

Whiteside County Health Department

Division of Environmental Health
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Pre-opening requirements for Mobile Food Units

Mobile Food Unit Defined

Mobile food unit shall mean either a licensable motorized vehicle or trailer equipped with an on-board food preparation facility which complies with these requirements*. Mobile food units shall be operable, duly licensed and bear current registration in accordance with Section 20-30 of the Whiteside County Public Health code.

Floors, Walls and Ceilings

The floor, wall and ceiling coverings of the food preparation/storage area shall be constructed from light colored, smooth, durable and easily cleanable materials and free of raised fasteners. All exposed walls shall be covered with fiberglass panel (f.r.p.), or non corrosive metal, such as aluminum or stainless steel. All exposed floors shall be covered with commercial grade tile, linoleum or non corrosive metal, such as aluminum or stainless steel; ref. codes 750.1680 and 750.1690

Exterior openings

All doors and windows shall be screened and or equipped with functional air curtains during periods of operation. Screen doors shall close tightly; ref. code 750.1170.

Refrigeration

Each mobile food unit shall be equipped with at least one mechanical refrigeration unit, for storing potentially hazardous foods, capable of maintaining an air temperature of 41 degrees F. The unit must be maintained in original condition; smooth/cleanable surfaces, intact door gaskets, etc... Each unit shall be equipped with a numerically scaled indicating thermometer, accurate to plus or minus 3 degrees F. located to measure the air temperature in the warmest part of the unit; ref. code section 750.140.

Preparation Surfaces

All preparation surfaces shall be constructed of Formica or stainless steel. All surfaces shall be installed free of open cracks, large spaces between counterpace and walls and rough or sharp edges. Plastic cutting boards shall be free of cracks or grooves. Wooden cutting boards are prohibited; ref. code 750.650.

Water System

A permanent tank, designed for holding potable water, shall be located inside the mobile unit. The system shall be equipped to furnish pressurized hot and cold running water for food preparation, utensil cleaning and sanitizing, and hand washing. The water inlet shall be located (protected) so that it will not be contaminated by waste discharge, road dust, oil, or grease and it shall be kept capped unless being filled. The water inlet shall be designed so that it can only be used for filling the holding tank with potable water. All distribution lines and appurtenances shall be constructed and installed with materials designed for potable water distribution; ref. code 750.1530.

Wastewater Retention

A permanently installed retention tank intended for receiving wastewater from the food service operation that is of at least 50% larger capacity than the water supply tank. The waste connection shall be lower than the water inlet connection to preclude contamination of the potable water systems; ref. code 750.1530.

Sinks

All sinks shall be equipped with pressurized hot and cold running water and drains shall be connected to the on-board wastewater retention tank. A three compartment sink with either a drain board or counter

space at one or both ends of the sink is required. The sink basins shall be large enough to accommodate the largest utensil used and to submerge at least one half of the largest pot or pan to be used. A separate hand wash sink is also required. The hand wash "station" shall be equipped with liquid hand soap and paper towel dispensers; ref. codes 750.820 and 750.1120.

Lighting

Lighting in food preparation/utensil washing areas must equal or exceed 20 foot candles of light (consult an electrician). All lighting shall be shielded; ref. code 750.1240.

Food/Single Service Article Storage

Packaged/repackaged non potentially hazardous foods and single service articles shall be stored in either tight fitting easily cleanable built in cabinets or in tight fitting lidded containers. Provisions shall be made so that such items will be stored a minimum 6" off the floor and above or away from sinks, wastewater lines and wastewater retention tank; ref. codes 750.130 and 750.880.

Garbage/Refuse Storage

Lidded and waterproof container(s) large enough to hold not more than one day's worth of accumulated waste shall be provided. The containers shall be lined with garbage bags and maintained in clean condition. Accumulated waste shall be disposed of on a daily basis in a manner that complies with state and local regulations; ref. code 750.1130.

Floor Plan

A floor plan detailing the layout of the mobile food unit in the manner specified above shall be submitted for review. Modifications to the unit shall not begin until the floor plan has been approved by the department.

Permit Approval

Issuance of a retail food permit is dependent on the following:

- A mobile food unit determined by inspection to be in compliance with all of the above listed requirements. The department reserves the right to not permit a mobile food unit that has all the structural and equipment requirements if such unit was poorly constructed or assembled.
- Proof that the operator of the unit is certified in food service sanitation.
- Copy of the menu provided to the department. The establishment cannot vary from submitted menu unless prior approval is granted.

*Push carts are not considered mobile food units and, therefore, shall operate from, and as part of, a permitted food service establishment: Push carts which offer only prepackaged non potentially hazardous foods are not required to be permitted.