicing, cleaning, maintenance and inspection of the unit. The service base must have an approved water supply and liquid waste disposal. The service base cannot be a private home.

5. Each mobile unit shall return to its service base at least once every 24 hours unless approval is granted by the licensing department when it can be shown to operate in a safe and sanitary manner for the longer periods of time.
6. Itineraries of each mobile unit shall be available at the service base.
7. The mobile unit and service base shall be made available for inspection.
8. Drinking water for the mobile unit shall be obtained from the service base and there must always be at least one gallon available on the unit.
9. The watering point shall consist of a threaded tap with back flow prevention.
10. Water hoses for food production shall be food grade.
11. Each unit shall be equipped with a gravity or pressurized **water storage tank**.
 - a. This tank should be at least 10 gallons for handwashing on units that are only reheating already prepared foods.
 - b. The tank for a pushcart shall be at least 5 gallons.
 - c. A 40 gallon tank is required for mobiles that prepare food on the unit.
 - d. The tank shall be constructed of at least 14 gauge metal or other durable food grade material, provided with a glass-sight gauge to read the volume of water and equipped with a threaded opening on the inlet tank with a locking device for flushing and sanitizing.
12. Each mobile unit shall have a waste water storage tank that is 15 percent larger than the water tank and constructed of at least 14 gauge metal or other durable smooth surface material, equipped with a dischargeclosing valve consisting of a minimum of 1½ inch half-union attachment for draining. The hose used for waste disposal shall be stored in a separate cabinet labeled "For Waste Water Hose Only".
13. Pushcarts shall be located on a paved surface or on permanent flooring if located indoors. Push carts can sell potentially hazardous foods if they have an enclosed system that precludes any contamination of food and have mechanical means to maintain foods at proper temperatures.
14. The driver's compartment shall be separated from food area and no foods, food containers, etc. shall be stored in the driver's compartment.
15. No unit shall be used for living or sleeping purposes and shall not be used for non-food purposes or business.
16. If bottle or liquefied gas is used within the unit it shall be installed, designed, and constructed according to COMM 40.
17. There must be public or private toilets available for use during all hours of operation.

Can I Prepare or Store Food in My Home Kitchen? Can I use my house as my Service Base?

No. All food preparation and storage must be on the mobile food truck or at the licensed service base. A private home cannot be used as a service base unless a separate commercial kitchen is installed to be used for food prep and storage.

Common Scenarios

The following are examples of different types of food services and the type of permit which must be issued. These examples are not all inclusive.

- 1) A person operating a food service 20 days or less at a race track, flea market, ball park or similar event at which food items such as hot dogs, preformed hamburgers, bratwurst or similar meals are served only during the period there is a ball game or other event, can be issued a temporary restaurant permit.
- 2) A person serving meals at a race track, flea market, ball park or similar event on a seasonal basis exceeding 20 days must operate from a mobile or permanent base and be issued a permanent or mobile & service base restaurant permit.
- 3) A person who serves meals at an annual fishing contest must be issued a temporary restaurant permit.
- 4) A person who serves meals from a boat on a daily or weekly basis must be issued a mobile restaurant and service base permit.
- 5) A person who serves meals at events such as Summerfest, Oktoberfest, Cheese Curd Festival, etc. must be issued a temporary restaurant permit.
- 6) A person who serves meals from a movable trailer, van, bus, pushcart, cooker or other type of a movable facility that has established stops selling to businesses or the general public must be issued a mobile restaurant and service base permit.
- 7) A person who serves meals at a sale barn where cattle are “brought in from farms” to a central auction barn for sale must be issued a mobile & service base or permanent restaurant permit.

The information in this pamphlet is not all inclusive. For additional and more detailed information refer to the Wisconsin Food Code