

HENNEPIN COUNTY  
MINNESOTA

# Mobile Food Unit, Seasonal Temporary and Seasonal Permanent Food Stand Construction Guide

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This guide has been adapted with permissions from its original version created by the Minnesota Department of Health. The original version can be found here: [Mobile Food Unit, Seasonal Temporary Food Stand and Seasonal Permanent Food Stand Construction Guide \(state.mn.us\)](http://Mobile Food Unit, Seasonal Temporary Food Stand and Seasonal Permanent Food Stand Construction Guide (state.mn.us))

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## Purpose

This guide is intended to aid individuals or groups looking to submit plans for mobile food unit (MFU), seasonal temporary food stand (STFS) and seasonal permanent food stand (SPFS) to Hennepin County Public Health for review and approval for licensing.

Construction, equipment, and physical facility standards outlined in this guide are minimum requirements as defined in the [Minnesota Food Code](#) and [Hennepin County Ordinance 3](#).

Hennepin County Public Health is responsible for plan review, licensing and inspections for operations taking place within Hennepin County Health Department jurisdiction. See map of cities within Hennepin County under HCPH jurisdiction: [HCPH Jurisdiction Map](#).

To find out which agency your operations will need to go through plan review and licensing with, visit the MDH website [Licensing Jurisdiction: Food, Beverage and Lodging](#) or call MDH at 651-201-4500 or Hennepin County Public Health at 612-543-5200.

## Definitions

### Mobile food unit

*"Mobile food unit" means a food and beverage service establishment that is a vehicle mounted unit, either:*

*(1) motorized or trailered, operating no more than 21 days annually at any one place, or operating more than 21 days annually at any one place with the approval of the regulatory authority as defined in Minnesota Rules, part 4626.0020, subpart 70; or*

*(2) operated in conjunction with a permanent business licensed under chapter 157 or chapter 28A at the site of the permanent business by the same individual or company, and readily movable, without disassembling, for transport to another location.*

– Minnesota Statutes, section 157.15, subdivision 9

### Seasonal temporary food stand

*"Seasonal temporary food stand" means a food and beverage service establishment that is a food stand which is disassembled and moved from location to location, but which operates for no more than 21 days annually at any one location, except as provided in paragraph (b).*

*(b) A seasonal temporary food stand may operate for more than 21 days annually at any one place with the approval of the regulatory authority, as defined in Minnesota Rules, part 4626.0020, subpart 70, that has jurisdiction over the seasonal temporary food stand.*



– Minnesota Statutes, section 157.15, subdivision 13

## Seasonal permanent food stand

*"Seasonal permanent food stand" means a food and beverage service establishment which is a permanent food service stand or building, but which operates no more than 21 days annually.*

– Minnesota Statues, section 157.15, subdivision 12a.

## Restrictions

### Approved Source

MFU, STFS, and SPFS must not use or serve food that was stored or prepared in a private home. All food storage and preparation must occur in the MFU, STFS, SPFS, or in a licensed food establishment. All food must come from Approved Sources for Food Products.

### Catering

Preparing, storing, transporting, and serving large volumes of food at catered events presents increased food safety risks. Catering operations cannot be conducted from MFU, STFS or SPFS unless approved by the regulatory authority and adequate provision is made for safe storage and handling of the large volume of foods associated with catered events.

## Plan Submittal and Review

Plans must be submitted to Hennepin County Public Health at least 30 days before beginning construction, remodeling, or conversion of an existing structure to a MFU, STFS or SPFS. If you begin work before plans are approved, Hennepin County Public Health may order work to stop when it determines work may lead to noncompliance.

Please contact Hennepin County Public Health at 612-543-5200 if you have questions about whether a plan review is needed for your MFU, STFS or SPFS.

### Plan review process

Submit your Plan Review Application with all required information and payment to:

Hennepin County Public Health Department

Epidemiology and Environmental Health

479 Prairie Center Drive, Eden Prairie, MN 55343



## New construction or remodeling

1. Plan review applications are reviewed in the order they are received. Submit all required information listed in the Required Plan Contents section of this guide. If your application is incomplete, the review process may take longer.
2. Your plan reviewer will notify you when review starts and will contact you to request any missing or additional information needed.
3. When review is complete, you will receive a letter approving your plans.
4. Wait to begin your project until after plans are approved.

In some circumstances, HCPH can issue a license without a plan submittal and review for MFU, STFS or SPFS if the establishment has previously been licensed by MDA, MDH or another MDA or MDH-delegated agency. However, an inspection is required to determine if the MFU, STFS or SPFS is in compliance with Minnesota statutes and rules, Hennepin County Ordinance and other applicable regulations.

Please contact HCPH at 612-543-5200 if you have questions about whether a plan review is needed for your MFU, STFS or SPFS.

## Required plan contents

Make sure to include all the following when you submit your completed plan review application and payment:

- The intended menu.
- A description of the proposed project including the anticipated volume of food to be stored, prepared, sold or served.
- Easily readable layout drawn to scale indicating the location of all equipment (e.g., cooking equipment, ventilation hood, refrigerators, food prep counters and counter equipment, handwashing sink(s), three-compartment sink, and food prep sink).
- Finish materials for floors, base coves, walls, and ceilings.
- Proposed equipment list that includes types, manufacturers and model numbers.
- Manufacturer's specification sheets for new equipment.
- Counters and cabinetry shop drawings, indicating cabinet construction, and countertop finish.
- Size of water heater, and fresh water and wastewater holding tanks.
- The source of water (private or public) for your MFU, STFS or SPFS. Include unique well number for private systems. Send information on food-grade hose to be used for filling.
- The method of sewage disposal (public or private) for your MFU, STFS or SPFS. SPFS include individual sewage treatment system certificate of compliance for individual sewage disposal systems.
- Commissary agreement with permanent support facility for storage, preparation, filling, dumping, etc. as required for operations.



- A copy of the zoning approval or building permit from the local unit of government for SPFS.

Additional information may be requested during the plan review process to allow for a thorough review.

## Licensing and preoperational inspections

Once your project is near completion, follow these steps:

1. **Complete required documents and pay any outstanding invoice(s)**

Once a submitted plan has been approved for licensing, an invoice and an additional required documentation to be completed and submitted by the responsible party will be sent. Documents must be received and completed and invoices paid in full prior to scheduling a final inspection.

2. **Have your MFU, STFS or SPFS inspected**

Contact your assigned approver to schedule a final inspection. For the final inspection, all equipment must be present, correctly installed and operational as it would be during operations.

3. **Post license in public view**

After a successful preoperational inspection, HCPH will issue a license. Post the original license in the MFU, STFS or SPFS in public view at all times. The license is valid for one year and must be renewed annually.

## General Equipment Information

Include specifications, proposed locations and intended use for all new and used equipment in submitted plan. Menu and food processes determine the type of equipment required. Complex food processes may require additional or specialized equipment.

## Equipment design and construction

Some equipment must be certified or classified for sanitation by an American National Standards Institute (ANSI) accredited certification program for food service equipment and includes:

- Manual warewashing sinks
- Mechanical warewashing equipment
- Mechanical refrigeration units except for reach-in or chest freezers
- Food hot-holding equipment

- Cooking equipment, except for microwave ovens and toasters
- Ice machines
- Mechanical slicers
- Mechanical tenderizers and grinders
- Food preparation surfaces including sinks used for food preparation

If there is no certification or classification for sanitation by an ANSI accredited certification program for a piece of equipment, the equipment must:

- Be designed for commercial use.
- Be durable, smooth, and easily cleanable.
- Be readily accessible for cleaning.
- Have food-contact surfaces that are not toxic.

### Most common ANSI accredited certification programs

Certifying Group	Mark
NSF International (NSF)	
Intertek Marked "ETL Sanitation."	
Underwriters Laboratory (UL) Marked "Classified UL EPH."	
Canadian Standards Association (CSA) Marked "CSA Sanitation to NSF/ANSI."	
Baking Industry Sanitation Standards Committee (BISSC) Marked "Certified BISSC."	

## Equipment numbers and capacities

Provide mechanical equipment that meets the cooking, cooling, re-heating, ventilation, and hot and cold holding needs of the MFU, STFS and SPFS. Install and use equipment as intended by the manufacturer.

Some common circumstances with special equipment requirements include:

- Picnic coolers may not be used for food storage except for bottled and canned beverages that are not time/temperature control for safety (TCS) food.
- Food guards, display cases or other effective means must be provided to protect unpackaged food from contamination while on display.

## Equipment locations and installation

Locate or install equipment so that food and food-contact surfaces are not exposed to contamination and the areas around and beneath the equipment are accessible for cleaning.

If equipment is not easily moveable, seal it to the surface or mount it on legs. Four-inch legs are required for table-mounted equipment; six-inch legs are required for floor-mounted equipment.

## Unapproved equipment

Examples of equipment that are frequently submitted but **not approved** include:

- Unfinished wood
- Household roasters/crock pots
- Galvanized food storage containers
- Enamelware
- Paintbrushes
- Wooden spoons
- Plastic tables
- Drills
- Non-food grade plastic containers
- Tubing or beverage cold plates in contact with stored ice

# Sinks

Include specifications, proposed locations and intended use for all sinks.

## Handwashing sinks

Provide at least one handwashing sink, either free standing or installed into an approved counter. Locate handwashing sinks to provide easy access for all employees who are:

- Preparing or dispensing food and beverages
- Conducting warewashing
- Using the toilet room

Each handwashing sink must be equipped to provide water under pressure at a temperature to allow handwashing for at least 15 seconds through a mixing valve or combination faucet. A self-closing, slow-closing, or metering faucet must provide a flow of water for at least 15 seconds without the need to reactivate the faucet.

Handwashing sinks in MFU and SPFS must be permanently installed. Handwashing sinks in STFS may be portable with water delivered under pressure or by gravity with a faucet or spigot that provides hands-free flow of water.

HCPH may require splashguards on handwashing sinks to limit contamination of food, clean equipment and utensils, and single-service and single-use articles.

## Manual warewashing sink

Provide a sink with at least three compartments. All compartments must be part of the same piece of equipment. Warewashing sinks in MFU may be either free standing or installed into an approved counter. Warewashing sinks in MFU and SPFS must be permanently installed. Portable warewashing sinks are allowed in STFS.

Warewashing sinks in SPFS must include at least three compartments that are all part of the same piece of equipment. Utensil racks or tables may be required for storing all dirty and clean equipment and utensils.

Sink compartments must be large enough to allow immersion of the largest piece of equipment and utensils. If equipment or utensils are too large for the warewashing sink, alternative manual warewashing equipment must be used.

Manual warewashing sinks must be certified or classified for sanitation by an American National Standards Institute (ANSI) accredited certification program.

## Food preparation sink

Provide a designated food preparation sink if the proposed menu includes a food product that requires washing or thawing in a sink.

Food preparation sinks must be certified or classified for sanitation by an American National Standards Institute (ANSI) accredited certification program.

## Summary of sink requirements

The following table summarizes the sink requirements for MFU, STFS, and SPFS.

Handwashing and warewashing sinks are **always required**. Food preparation sinks may or may not be required.

Type of Sink	Mobile Food Unit (Water must be under pressure)	Seasonal Temporary Food Stand	Seasonal Permanent Food Stand (Water must be under pressure)
Handwashing Sink(s)	Permanently installed	May be portable (water under pressure or by gravity)	Permanently installed
Warewashing Sink	Permanently installed (free standing or installed in counter)	May be portable	Permanently installed (must include integrally attached drainboards at each end)
Food Preparation Sink	Permanently installed	May be portable	Permanently installed

## Ventilation Systems

Include specifications and proposed locations for ventilation hoods in submitted plans. Design and install ventilation systems according to [Minnesota Rules, chapter 1346](#), Minnesota mechanical and fuel gas code. [Minnesota Rules, part 1346.0507](#) provides commercial kitchen hood requirements for some equipment.

Ventilation hood systems and devices must be sufficient in number and capacity to prevent grease or condensation from collecting on walls and ceilings. Adequate ventilation and make-up air is required for equipment that produces excessive steam, condensation, vapors, obnoxious or disagreeable odors, smoke and fumes.

Design ventilation systems to prevent grease or condensation from draining or dripping onto food, equipment, utensils, walls, ceiling, linens and single-service articles. Grease filters used in an exhaust ventilation hood or other grease extracting equipment must be designed to be readily removable for cleaning and/or replacing if not designed to be cleaned in place.



# Counters, Cabinetry and Tables

Include specifications, proposed locations and intended uses for all tables, counters, cabinetry and customer self-service areas in submitted plans.

## Food-contact surfaces

A food-contact surface is a surface of equipment or utensil that directly contacts food. Food-contact surface also includes a surface of equipment or utensil from which food may drain, drip or splash, such as an interior of a reach-in cooler.

Plastic laminate surfaces or plastic tables are not acceptable as food preparation surfaces.

Food-contact surfaces must be certified or classified for sanitation by an American National Standards Institute (ANSI) accredited certification program.

Food-contact surfaces must be:

- Safe
- Durable, corrosion-resistant and nonabsorbent
- Sufficient in weight and thickness to withstand repeated warewashing
- Finished to have smooth, easily cleanable surface
- Resistant to pitting, chipping, crazing, scratching, scoring, distortion, and decomposition

Examples of activities requiring approved food-contact surfaces include:

- Chopping, cutting or mixing raw foods
- Cooking foods using equipment such as grills, deep fryers, flat tops, or ovens
- Assembling foods such as sandwiches or salads

## Non-food-contact surfaces

A non-food contact surface is a surface of equipment that does not directly contact food, such as surfaces of millwork and cabinetry. Non-food-contact surfaces of equipment that are exposed to splash, spillage, other food soiling or that require frequent cleaning must be constructed of a corrosion-resistant, nonabsorbent, and smooth material.

Non-food-contact surfaces must be free of unnecessary ledges, projections, and crevices, and designed and constructed to allow easy cleaning and maintenance.

Non-food-contact counters and cabinets can be plastic laminate or other nonabsorbent material. Unfinished wood is not allowed. All cutouts must be sealed by the manufacturer or countertop installer because it prevents water damage to the interior of the counter or cabinet. Cabinets with enclosed hollow bases are prohibited.

Stainless steel, laminated top, or other equivalent nonabsorbent surfaces are allowed for some types of equipment.

Examples of areas with non-food contact surfaces include:

- Beverage service areas for beverage dispensers such as espresso or coffee machines, or pop dispensers
- Customer self-service areas such as condiment display stations
- Cashier or ordering areas at bar or wait stations

## Floors, Walls and Ceilings

Include proposed finish materials for all floor, wall and ceiling surfaces in submitted plans. Provide smooth, nonabsorbent, durable and easily cleanable floors, walls and ceilings.

Prior to selecting floor, wall and ceiling surfaces, owners, design professionals, and others involved in preparing the plans should consider the following factors:

- Type and amount of use
- Type of soil and cleaning methods
- Life span of the surface

### Floors

Select and install flooring surfaces that meet the needs of your MFU, STFS or SPFS. Follow all manufacturer's recommendations.

When operating STFS and SPFS on machine-laid asphalt or concrete that is sloped to drain an additional flooring surface is not required.

When operating STFS and SPFS on grass, dirt or gravel, provide a surface such as mats, removable platforms, duckboards or other suitable approved materials that control dust and mud. Mats and duckboards must be designed to be removable and easily cleanable.

### Walls and ceilings

Select and install wall and ceiling surfaces that meet the needs of your MFU, STFS or SPFS. Wall and ceiling surfaces must be smooth, durable, nonabsorbent, and easily cleanable.

Provide wall and ceiling surfaces for STFS and SPFS that protect the interior of the stand from the weather and windblown dust and debris.



# Utilities

Include specific information for water supply, water heaters, sewage disposal system, and other utilities in submitted plans. Provide utilities to meet the needs of your MFU, STFS and SPFS.

## Water supply

Identify the source of the water for your MFU, STFS and SPFS in submitted plans.

A safe and adequate supply of water must be provided to meet the needs of your food establishment. Water for your establishment must be obtained from a municipal water supply or a water supply that meets the requirements of Minnesota Rules, chapter 4720, Public Water Supplies; and chapter 4725, Wells and Borings.

A representative from Hennepin County Public Health may conduct an onsite evaluation of your water supply prior to licensing your establishment.

The water inlet must be protected from contamination and be designed to prevent attachment of a non-potable service connection. Hoses used to obtain water must be of food grade quality and be provided with an approved backflow preventer. Garden hoses are not allowed.

## Drinking water and wastewater holding tanks, and water heaters

Drinking water tanks must be designed for holding potable water, be easily cleanable, of sufficient capacity to meet the needs of the operation and constructed of an approved food grade non-toxic material.

A wastewater, or grey water, holding tank must be provided which is sized 15 percent larger in capacity than the water supply tank. MFU must have wastewater and fresh water tanks permanently installed on the unit.

A water heater must be adequately sized to meet the demands of the foodservice facility.

## Sewage disposal

Identify the method of sewage disposal (public or private) for your MFU, STFS or SPFS in submitted plans. Provide a sewage disposal system that meets the peak sewage needs of your food establishment.

Wastewater must be removed in such a manner that a public health hazard or nuisance is not created. Wastewater must be discharged into a sanitary sewage system. Dumping any wastewater onto the ground or storm sewer is prohibited.



## Utility service lines

Exposed utility service lines and pipes must be installed so they do not obstruct or prevent cleaning of the floors, walls and ceilings. Electrical service must comply with [Minnesota Rules, chapter 1315](#). Use the Minnesota Department of Labor and Industry [Electrical Inspector Directories](#) for more information about electrical requirements or call 651-284-5026.