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## **MOBILE FOOD FACILITY REQUIREMENTS - PREPARATION UNITS**

### **Definitions**

A "**mobile food facility**" is any vehicle used in conjunction with a commissary or other permanent food facility upon which food is sold or distributed at retail. A "mobile food facility" does not include a "transporter" used to transport packaged food from a food facility, or other approved source to the consumer.

A "**mobile support unit**" is a vehicle used in conjunction with a commissary or other permanent food facility that travels to and services mobile food facilities approved for limited food preparation as needed to replenish supplies, including food and potable water, clean the interior of the unit, or dispose of liquid or solid wastes.

**Both mobile food facilities and mobile support units are subject to permitting and plan review.** Requirements are based on the proposed method of operation and the number of mobile food facilities serviced (for mobile support units only).

### **Permitting Requirements**

1. **No mobile food facility may operate in San Luis Obispo County without a valid San Luis Obispo County Health Permit.**
2. Permits, once issued are specific to the vehicle license plate number and the name of the current registered owner of the mobile food facility. Owners of multiple mobile food facilities must receive a permit for each individual mobile food facility.
3. Permits are non-transferable.
4. The permit must be posted or otherwise maintained within the vehicle at all times.
5. **The following must be completed prior to receiving a health permit:**
  - A. Submit mobile food facility application (required for initial permitting only),
  - B. Submit commissary agreement (required annually),
  - C. Show proof of food safety manager certification, as applicable (updates required following recertification only, recertification is required every 5 years),
  - D. Submit written operational procedures (required only for initial permitting and following changes to previously approved operational procedures and/or menu items),
  - E. Submit toilet facilities use form (annually),
  - F. Show proof of certification by the California Department of Housing and Community Development (required for initial permitting of enclosed mobile food facilities only),
  - G. Pay applicable health permit fee (annually),
  - H. Pass a mobile food facility inspection (annual, mobile food facility structural conditions and food service operations must comply with mobile food facility requirements).

## **Commissary Requirements**

No food may be prepared or stored in a private home, except for registered/permitted Cottage Food Operations. All mobile food facilities must operate in conjunction with a commissary, mobile support unit, or other facility approved by the enforcement agency (unless the mobile food facility operates solely at community events and remains in a fixed position during food preparation and its hours of operation). Complete and submit the attached form annually, "Statement of Commissary Use".

In order to have protection from unsanitary conditions, mobile food facilities and support units must be stored at the commissary unless approved by the health department for storage at another location.

All commissaries and other approved facilities servicing mobile food facilities and mobile support units must meet the following requirements:

1. Adequate facilities must be provided for the sanitary disposal of liquid waste from the mobile food facility or mobile support unit being serviced,
2. Adequate facilities must be provided for the handling and disposal of garbage and refuse originating from a mobile food facility or mobile support unit,
3. Potable water must be available for filling the water tanks of each mobile food facility and mobile support unit that requires potable water.
4. Faucets and other potable water sources must be constructed, located, and maintained so as to minimize the possibility of contaminating the water being loaded,
5. Hot and cold water, under pressure, must be available for cleaning mobile food facilities and mobile support units,
6. Adequate facilities must be provided for the storage of food, utensils, and other supplies,
7. Commissaries that service mobile food facilities conducting "limited food preparation" must provide a food preparation area.
8. Servicing areas at commissaries must be provided with overhead protection (unless used only for the loading of water or the discharge of sewage and other liquid waste through the use of a closed system of hoses),
9. Servicing areas used for cleaning must be sloped to drain to an approved wastewater system,
10. Adequate electrical outlets must be provided for mobile food facilities and mobile support units requiring electrical service.

## **Food Safety Certification**

**Mobile food facilities that prepare, handle, or serve non-prepackaged potentially hazardous food, must have an owner or at least one employee who has successfully passed an approved and accredited food safety manager certification examination.**

1. Certification is required for each mobile food facility operated under single owner.
2. The permit holder of the mobile food facility is given 60 days to obtain food safety manager certification when:
  - A. Beginning initial operation,
  - B. Undergoing a change of ownership,
  - C. The mobile food facility experiences changes in personnel resulting in the loss of the previously employed certified food handler.

### **Written Operational Procedures**

The permit holder of a mobile food facility handling non-prepackaged food must develop and follow written operational procedures for food handling and the cleaning and sanitizing of food contact surfaces and utensils. The enforcement agency will review and approve the procedures prior to implementation and an approved copy must be kept on the mobile food facility during periods of operation. Complete and submit the "Operational Procedures for Mobile Food Facilities" form.

### **Business License and Code Enforcement Approval**

Receipt of a health permit verifies the facility is approved for food preparation and/or service, however does not provide clearance to conduct business or to set up in any chosen location. Owners must obtain the necessary business permits from the local City Hall or County Business Tax office (if located in a non-incorporated area of the county) prior to operating and should also verify whether city or county code enforcement agencies have restrictions regarding sales from vehicles. Ensure that local city and/or county code enforcement agencies provide location approval prior to beginning operation.

### **Identification**

Each mobile food facility and mobile support unit must have legible, clearly visible to patrons, and permanently affixed identification in a color that is contrasting with the vehicle exterior. Motorized mobile food facilities and mobile support units shall have the required identification on two sides. Identification must provide the following:

1. The business name and the name of the permit holder using minimum 3-inch letters and numbers (the permit holders name is not necessary if the name is included as part of the facility name),
2. City, state, ZIP code, using minimum 1-inch letters and numbers,

### **Toilet Facilities**

Mobile food facilities that stop to conduct business for longer than one hour in the same location must be located within 200 feet of approved and readily available toilet and handwashing facilities to ensure restroom facilities are available to facility employees. Approved means that handwashing facilities are provided with warm water (minimum 100°F), pump dispensed liquid hand soap and single-use towels in dispensers or other approved hand drying device.

Complete and submit the attached form, "Restroom Use Agreement".

### **Certification by Housing and Community Development**

An enclosed and occupiable mobile food facility (such as a converted trailer, special purpose commercial modular and coach or a commercial modular coach) must be certified by the California Department of Housing and Community Development. Information on third-party inspection and certification offices is available in our office or via email and will be provided upon request. Additionally, the enforcement agency must approve all equipment installation prior to operation.

Local California Department of Housing and Community Development offices are located at:



Codes & Standards  
3737 Main Street, Ste. 400  
Riverside, CA 92501  
(951) 782-4420

### **Health Department Inspection**

Each mobile food facility and mobile support unit must receive a health department inspection once a year prior to receiving the permit to operate for that year. Health department inspections are based on requirements set forth in the California Retail Food Code (Cal Code). Once the mobile food facility or mobile support unit has been found to be in compliance with Cal Code requirements, a permit decal will be affixed to the exterior of the mobile food facility and a paper permit will be mailed to the permit holder.

### **Mobile Food Facilities Operating at Community Events**

Mobile food facilities that operate at community events and that remain fixed during food preparation and its hours of operation may:

1. Include a staffed counter that serves hot and cold beverages and ice that are not potentially hazardous food and that are dispensed from approved bulk dispensing units.
2. Store supplies and food that are not potentially hazardous in unopened containers adjacent to the mobile food facility or in a nearby temporary storage unit. "Unopened container," means a factory sealed container that has not been previously opened and that is suitably constructed to be resistant to contamination from moisture, dust, insects, and rodents.
3. Operate an open-air barbecue adjacent to the mobile food facility as approved by the enforcement agency. **Please note, a barbecue unit is ONLY allowed to be operated as part of a mobile food facility when in conjunction with a community event.**

### **Mobile Support Unit Requirements: (submit "Operational Procedures for Mobile Support Units" form)**

Interior floor, sides, and top must be:

1. Free of cracks, seams, or linings where vermin may harbor, and must be constructed of a smooth, washable, impervious material capable of withstanding frequent cleaning with approved sanitizing agents.
2. Constructed and operated so that no liquid wastes can drain onto any street, sidewalk, or premises.
3. If used to transport potentially hazardous food, approved equipment to maintain food at the required temperatures must be provided.
4. Food, utensils, and supplies shall be protected from contamination.
5. A separate storage area shall be provided for all poisonous substances, detergents, bleaches, cleaning compounds, and all other injurious or poisonous materials.
6. Mobile support units are not approved for warewashing.
7. Mobile food facilities that are serviced by a mobile support unit and that do not report to a commissary on a daily basis shall be stored in a manner that protects the mobile food facility from contamination. Mobile support units shall report to a commissary or other approved facility for cleaning, servicing, and storage at least daily.

## **MOBILE FOOD FACILITY CONSTRUCTION REQUIREMENTS**

The following requirements are from California Health and Safety Code, California Retail Food Code §113700-114437.

### **1. Floors, Walls, and Ceilings**



- A. Floors, walls, and ceilings of all enclosed food preparation areas must be constructed so that the surfaces are resistant to moisture, smooth, and easily cleanable. Floor material must ensure employee safety from slipping.
- B. The juncture of the floor and wall shall be coved with a 3/8-inch minimum radius coving, with the floor surface extending up the wall at least four inches.

### **2. Equipment Construction Requirements**

- A. All equipment must be installed so as to be easily cleanable, prevent vermin harborage, and provide adequate access for service and maintenance.
- B. Mobile food facilities that handle potentially hazardous foods must be equipped with ANSI certified refrigeration units.
- C. Equipment for cooling, heating, and holding food must be sufficient in number and capacity to ensure proper food temperature control during operation and transportation.
  - Cold and hot holding equipment storing potentially hazardous food must have at least one thermometer, permanently affixed in the warmest part of the unit, readily visible, and easily readable.
- D. Mobile food facility equipment (including, but not limited to, cooking and preparation equipment, refrigeration equipment, preparation surfaces, sinks, shelving, the interior of cabinet units, compartments, etc.) must:
  - i. Possess smooth easily cleanable surfaces,
  - ii. Be readily accessible for cleaning,
  - iii. Be durable and retain their characteristic qualities under normal use conditions.
- E. Unfinished wooden surfaces are prohibited.
- F. Construction joints and seams must be tightly fitted and sealed so as to be easily cleanable. Silicone sealant or equivalent waterproof compounds shall be acceptable, provided that the gap is smaller than one-quarter inch and applied smooth so as to prevent the entrance of liquid waste or vermin.
- G. Non-portable equipment must be an integral part of the primary unit.
- H. All new and replacement gas-fired appliances must meet applicable ANSI standards. All new and replacement electrical appliances must meet applicable Underwriters Laboratory standards.
- I. Mechanical exhaust ventilation equipment shall be provided over all cooking equipment as required to effectively remove cooking odors, smoke, steam, grease heat, and vapors. All mechanical exhaust ventilation equipment shall be installed and maintained in accordance with the California Mechanical Code. The California Mechanical Code §513.2.2 requires new and existing mobile food facilities to have a UL 300 fire suppression system installed.
- J. Space around pipes, conduits, or hoses that extend through cabinets, floors, or outer walls must be sealed. The closure must be smooth and easily cleanable.



- K. Equipment in which spillage is likely to occur must have a drip tray fitted so that spillage drains into a waste tank.
- L. Equipment must be spaced apart or sealed together for easy cleaning.
  - There must be a minimum of four inches of unobstructed space provided for sanitary maintenance beneath counter mounted equipment or between the sides of adjacent equipment. Portable equipment or machinery need not comply with the minimum leg height requirement.
  - All floor-mounted equipment must be sealed to the floor to prevent moisture from getting under the equipment, or it must be raised at least six inches off the floor by means of an easily cleanable leg and foot.
- M. Threads, nuts, or rivets may not be exposed where they interfere with cleaning. Threads, nuts, or rivets that interfere with cleaning shall be sealed or capped .

### 3. Height and Width of Occupied Areas

- A. Mobile food facilities that are occupied during normal business operations must have a clear, unobstructed height over the aisle-way portion of the unit of at least 74 inches from floor to ceiling, and a minimum of 30 inches of unobstructed horizontal aisle space.

### 4. Handwashing Sink Requirements

- A. Mobile food facilities from which non-prepackaged food is served (except whole produce or bulk dispensing of nonpotentially hazardous beverages) must be equipped with a handwashing sink and stocked wall mounted soap and single service towel dispensers.
- B. The handwashing sink must have a minimum dimension of nine inches by nine inches in length and width and five inches in depth and be easily accessible by food employees.
- C. The handwashing sink must be separated from the warewashing sink by a six-inch vertical metal splashguard extending from the back edge of the drainboard to the front edge of the drainboard, with rounded corners. A splashguard is not required if the distance between the handwashing sink and the warewashing sink drainboards is 24 inches or more.



### 5. Warewashing Sink Requirements

- A. Mobile food facilities in which non-prepackaged food is cooked, blended, or otherwise prepared must be equipped with a three-compartment warewashing sink with two integral metal drainboards.
  - I. Each compartment must have minimum dimensions of 12 inches wide, 12 inches long, and 10 inches deep or 10 inches wide, 14 inches long, and 10 inches deep, and large enough to accommodate the cleaning of the largest utensil.
  - II. Each drainboard must be equal to the size of the sink compartments. The drainboards must be installed with at least one-eighth inch per foot slope toward the sink compartment, and fabricated with a minimum of one-half inch lip or rim to prevent the draining liquid from spilling onto the floor.
  - III. The sink must be equipped with a mixing faucet and a swivel spigot capable of servicing all sink compartments.



***Facilities serving non-potentially hazardous foods, boiled or steamed hot dogs, or tamales in the original inedible wrapper are exempt from this requirement provided an adequate supply of spare preparation and serving utensils (sufficient to meet 4 hour cleaning and sanitizing requirements) are provided and the mobile food facility reports to the commissary daily for cleaning and sanitizing of utensils and equipment.***

- B. An unenclosed mobile food facility that prepares potentially hazardous beverages for immediate service in response to an individual consumer order may utilize any of the following:
  - I. A three-compartment sink meeting requirements described above.
  - II. A two-compartment sink with two integral metal drainboards.
- C. Mobile food facilities where only non-potentially hazardous foods requiring no preparation other than heating, baking, popping, portioning, bulk dispensing, or assembly, are not required to provide a warewashing sink provided the following is met:
  - I. All utensils and equipment must be washed and sanitized on a daily basis at the approved commissary,
  - II. An adequate supply of spare preparation and serving utensils must be provided and maintained in the mobile food facility as needed to replace those that become soiled or contaminated.

## **6. Handwashing and Warewashing Facilities Location**

- A. Handwashing facilities and warewashing sinks for unenclosed mobile food facilities must be an integral part of the primary unit or on an approved auxiliary unit that is used in conjunction with, and maintained immediately adjacent to, the primary unit of the mobile food facility.
- B. Warewashing sinks for unenclosed mobile food facilities must be equipped with overhead protection made of wood, canvas, or other materials that protect the sinks from bird and insect droppings, dust, precipitation, and other contaminants.

## **7. Food Preparation Sink**

- A. Installation of a food preparation sink on the mobile food facility may be required when washing, rinsing, soaking, thawing, or similar preparation of foods occurs within the mobile food facility and when use of the food preparation sink at the commissary ahead of time for these purposes is not practical.
  - I. If required, the sink must be sufficient size to fit all items which necessitate its use.
  - II. Submit a written statement to verify when all washing, rinsing, soaking, thawing, or similar preparation of foods occurs at the commissary only.



## **8. Water Heater Requirements**

- A. A water heater or an instantaneous heater capable of heating water to a minimum of 120°F, interconnected with a potable water supply, must be provided and must operate independently of the vehicle engine.
- B. The water heater must have a minimum capacity of three gallons.
- C. Mobile food facilities approved for limited food preparation may provide a water heater with a minimum capacity of one-half gallon

## 9. Potable and Waste Water Tanks

A. Potable and wastewater tank capacity is required as detailed in the chart below:

TYPE OF OPERATION	TANK SIZE REQUIRED (GALLONS)	
	POTABLE WATER	WASTE WATER
Handwashing only	5	7.5
Limited Food Preparation (handwashing + warewashing)	20	30
Unlimited Food Preparation (handwashing + warewashing)	30	45
<b><i>Additional wastewater tank capacity may be required where wastewater production is likely to exceed tank capacity.</i></b>		
<b><i>Where ice is utilized in the storage, display, or service of food or beverages, an additional minimum wastewater holding tank must be provided with a capacity equal to 1/3 of the volume of the ice cabinet to accommodate the drainage of ice melt.</i></b>		

B. Materials used in the construction of potable water and wastewater tanks, line couplings, valves and all other plumbing must be:

- I. Safe, durable, corrosion resistant, nonabsorbent, and finished to have smooth, easily cleanable surfaces.
- II. Installed, maintained, and constructed of materials that will not contaminate the water supply, food, utensils, or equipment.

C. Potable and wastewater tanks must be:

- I. Sloped to an outlet that ensures complete drainage of the tank and designed and constructed so as to be easily and completely drained.
- II. Installed with an air vent overflow capable of preventing potential flooding of the interior of the facility.
  - When located in a protected area, the vent must terminate in a downward direction and must be covered with 16 mesh per square inch screen or equivalent
  - When located in a non-protected area that is from windblown dirt and debris, a protective filter is required.
- III. Designed with an access port for inspection and cleaning\*, located at the top of the tank and equipped with a port cover assembly provided with a gasket and a device for securing the cover in place, flanged to overlap the opening and sloped to drain.
- IV. \*Mobile food facilities with nonaccessible water tanks may submit written operational procedures for the cleaning and sanitizing of the potable water tank to satisfy this requirement.
- V. Flushed and sanitized before being placed in service after construction, repair, modification and periods of non-use.

D. The potable water tank must be enclosed from the filling inlet to the discharge outlet.

E. All waste lines must be connected to wastewater tanks with watertight seals

F. Any connection to a wastewater tank must prevent the possibility of contamination to any food, food-contact surface, or utensil.

G. Potable water tanks must be installed in a manner that allows water to be filled with an easily accessible inlet

- I. Inlets and outlets must be positioned so that they are protected from contaminants
- II. Inlets and outlets must be constructed so that backflow and other contamination of the water supply is prevented.

- III. Fittings must be protected between uses by a cap, quick disconnect, or other approved protective cover or device.
- H. Hoses used for conveying potable water to or from a water tank must be:
  - I. Smooth
  - II. Durable, corrosion-resistant, nonabsorbent
  - III. Resistant to pitting, chipping, scratching, and other distortion and decomposition
  - IV. Finished with a smooth interior surface
  - V. Protected from contamination at all times.
  - VI. Clearly and durably identified as to its use for potable water
- I. Liquid waste hoses must be differing color from those used for potable water



## 10. Safety Requirements

- A. A first-aid kit must be provided and located in a convenient area in an enclosed case.
- B. Mobile food facilities operating at more than one location in a calendar day must be equipped to meet all of the following requirements:
  - I. All utensils in a mobile food facility shall be stored to prevent their being thrown about in the event of a sudden stop, collision, or overturn,
  - II. A safety knife holder must be provided to avoid loose storage of knives in cabinets, boxes, or slots along counter aisles. Knife holders must be designed to be easily cleanable and be manufactured of materials approved by the enforcement agency,
  - III. Coffee urns, deep fat fryers, steam tables, and similar equipment must be equipped with positive closing lids that are fitted with a secure latch mechanism that will prevent excessive spillage of hot liquids into the interior of a mobile food facility in the event of a sudden stop, collision, or overturn, as an alternative to this requirement, a coffee urn may be installed in a compartment that will prevent excessive spillage of coffee in the interior of the unit.
  - IV. Metal protective devices must be installed on the glass liquid level sight gauges on all coffee urns.
- C. Light bulbs and tubes must be covered with a completely enclosed plastic safety shield or its equivalent, and installed so as to not constitute a hazard to personnel or food,
- D. All liquefied petroleum equipment must be installed to meet applicable fire authority standards, and the fire authority must approve this installation,
- E. All gas-fired appliances shall be properly insulated in a manner that will prevent excessive heat buildup and injury,
- F. A properly charged and maintained minimum 10 BC-rated fire extinguisher to combat grease fires must be properly mounted and readily accessible on the interior of each occupied mobile food facility, additionally the California Mechanical Code §513.2.2 requires new and existing mobile food facilities to have a UL 300 fire suppression system installed. Many local fire departments also require a K-rated extinguisher.
- G. A second means of exit must be provided on enclosed mobile food facilities in the roof or rear of the unit or side opposite the main exit door with an unobstructed passage of at least 24 inches by 36 inches.
- H. The interior latching device must be operable by hand without special tools or key,
- I. The exit must be labeled "Safety Exit" with one-inch letters in contrasting colors.



## 11. Location of Generators/Compressors

Compressor units that are not an integral part of food equipment, auxiliary engines, generators, and similar equipment must be installed in an area that is completely separated from food preparation and food storage and that is accessible from outside the unit for proper cleaning and maintenance.