GUIDE FOR NEW MOBILE FOOD OPERATORS

Public Health – Madison & Dane County
Mobile Food Establishment in Dane Co.

Curt’s Popcorn Cart operating on the Capitol Square, downtown Madison
What is a Mobile Food Establishment?

“A mobile food establishment is a restaurant or retail food establishment where food is served or sold from a movable vehicle, push cart, trailer or boat which periodically or continuously changes location and requires a service base to accommodate the unit for servicing, cleaning, inspection and maintenance.”

-Wisconsin Food Code 1-201.10(B)(53m)
Average Start Up Costs

- $5000 and up for purchase of a mobile food unit
- $1300 for a mobile base and mobile cart license
- $200 for a Certified Food Manager’s License
- $150 Wisconsin Seller’s Permit
- $150-850 for additional street vendor permits

Check with the local municipality where you plan to operate.

In Madison refer to:
www.cityofmadison.com/Business/streetvending/StreetVendorfees.cfm
New mobile food establishments require licensing and approval from Public Health – Madison & Dane County before operating.
Licensing Requirements

- All mobile food establishments must obtain proper licensing prior to operating in Dane County.

- Two licenses are required:
  - Mobile Food Establishment License
  - Service Base License
The Wisconsin Food Code requires all mobile food establishments to post their current license in public view on the mobile unit.
What is a Service Base?

“A service base is an operating base location to which a mobile food establishment or transportation vehicle returns regularly for such things as vehicle and equipment cleaning, discharging liquid or solid wastes, refilling water tanks and ice bins, and boarding food.”

-Wisconsin Food Code 1-201.10(B)(84)
Why is a service base required?

- A service base is a licensed facility where:
  - Food for the mobile unit is stored and/or prepared
  - Utensils and single use items are stored
  - Fresh water is obtained daily
  - Waste water is disposed daily
  - Dishwashing is performed

- Home based kitchens are not allowed to be used as a service base
Do I need an additional service base license if I own a licensed restaurant?

No. If the mobile food establishment will be licensed under the same licensee name, then your restaurant license will fulfill the service base license requirement.
Service Base Options...

- A licensed service base may be located at:
  - Your own warehouse or commercial space
  - Shared space from a licensed restaurant or retail establishment
  - Shared space from a licensable community kitchen
Service Base Sharing Agreement

If sharing space, the owner must agree to share equipment with mobile food operator.

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Service Base Owner/Manager Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Business Name</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>City</th>
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Contact Name and Phone number: _________________________________

Daily Business Hours of Operation: _______________________________

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Mobile Food Operator Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Business Name</th>
<th>Contact Name and Phone Number</th>
<th>Daily Hours of Operation at Service Base</th>
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A service base is a fundamental part of a mobile food establishment’s operation. Requirements may vary depending on the menu, food preparation activities, and design of the mobile food establishment. Indicate which of the following items will be available for use at the service base:

- [ ] Mop or Utility Sink
- [ ] Utensil Washing Sinks
- [ ] Dish Machine
- [ ] Hand washing Sink
- [ ] Food Preparation Sink
- [ ] Ice Machine
- [ ] Commercial Refrigeration
- [ ] Freezer Space
- [ ] Cooking Equipment
- [ ] Preparation Table
Wisconsin Food Code

- Mobile food establishments must comply with the Wisconsin Food Code requirements for Restaurants or Retail Food Establishments.

- For Wisconsin Food Code refer to: www.publichealthmdc.com/environmental/food/index.cfm
The Wisconsin Food Code requires all mobile food establishments that prepare, handle or serve unpackaged meals to have a certified food manager’s license. This license must be posted in public view on the mobile food unit.
What are different types of mobile food establishments?

- Open Air
- Enclosed Limited Service
- Enclosed Full Service
Open Air

- Prepackaged foods
- Beverages dispensed in single servings from covered containers
- Very limited food handling (e.g. hot dogs)
- No cooking or grilling
- No raw foods of animal origin – precooked items only
  - e.g. Bicycle Carts, Push Carts, Boats
Open Air

- A mobile unit *without a hand-wash facility* is restricted to:
  - Prepackaged food items
  - Beverages dispensed in single servings from covered containers or other protected equipment
  - e.g. carts selling prepackaged ice cream and coffee push carts

- A mobile unit *with a minimum 5 gallon hand-wash facility* is restricted to:
  - Very limited food handling
  - No grilling or cooking
    - e.g. Hot dog push cart
Enclosed Limited Service

- Most common
- All food prepared at service base
- Assembling, reheating, and serving food only
- Must have a minimum 10 gallon hand-washing facility
Enclosed Limited Service

- Limited to:
  - Reheating
  - Hot / cold holding
  - Assembling / serving

- Not allowed:
  - Preparation of ingredients (e.g. cutting, mixing, forming)
  - Raw food of animal origin on unit
  - Cooking or grilling
Enclosed Full Service

- All restaurant and retail food preparation and/or processing activities may occur on the mobile unit
- Large food concession trailer/truck
- Size of unit may limit vending sites
- Raw foods of animal origin may be allowed (per approval from health department)
Enclosed Full Service: Fresh Water Supply

- Mobile unit must have a minimum 40 gallon fresh water supply for the:
  - Hand-wash sink
  - Food prep sink (if applicable)
  - Dishwashing facilities (3 or 4-compartment sink)
- Pressurized water tank is required
Enclosed Full Service: Ventilation Hood

Such activities as frying may require a ventilation system sufficient to control excessive heat, steam, smoke, etc.
All mobile food establishments requiring hand-washing facilities shall be equipped with a gravity or pressurized fresh water supply.

The fresh water supply must be equipped with a heater to provide heated water (85-110 degrees F) for hand-washing and dishwashing.

All connections throughout the fresh water system must be tight fitting to prevent contamination of the fresh water supply.
Tank must be durable and food grade. Water level must be viewable (e.g. translucent tank or with graduated sight glass gauge).
**Fresh Water Tank Inlet Line**

- Food grade hose required for filling non-removable water tank
- Hose must be labeled “for filling only”
- Can be purchased at restaurant or RV supply store

- Hose inlet must be threaded
  - This enables proper flushing and sanitizing of tank
Example: 40 Gallon Fresh Water System

Water Heater for Full Service Enclosed Unit

Pump for Pressurized Water
Approved Waste Storage Tank

MUST

- Be durable, smooth material
- Have discharge connection with a tight closing valve
- Be at least 15% larger than the fresh water tank
- Be maintained in a sanitary condition
Waste water must be disposed of daily

A utility sink must be used for proper disposal of waste water

A different hose labeled “waste water hose” must be used for disposal of liquid waste when the waste tank is not removable for direct disposal
Example: Approved Fresh Water System

- 10 gallon fresh water tank
- 12 gallon waste storage tank
- Battery operated pump for pressurized water
- Food grade hose
- Water heater
Gravity Fed Fresh Water System

- 10 gallon fresh water tank
- 15 gallon waste storage tank
- Food grade hose gravity fed from fresh water tank to sink
- Water heater attached to exterior wall of mobile unit

Note: exposed, unfinished wood is not approved – all material must be smooth, durable, and easily cleanable.

Example: Gravity Fed Fresh Water System
Interior of Mobile Unit

- Smooth, non-absorbent, and easily cleanable surfaces
  - stainless steel
  - glass-board
  - sealed wood
- Joints properly sealed
  - caulk
  - trim between floor & wall
- Lights shielded
Hand-washing Supplies

- Hand-washing signage
- Soap
- Paper towels
- Non-hand operated faucet handles
- Heated water
Non-Hand Operated Handsink

**Approved**

**Not Approved!**
CRITICAL VIOLATION!

Hand-washing sink must be accessible at all times during mobile food establishment operation.
Equipment Requirements

- Commercial equipment is necessary
- Proof of ANSI/NSF certification is required
- All equipment must operate simultaneously
- Electrical or gas supply must be adequate for full operation
Approved Hot Holding Equipment

NSF Steam Table

NSF Grill
Approved Cold Holding Equipment

NSF Refrigerators

Coolers are not allowed!
Electrical & Fire Requirements

- 15 amp electrical circuit generally required
- A fire extinguisher is required on all mobile units.
Generators

Recommended

Must not produce noise greater than 75 decibels

15 – 20 amp operation
Check with your local municipality to determine size and/or type restrictions for mobile units. Additional permits and approval may be required for certain vending locations.
Operating in Downtown Madison

- Special restrictions may block approval to operate in Madison’s downtown areas such as Library Mall or Capitol Square.

- For details refer to: www.cityofmadison.com/Business/streetvending/index.cfm
Mobile Food Establishment Resources

- General mobile food establishment information:
  - www.publichealthmdc.com/environmental/food/mobilefood.cfm

Or contact one of these health inspectors:

- Bonnie Lynn:
  - blynn@publichealthmdc.com

- Katie McCullough:
  - kmccullough@publichealthmdc.com
Public Health – Madison & Dane County gratefully acknowledges the help of the following mobile food establishments in this production:

- Curt’s Popcorn
- Bonne Journee
- Fresh Cold Drinks
- Taste of Jamaica
- El Burrito Loco
- Hibachi Hut
- Santa Fe
- Wei’s Food to Go
- Henry Vilas Zoo
- Africana
- Blowin’ Smoke BBQ
- Monty’s Blue Plate
- Electric Earth
- LMNO Pies
- Natural Juice
- FIB’s