



SPS 327 Camping Units FAQs

Administration and Enforcement

Q: How is a “Camping Unit” defined for the purposes of application of Wis. Admin. Code § SPS 327?

A: [Wis. Stat. § 101.63\(1\)](#) of the State Statutes establishes standards for the construction and inspection of camping units set in a fixed location in a campground that are licensed by the Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection. The standards apply to such units that contain a sleeping place, and that is used for seasonal overnight camping.

[Wis. Admin. Code § SPS 327.08\(9\)](#) defines Camping Unit as a framed structure or a tent, teepee, yurt, or other structure with fabric roof or walls that is 400 square feet or less in area, which is used for seasonal overnight camping in a campground.

[Wis. Stat. § 97.67](#) covers both campgrounds (ATCP 79 admin. code) and recreational and educational camps (ATCP 78 admin. code).

Q: Who is responsible for inspecting Camping Units?

A: Per Wis. Admin. Code §§ SPS [327.06\(1\)\(a\)](#) and [320.06](#), inspections of camping units shall be performed by the certified UDC inspector employed or contracted with the municipality in which the camping unit is located.

Q: Does this code apply to existing camping units already in place?

A: No. This code only applies to camping units for which construction commenced on or after the effective date of the code. While this code has no bearing on camping units built prior to the effective date of this code, it does introduce the “Pre-Existing Insignia” that is available from the municipality upon request by the owner. The procedure for obtaining the “Pre-Existing Insignia” is described in more detail on page 4 of this document. The issuance of the “Pre-Existing Insignia” does not imply compliance with [Wis. Admin. Code § SPS 327](#).

Q: How can an inspector purchase the Wisconsin Insignias or the Pre-existing insignias?

A: Wisconsin insignias and pre-existing insignias shall be purchased by municipalities from the Department of Administration (DOA) Document Sales in accordance with the fee established in [Wis. Admin. Code § SPS 302.34](#). DOA Document Sales can be accessed via the following web address within the selection for the Department of Safety and Professional Services. <https://docsales.wi.gov/>

Q: Can local codes apply to camping units?

A: [Wis. Admin. Code § SPS 327](#) is a uniform statewide code, thus a local municipality may not adopt an ordinance on any subject falling within the scope of the code.

Q: Does Wis. Admin. Code § SPS 327 apply to repairs of affected camping units?

A: No. The provisions of the code do not apply to repairs or maintenance of camping units, or the repair of electrical, plumbing, heating, ventilating, air conditioning and other systems installed in the camping unit.

Q: Are municipalities required to adopt Wis. Admin. Code § SPS 327 in their local codes?

A: Yes. All municipalities that exercise jurisdiction over the UDC for one- and two- family dwellings shall, by ordinance, adopt [Wis. Admin. Code § SPS 327](#) in its entirety.

Q: Can a municipality that exercises jurisdiction over the UDC choose to not exercise its jurisdiction regarding camping units?

A: Yes. Per [Wis. Admin. Code § 327.06\(1\)\(b\)](#), municipalities intending not to exercise jurisdiction over the construction and inspection of new camping units shall notify the Department, in writing, within 90 days of the effective date of this code. This notification must have been made by Sunday, May 7, 2017.

In municipalities not exercising jurisdiction under sub. (1), the Department will oversee enforcement and inspection services for new camping units.

Q: What exactly is defined as a “Campground”?

A: “Campground” has the meaning given in ATCP 79.03 (3).

ATCP 79.03 (3) reads: “Campground” means a parcel or tract of land owned by a person, state, or local government that is designed, maintained, intended, or used for the purpose of providing campsites offered with or without charge, for temporary overnight sleeping accommodations.

Q: Where do I obtain and submit a permit application for a camping unit?

A: A Wisconsin camping unit building permit is obtained from and submitted to the municipality administering and enforcing this code or from a registered UDC inspection agency administering and enforcing this code in a municipality where the Department has jurisdiction pursuant to [Wis. Stat. § 101.651\(3\)](#) before any construction of a camping unit may begin.

Q: How long is the Wisconsin Camping Unit Building Permit valid?

A: The permit shall expire 24 months after issuance if construction of the camping unit has not been completed.

Q: What inspections are required for a camping unit?

A: A rough inspection of the following shall be performed after the rough work is constructed but before it is concealed to determine if the work complies with this code:

1. General construction, including framing.
2. Rough electrical.
3. Rough plumbing.
4. Rough heating, ventilating and air conditioning.

A Final inspection is required prior to occupancy. A camping unit may not be occupied until a final inspection has been made of a camping unit’s construction, HVAC, electrical, plumbing, and transfer tank that finds no critical violations of this code that could reasonably be expected to affect the health or safety of a person using the camping unit.

Q: How must an inspector note compliance with the camping unit construction code?

A: Upon finding of compliance for a final inspection, the municipality shall assign a “Wisconsin insignia” to the owner of the camping unit as provided in [Wis. Admin. Code § SPS 327.12\(1\)](#). “Insignia” or “Wisconsin insignia” means a device or seal approved by the Department to certify compliance with this code.

Q: How must an inspector note noncompliance with the camping unit construction code?

A: Upon finding of noncompliance for a rough or final inspection, the municipality or authorized UDC inspection agency enforcing this code shall notify the applicant of record and the owner, in writing, of the violations to be corrected. The municipality or authorized UDC inspection agency shall order all cited violations corrected within 30 days after written notification unless an extension of time is granted under [Wis. Admin. Code § SPS 327.18](#).

Q: What is meant by a “Pre-existing insignia” or “Wisconsin pre-existing insignia”?

A: Per [Wis. Admin. Code § SPS 327.12\(1\)\(b\)](#), an owner of a camping unit that is exempt from the provisions of this code, may request that the municipality issue a Wisconsin pre-existing insignia to the owner of the camping unit. Per [Wis. Admin. Code § SPS 327.05\(1\)](#), the municipality shall issue the pre-existing insignia upon request of the owner. The pre-existing insignia tag shall contain language stating that the “unit was constructed before the code’s effective date.”

Q: What are the record keeping requirements as they pertain to the camping unit construction code?

A: Municipalities that have adopted an ordinance to enforce this code shall maintain records in accordance with all of the following:

1. A record shall be made of each visit to a site, each inspection performed and the pass or fail results of each inspection.

2. Applications forms, correction orders, correspondence and inspection records shall be maintained for 7 years after completion of the camping unit.

Inspectors working under state contract shall maintain records in accordance with the provisions of the contract that was in effect at the time the inspections were completed.

Q: Who is responsible for attaching the insignia to the camping unit?

A: The owner of the camping unit shall affix the Wisconsin insignia to the camping unit.

Q: Who is responsible for maintaining records of Wisconsin insignias that have been issued?

A: The municipality that issues the permit is responsible for maintaining records for a period of 10 years after issuance of the camping unit permit.

The municipality issuing the permit is also responsible for assigning a unique serial number to the camping unit which shall appear on the Wisconsin insignia.

The municipality shall keep permanent records regarding the handling of all Wisconsin insignias indicating the following:

1. The number of Wisconsin insignias affixed to camping units.
2. Which Wisconsin insignia has been applied to which camping unit.
3. The disposition of any damaged or rejected Wisconsin insignias.
4. The location and custody of all unused Wisconsin insignias.

Q: Can the owner of a camping unit apply for a petition for variance with the Department?

A: Yes. Per [Wis. Admin. Code § 327.16](#), the Department may grant a variance to a rule if and only if the variance does not result in lesser standard of protection of the health, safety, and welfare established or intended by the code.