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This Assistance Bulletin only applies to property within unincorporated Snohomish County and does not apply to property within incorporated city limits.

Recreational Vehicles

#53

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Keyword: Assistance Bulletins

Q: How do you define “recreational vehicle”?

A: According to the Snohomish County Chapter 30.91 “recreational vehicle” means “a travel trailer, motor home, truck camper, or camping trailer that is permanently designed and used as temporary living quarters, is either self-propelled or mounted on or drawn by another vehicle, is transient, and is not immobilized or permanently fixed to a mobile home lot.”

These vehicles are not mobile homes as defined in Snohomish County Code (SCC) Title 30 or in the Washington Administrative Code (WAC). They are identified by a tag on the unit and contain a serial number beginning with the letters “RV.”

Under the flood hazard regulations, “recreational vehicle” means a vehicle designed primarily not for use as a permanent dwelling but as temporary living quarters for recreational, camping, travel, or seasonal use which is built on a single chassis, is self-propelled or permanently towable by a light-duty truck having a gross floor area of not more than 400 sq. ft.

Q: What is a “park trailer”?

A: Park trailers, which are often referred to as “park model mobile homes,” are manufactured for seasonal use only and are identified by a tag on the unit and contain a serial number beginning with the letters “PT” or “RPT.” These vehicles are not mobile homes as defined in Title 30 or in the Washington Administrative Code and are not to be considered temporary dwellings or accessory apartments. These vehicles are allowed in the same zones and under the same conditions as recreational vehicles.

“Park trailer” means a vehicular unit which is built on a single chassis and mounted on wheels. It is designed to provide seasonal or temporary living quarters which may be connected to utilities necessary for operation of installed fixtures and appliances. It has a gross trailer area not exceeding 400 sq. ft. In calculating the square footage of a park trailer, measurement shall be taken on the exterior of the unit. The square footage includes all siding, corner trim, molding, storage space, and area enclosed by windows, but not the roof overhang.

This bulletin is intended only as an information guide. The information may not be complete and is subject to change. For complete legal information, refer to Snohomish County Code.

Q: How do you define “mobile home”?

A: A mobile home is a single family dwelling constructed in accordance with the requirements prescribed under either the Washington State Code or the Federal Department of Housing and Urban Development standards, set forth in the amended National Mobile Home Construction and Safety Standards Act of 1974. After fabrication, all mobile homes must be designed for transportation on public streets and highways on its own chassis and wheels. When it is erected on site, it must be designed to be permanently connected to required utilities.

Q: Can I use a recreational vehicle as a residence?

A: No. There are zoning code provisions, however, that allow a travel trailer to be placed on a lot for up to 180 days in any 12-month period for camping or recreational use. These provisions apply only in the following zoning classifications: Forestry (F), Forestry & Recreation (F&R), Agriculture 10-Acres (A-10), Rural 5-Acres (R-5), Rural Conservation (RC), Rural Diversification (RD), Suburban Agriculture 1-Acre (SA-1), Rural Resource Transition 10-Acres (RRT-10), and Rural Use (RU). A person utilizing a recreational vehicle for recreational purposes as permitted in the above mentioned zones must also have a permanent residence elsewhere, with the recreational vehicle being used only for recreational use.

Q: What restrictions apply to use of an RV in the floodway?

A: There shall be no more than one per lot and it shall not be placed on a single site for more than 180 days in any 12-month period and in the floodways they shall be limited to day use only (dawn to dusk) during the flood season (October 1 through March 30) with the following exceptions:

- Recreational vehicle use associated with a legally occupied dwelling to accommodate overnight guests for no more than a 21-day period;
 - Temporary overnight use by farm workers on the farm where they are employed subject to SCC 30.22.130(19)(a) and (b); and
 - Subject to SCC 30.22.130(19)(a) and (b) and SCC 30.22.120(7)(b), temporary overnight use in a mobile home park, which has been in existence continuously since 1970 or earlier, that provides septic or sewer service, water and other utilities, and that has an RV flood evacuation plan that has been approved and is on file with the Department of Emergency Management and the Department of Planning and Development Services.
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