



Mobile Food Unit and Seasonal Temporary Food Stand Construction Guide

Brown-Nicollet Environmental Health

622 South Front Street

St. Peter, MN 56082

507-934-4140

www.co.nicollet.mn.us

Table of Contents

Purpose	4
Definitions	4
Mobile Food Unit	4
Seasonal Temporary Food Stand	4
Restrictions	4
Plan Submittal and Review	5
Plan Review Process.....	5
Projects That May Require Plan Review	5
Plan Submittal	5
Licensing and Preoperational Inspection.....	6
General Equipment Information.....	7
Equipment Design and Construction	7
Equipment Numbers and Capacities	7
Unapproved Equipment.....	7
Sinks	8
Handwashing Sinks	8
Three-Compartment Sinks	8
Food Preparation Sinks	8
Summary of Sink Requirements	8
Exhaust Ventilation	8
Counters and Cabinetry	9
Floors, Walls and Ceilings	11
Floors.....	11
Walls and Ceilings	11
Utilities	12
Water Supply.....	12
Drinking Water and Wastewater Holding Tanks and Water Heaters.....	12
Sewage Disposal.....	12
Utility Service Lines.....	12
Safe Operation of a Food Establishment	13

PURPOSE

This document is intended to assist individuals or groups in submitting for mobile food units (MFU) and seasonal temporary food stands (STF).

MFU and STF in Minnesota are licensed by a variety of different agencies. The menu and location of operation will be used to determine which agency is responsible for plan review and licensing.

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

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

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 no more than 21 days annually at any one location.

RESTRICTIONS

Menu and process determine the type of equipment required and whether the operation can be approved. Complex food items usually require additional or specialized equipment, and will not be approved unless necessary equipment is provided.

Catering operations cannot be conducted from MFU or STF.

All food storage and preparation must take place in the stand, unit or at a permanent approved food establishment.

([MN Statutes 157.15, 157.16](#))
([MN Rules 4626.0130, 4626.1425, 4626.1720D](#))

PLAN SUBMITTAL AND REVIEW

Plans must be submitted to this agency at least 30 days before beginning construction, extensive remodeling or conversion of an existing structure to a food establishment. "Approved" means acceptable to this agency based on a determination of conformity with principles, practices and generally recognized standards that protect public health.

Plan Review Process

The plan review process follows these steps:

1. Submit your plan review application, required information and appropriate fee. MFU or STF plan review application is available at www.co.nicollet.mn.us, select Brown-Nicollet Environmental Health under Department list drop-down menu.
2. Plan review staff reviews plans in the order they are received.
3. Plan review staff may call or email you when review starts, and to request any needed additional information.
4. When review is complete, you will receive a letter reporting the findings of the review (approval or denial). Plan approval letters will include a license application.
5. Begin construction after approval to avoid costly corrections and delayed openings.
6. Submit the license application and appropriate fee(s).
7. Contact this office to request a preoperational inspection.

Plans may take up to **30 days** to review. **Incomplete plans may take longer.**

Projects That May Require Plan Review

Following are examples of situations that may require a plan review:

- **New construction:** MFU or STF that is newly constructed or purchased new **requires a plan review.**
- **Remodel:** A change in the type of food operation or the addition of equipment due to a menu change of MFU or STF **may require a plan review.**
- **Previously licensed in another state:** MFU or STF that has been licensed in another state **must submit** a plan review application and fee, and undergo an "on-site" plan review to determine if it is in compliance with Minnesota statutes and rules, and other applicable regulations. If modifications are required before licensure, you will need to follow the complete process listed above (1-7).
- **Previously licensed in Minnesota:** MFU or STF licensed by MDA or a MDH or MDA delegated agency **may not** need a plan review. However, an **inspection and license fee is required** to determine if the MFU or STF is in compliance with Minnesota statutes and rules, and other applicable regulations.

Please contact our office at 507.934.4140 if you have questions about whether a plan review is needed for your MFU or STF.

Plan Submittal

Submit plans with the completed application, all the required information and correct fee to:

<i>Mailing Address</i>	<i>Delivery Address</i>
Brown-Nicollet Environmental Health 622 South Front Street Saint Peter, MN 56082	Brown-Nicollet Environmental Health 622 South Front Street Saint Peter, MN 56082

Make sure to include all of the following when you submit your plan:

- Completed plan review application with the required fees

- Intended menu
- Description of how food will be prepared
- Easily readable floor plan layout indicating the location of all equipment (e.g., cooking equipment, hood, refrigerators, food prep counters, handwashing sink(s), three-compartment sink, and food prep sink)
- Finish schedule for floors, walls and ceilings
- Manufacturer’s equipment specifications sheets for all equipment, including sinks
- Size of water heater, and fresh water and wastewater holding tanks
- Finishes for counters and cabinetry
- Commissary agreement, if required
- List of intended, scheduled events or areas of operation if known

In addition to the items listed above, other information may be requested during the plan review process.

Licensing and Preoperational Inspection

Once plans are approved and construction is completed, follow these steps to get your MFU or STF licensed:

1. Apply for a license.

With your plan approval letter, you will receive a license application. **The license fee is separate from the plan review fee.** Please contact our office 14 days in advance to schedule a preoperational inspection.

2. Have your unit inspected.

Bring the MFU or STF to an agreed public location (e.g., our office) for the preoperational inspection. Agency staff cannot conduct inspections at a private residence. Have all equipment present. Completely set up a STF. Do not bring food into the MFU or STF until MDH approves the unit for operation.

3. Post the license and decal during operation.

Our office will issue a license after approval. Post the original license. The license is valid for one calendar year (January 1 through December 31), and must be renewed annually.

([MN Statutes 157.16](#))

([MN Rules 4626.0020](#), [4626.1720](#), [4626.1725](#), [4626.1745](#), [4626.1750](#), [4626.1755](#), [4626.1765](#), [4626.1770](#))

GENERAL EQUIPMENT INFORMATION

Equipment Design and Construction

Food and beverage equipment in MFU and STF must meet the applicable standards for one of the following:

Certifying Group	Mark
National Sanitation Foundation (NSF)	
Edison Testing Laboratories (ETL) Marked "ETL Sanitation."	
Underwriters Laboratory (UL) Marked "classified UL EPH."	
Canadian Standards Association (CSA) Marked "CSA sanitation to NSF/ANSI."	

All custom fabricated equipment must be made by an NSF custom fabricator and bear a sticker indicating the equipment meets the standard. Equipment must be designed for its intended use. Equipment (e.g., heating elements for hot holding units, sinks, smokers or any other equipment) cannot be homemade.

Used equipment may be used if approved by MDH. In order to be approved the equipment must:

- Have met existing applicable standards when it was manufactured
- Have been properly maintained
- Not have been modified

Equipment Numbers and Capacities

Provide equipment sufficient for the cooking, heating, and hot and cold holding needs of the establishment. Potentially hazardous foods must be cold-held and hot-held using mechanical equipment. Picnic coolers may not be used for food storage except for bottled and canned beverages. NSF approved refrigerators designated for the storage of pre-packaged food, canned or bottled beverages must not be used for open food storage.

Unapproved Equipment

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

- Unfinished wood
- Domestic crock pots
- Galvanized containers
- Enamelware
- Paintbrushes
- Wooden spoons
- Plastic tables
- Domestic roasters
- Drills
- Non-food grade plastic containers

[\(MN Rules 4626.0450, 4626.0495, 4626.0505, 4626.0540, 4626.0675\)](#)

SINKS

Include specifications and proposed locations for all sinks in submitted plans. All sinks must be manufactured to **NSF Standard No. 2** and may not be constructed from stainless steel pans or other components not originally designed as sinks.

Handwashing Sink

Provide at least one handwashing sink, either free standing or installed into an approved counter. Each handwashing sink must be provided with hot and cold water under pressure through a mixing valve or combination faucet. MDH may require splash guards at handwashing sinks.

Handwashing sinks in MFU must be permanently installed. Portable handwashing sinks are allowed in STF.

Three-Compartment Sink

Provide an integral (one piece) three-compartment sink, either free standing or installed into an approved counter. Each compartment must be large enough to allow immersion of the largest utensil or piece of equipment used in the operation. The three-compartment sink must be supplied with water under pressure with a mixing valve.

Three-compartment sinks in MFU must be permanently installed. Portable three-compartment sinks are allowed in STF.

Food Preparation Sink

If the proposed menu calls for a food preparation process requiring washing or thawing of food in a sink, include a food preparation sink in submitted plans. The sink must be designed for use as a food preparation sink.

Summary of Sink Requirements

The following table summarizes the sink requirements for MFU and STF. Shaded areas indicate sinks that are **always required**. Non-shaded areas indicate sinks that may or may not be required.

Type of Sink	Mobile Food Unit	Seasonal Temporary Food Stand
Handwashing Sink(s)	<i>Permanently installed</i> <i>Water must be supplied under pressure</i>	<i>May be portable</i>
3-Compartment Sink	<i>Permanently installed</i>	<i>May be portable</i>
Food Preparation Sink	<i>Permanently installed</i>	<i>May be portable</i> <i>Water must be supplied under pressure</i>

(MN Rules [4626.0300](#), [4626.0315](#), [4626.0320](#), [4626.0505](#), [4626.0680](#), [4626.0780](#), [4626.0955](#), [4626.1860](#))

EXHAUST VENTILATION

Cooking equipment in enclosed spaces or indoors that produces excessive heat, grease vapor, steam, fumes, smoke, condensation or odor must be located under an approved exhaust ventilation hood constructed to **NSF**

Standard No. 2. Exhaust ventilation hoods that have been modified or no longer meet NSF Standard No. 2 are not acceptable. Custom fabricated hoods must be made by an NSF fabricator, and must bear the NSF sticker and name of the manufacturer. Galvanized hoods are not permitted.

Exhaust ventilation hoods must completely cover the cooking equipment. Cooking or reheating equipment with a BTU output of less than 12,000 BTU/hour (3.7kW) does not require an exhaust ventilation hood.

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.

Light bulbs within the exhaust ventilation hood must be shielded, coated or otherwise shatter-resistant.

Fire suppression is recommended within the exhaust ventilation hood.

[\(MN Rules 4626.0495, 4626.0505, 4626.0690, 4626.1375, 4626.1475, 4626.1860; MN Rules 1346\)](#)

COUNTERS AND CABINETS

Purchase and install food preparation counters that meet **NSF Standard No. 2** or equivalent. Non-NSF plastic laminate surfaces or plastic tables are not acceptable as food preparation surfaces. All food preparation must take place on approved food contact surfaces.

If non-food-contact surfaces (i.e. point of sale counters, dry goods storage cabinets) will be exposed to splash or other food soiling, or will require frequent cleaning, they must be constructed of a corrosion-resistant, nonabsorbent, and smooth material. Non-food-contact counters and cabinets may be plastic laminate or other nonabsorbent material. Unfinished wood is not allowed.

Make sure that counters and cabinets do not have unnecessary ledges, projections, and crevices. Hollow enclosed base cabinets are prohibited. Design and construction should allow easy cleaning and maintenance. Examples of approvable finishes for underside and interior of cabinets include: plastic laminate, plastic, high gloss paint, or three coats of polyurethane.

Place cooking equipment on **NSF Standard No. 2 tables**. Examples include:

- Grill
- Deep fryer
- Flat top
- Oven

Stainless steel top surfaces are required for some types of equipment. Examples include:

- Hot plate
- Waffle iron
- Sautee station

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

- Coffee machine
- Espresso machine
- Air pot
- Milk dispenser
- Pop dispenser
- Blender
- Handwashing sink
- Three-compartment sink
- Display merchandiser (e.g., popcorn, pizza)
- Hot dog roller
- Countertop warmer (e.g., soup warmer)
- Microwave
- Tabletop refrigerator
- Tabletop freezer

Contact MDH at 651-201-4500 for further clarification or with specific questions.

[\(MN Rules 4626.0450, 4626.0540, 4626.0495, 4626.0505\)](#)

FLOORS, WALLS AND CEILINGS

Design, construct and install floors, walls and ceilings in MFU and STF so that they are smooth and easily cleanable. Use durable, nonabsorbent, nonwood materials.

MFU or STF located outdoors must provide protection during adverse weather. Food activities must cease if protection from adverse weather fails.

Protect food preparation and cooking areas by a shield or separation distance to ensure customer safety and to prevent food contamination by customers. Examples include ropes, equipment or other structures.

Floors

Approved floor surfaces may include:

- Commercial grade vinyl
- Diamond tread
- Other equivalent material

For STF operating on machine-laid asphalt or concrete, an additional flooring surface is not required. When operating STF on grass, dirt or gravel, provide a surface such as mats, removable platforms, or duckboards that are cleanable. Mats and duckboards must be constructed of nonabsorbent, nonwood, grease-resistant material.

Walls and Ceilings

Approved wall and ceiling surfaces may include:

- Fiberglass-Reinforced Panel (FRP)
- Stainless steel or equivalent material
- Smooth metal
- Smooth plastic

Stainless steel is required behind cooking equipment.

Provide a canopy or other form of overhead protection for STF. All equipment must fit under the overhead protection.

[\(MN Rule 4626.1325, 4626.1355, 4626.1860\)](#)

UTILITIES

Water Supply

Several different terms (e.g., drinking water, potable water, and fresh water) are used to describe water that is safe for use in a food establishment. Use only drinking water in MFU and STF. Drinking water must be obtained from an approved source. Water cannot be obtained from a residential well.

The water inlet must be protected from contamination and be designed to prevent attachment of a nonpotable 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 permitted.

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.

Recommended guidelines for MFU:

- 20 gallon fresh water tank
- 25 gallon grey water tank
- 6 gallon water heater

Sewage Disposal

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, or ceilings. Electrical service must comply with MN Rules 1315. Contact electrical inspections for information at www.dli.mn.gov/CCLD/Electrical.asp or 651-284-5025.

([MN Rules 4626.1015](#), [4626.1025](#), [4626.1060](#), [4626.1340](#), [4626.1860](#))

SAFE OPERATION OF A FOOD ESTABLISHMENT

Individuals or groups operating a food establishment must operate in compliance with the Minnesota Food Code ([MN Rules 4626](#)). Some of the general requirements for the safe operation of a food establishment licensed and inspected in Minnesota are listed below.

- Food service employees who have been ill with vomiting and/or diarrhea should not work in a food establishment for at least 24 hours after their symptoms end.
- Food employees must dress in clean clothing and wear an effective hair restraint such as a hairnet, hat or scarf.
- While preparing food, a food employee must not wear jewelry on the arms and hands, except for a wedding band or other plain ring, nor painted or false fingernails.
- Person in Charge (PIC) must be present during all hours of operation and service.
- PIC is responsible for providing employees with safe food handling information needed while performing their job and to ensure the employees follow approved procedures.
- Handwashing sink(s) must be set up and operational prior to the start of an event.
- Handwashing sink(s) must be easily accessible to all employees and used for no other purpose.
- Handwashing sink(s) must be supplied with soap, fingernail brush and disposable towels.
- Hands must be washed before working with food, clean equipment and utensils, after smoking, eating or drinking, using toilet facilities or any time hands become contaminated.
- Gloves, wet-wipes, or hand sanitizers are not substitutes for handwashing.
- Limit bare hand contact with ready-to-eat or cooked foods by wearing disposable gloves or using utensils, deli tissue, spatulas, tongs or other dispensing equipment.
- All foods, beverages, and ice must be obtained from an approved source.
- Food must be discarded after an event or at the end of the period of operation unless it is returned to a permanent licensed food establishment or maintained at safe food temperatures using mechanical equipment at the site of the event or operation.
- When food is prepared at another location; a copy of that establishment's license or the commissary agreement should be carried during periods of operation.
- Food cannot be prepared or stored in a home.
- The entire operation must be accomplished from a single self-contained unit, except for storage of food and single-use items.
- Locate the food establishment away from possible contamination sources.
- Adequate storage areas are required for storing food, equipment, utensils, linens and single use items.
- Designate a separate area for chemical storage away from food and single-service items.
- Facilities located indoors may not be located on carpet.
- Water tanks, pumps and hoses must be flushed and sanitized before being placed into service, after construction, repair, modification and periods of nonuse.
- Provide accurate thermometers for monitoring temperatures and in all refrigeration units.
- Cook all potentially hazardous food to the following temperatures or hotter: poultry, 165°F; ground beef, sausage, gyro, 155°F; pork, 155°F; fish, shrimp, shell eggs, 145°F, beef steak, beef roast, lamb, 145°F.

- Hold hot foods at or above 140°F. Hold cold foods at or below 41°F.
- Never thaw foods on the counter at ambient temperature.
- Provide accurate thermometers for monitoring the temperature of food.
- Do not cross-contaminate raw meats, poultry and fish with ready-to-eat food.
- Utensils and equipment must be washed, rinsed, sanitized and air dried after each use in an approved sanitizer at the required strength and contact time. Approved sanitizers may include chlorine bleach, quaternary ammonium or iodine.
- Damp or soiled wiping cloths must be stored in an approved sanitizer at the required strength.
- Provide an appropriate test kit to check the concentration of the sanitizer used.
- All light fixtures shall be shielded, coated or otherwise shatter resistant.
- Receptacle(s) for trash and garbage must be provided.
- Food establishments must operate in compliance with all applicable gas hook-up and service, electrical and fire code requirements.