Short-Term Rental Drinking Water and Wastewater System Fact Sheet

If you are considering renting all or part of a home or structure on a short-term basis you need to be aware of Vermont's rules regarding drinking water supplies and wastewater systems (WW Rules). You and your guests want reliable water and wastewater systems— sewage backups on your property aren't a recipe for 5-star reviews!

Remember, Learn Before You List!

Examples of Short-Term Rentals

Examples of short-term rentals include: Non-mobile, non-registered RV connected to a water supply or wastewater system; Yurts/ Yomes; Cabins/Huts; Mobile homes; Single family residences; Accessory Apartments; Duplexes; Multi-unit buildings; Condominiums; and Seasonal Camps & Cottages.

Do I Need a Wastewater Permit?

VT WW Rules (https://bit.ly/vtwwrules) require all structures for living or work have a water supply and wastewater system that protects human health and the environment. Except for some exemptions, (see remote huts and primitive camps) changes in use that impact waste output and water usage need an updated permit, for example, adding studio apartment to your property.

Short-Term Rentals for Camping, Primitive Camps or Remote Huts only Accessible by Foot or Boat

A WW Permit may still be required; however, additional options are available for water sources and wastewater disposal. Please see our Camping/Campground Guidance document for details or contact a VT Licensed Designer.

What Do Short-Term Rentals Have to Do with Wastewater and Drinking Water?

Water supplies and wastewater systems can't handle an unlimited number of daytime and overnight guests. Drinking Water supplies and wastewater systems are designed for a limited number of people, typically based on the bedroom count.

What Is a Bedroom?

A bedroom is a room in a building that is used or serves as sleeping quarters/spaces. Adding beds to places like a screened in porch or other room in the building is considered a bedroom. Adding a "bedroom" to your building is considered an increase in wastewater/water flows and requires a permit.

Drinking Water and Wastewater Have Limits

Drinking water and wastewater systems are engineered for certain amounts of water and sewage per day. If you have a local permit to use your property as a short-term rental it is important to know if its water supply and wastewater system has the capacity to serve your rental guests. Both town sewer/water and onsite wastewater/private wells have limits on the amount of water and sewage they can handle. Not having a proper wastewater and water supply system can negatively impact human and environmental health by spreading dangerous germs or releasing untreated wastewater.

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How Do I Determine the Number of People My System and Supply are Designed to Serve?

Typically, wastewater systems are designed for two people per bedroom, up to three bedrooms, and one person per bedroom beginning with the fourth bedroom. **On occasion, a wastewater system may be oversized, which may allow greater occupancy.** The table below lists the typical capacity for certain size dwellings and can help you decide how to list your property (**note these examples are for reference only**).

Number of Bedrooms	Typical wastewater/water system capacity
1-bedroom	2 people
3-bedroom	6 people
4-bedroom	7 people
6-bedroom	9 people

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

What if my short-term rental unit has a composting toilet, doesn't that take care of the wastewater needs? No, you must safely dispose of all types of wastewater, not just toilet water.

What if I provide bottled water for my short-term rental unit guests, does that take care of my potable water needs? No, a sufficient quantity of water for guests for personal hygiene and proper sanitation is required. Different standards exist for remote sites, please contact us with questions.

How do I get a WW Permit? Contact a State of Vermont licensed wastewater and water supply designer. They can help you understand requirements and assist you in applying for a permit. Go to this link to find a nearby professional: **https://bit.ly/vtlicenseddesigner**.

I want to add an in-law apartment, tiny home, yurt, etc., do I need a WW Permit? Very likely, however, if it is a primitive camp or remote hut, it may be exempt. Please contact a VT Licensed Designer to apply for a permit.

I plan to convert a bedroom to create a short-term rental apartment, do I need a WW Permit? Most likely yes, however, some exemptions may apply. Please contact a VT Licensed Designer or your Regional Engineer to determine the specifics of your situation.

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.

Please be aware that other State, Local, or Federal permits may be required for short-term rentals and related land uses.

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