

Guidelines for Mobile Food Service

A Mobile Food Service Vehicle/ Unit is a self-contained mobile unit, which is used for the preparation and/ or retail dispensing of food products. The unit must be capable of moving, or being moved and is not left in any one location for a period longer than one week. Log books detailing unit movement may be required by the Food Safety Specialist.

Mobile food service units are **not** moveable restaurants. Due to potable water and wastewater requirements, these units must be fully self-contained, easily mobile, and require a valid vehicle or trailer inspection permit through the Registry of Motor Vehicles, per the *Nova Scotia Motor Vehicle Act*, depending on the classification of the mobile unit. Facilities within mobile units are limited, so food preparation is restricted to the requirements of this guideline.

CLASSIFICATIONS:

There are three classifications of mobile food service units:

Class 1: *Mobile Eating Establishment*: means a self-contained mobile food vending vehicle, capable of being fully enclosed for protection from the elements, from which approved food is prepared and served for human consumption. The equipment available could dictate restrictions on the type of foods prepared.

Class 2: *Pushcarts*: means a mobile self-contained food vending unit, moved with or without the assistance of a motor vehicle, from which approved, pre-cooked potentially hazardous foods, or pre-packaged ready-to-eat potentially hazardous foods are offered.

This type of unit permits very limited or no food preparation, and is deemed to have restricted use.

Class 3: *Meat/Fish Vendor*: means a self-contained food vending unit from which only whole or packaged approved meat or fish are sold. An example of whole meat would be a side, quarter, leg etc. that has been processed at a federally or provincially inspected/licensed facility and offered for sale in the same state as received from that facility.

All food service units shall return to a central commissary for cleaning and sanitizing of equipment, approved disposal of wastes, and replacement of products, as required. At least a daily return to the commissary is recommended.

NOTE: Food service facilities constructed for the service of foods on a temporary basis are regulated by the *Guidelines for Food Service at Temporary Events*.

APPROVAL:

1. No person shall operate a mobile food service unit unless there is, in respect to such a mobile food service unit, a permit, which is in force and issued by the Department of Agriculture – Food Protection and Enforcement Division.
2. Prior to the issuance of the permit, plans should be submitted to the Department of Agriculture, so that the Food Safety Specialist may assess the planned mobile unit for compliance with the regulations and guidelines.
3. Submission of plans for a commissary is required. A commissary is an area designated for preparation, storage, and sanitation associated with the mobile food service unit. This area will require compliance with Department of Agriculture and meet sanitation and food safety requirements as stipulated by the Food Safety Specialist, dependent upon the activities conducted within the area, and the class of mobile associated with the commissary.
4. All mobile food service facilities must be inspected for compliance by a Food Safety Specialist prior to the issuance of the required permit.
5. A valid vehicle or trailer inspection permit through the Registry of Motor Vehicles, per the *Nova Scotia Motor Vehicle Act* is required, depending on the class of mobile unit. Vehicle inspection requirements are outlined in this document under the General Construction - Class subheadings.
6. The permit must be renewed annually and is not transferable. The permit (decal) should be displayed in a prominent place on or within the vehicle.

GENERAL CONSTRUCTION:

1. The construction materials of all mobile food service units shall be smooth, non-absorbent, and easily cleanable, preferably consisting of smooth metal such as stainless steel, or plastic.
2. All units shall be constructed in such a manner that all joints are fully sealed.
3. Refrigeration units must be capable of maintaining potentially hazardous food or ingredients, those capable of supporting the growth of pathogenic organisms or the production of toxins, at a temperature of 4C (40 F) or below at all times. An accurate indicating thermometer is required in this unit to assist in the monitoring of the refrigeration temperature.
4. All units requiring a supply of water must provide potable water from an approved source and in sufficient volume, temperature and pressure as indicated within these Guidelines under the appropriate Class.
5. All units requiring a supply of water must provide acceptable waste water collection and a waste disposal process that is acceptable to Nova Scotia Environment. The waste water storage within the unit must be 15% larger than the potable water storage unit.
6. Mobile food service units must be designed to protect foods from direct sunlight and potential contaminants.
7. A sufficient number of garbage receptacles with tight fitting covers shall be provided for the use of staff and the public. Such receptacles shall be emptied and cleaned when the unit returns to the commissary.

CLASS 1: Mobile Eating Establishment

(Examples: burger/fish & chip bus, full-menu mobile, soft ice cream unit, vending vehicle, etc.)

1. All mobile eating establishment units must comply with the ***Nova Scotia Food Safety Regulations*** and the “General Construction” requirements of this guideline.
2. All Class 1 units require a valid vehicle or trailer inspection permit through the Registry of Motor Vehicles, per the ***Nova Scotia Motor Vehicle Act*** prior to pre-inspection for approval by the NSDA Food Safety Specialist.
3. All foods offered for sale must be from an approved source.
4. Walls, ceiling, equipment and occupants shall be protected from grease by the installation of a powered exhaust canopy, filters, and appropriate duct work to exhaust cooking odours, gases, fumes, and grease laden air from the cooking area.
5. Only potable water shall be stored on the premises. A potable water storage tank with the capacity of at least 135 litres (30 gallons), capable of providing a constant pressure of water to the fixtures shall be provided. A tank installed at a higher elevation (flowing under gravity feed) will suffice, though some situations may require water to be mechanically pumped. The adequacy of water pressure will be determined by the Food Safety Specialist.
6. **Class 1** mobile food service facilities require a water heating unit that is capable of providing water to the sinks at a temperature of not less than 45C (113F) for washing and sanitizing purposes. Approved chemical sanitizer will also be required as part of the sanitizing process.
7. **Class 1** mobile food service facilities require a wastewater storage tank with a capacity of at least 15% greater than the vehicles potable water storage tank.
8. A minimum of a two-compartment sink is required for the washing and sanitizing of utensils.
 - If a mobile food service unit is providing only pre-packaged foods that are being held hot and/or cold holding, and very limited or no preparation (i.e., concentrated soup etc.), a two-compartment sink may not be required.
9. A hand-washing sink for the use of staff shall be provided, as well as liquid soap and single service towels conveniently located. This sink is to be solely for the purpose of hand washing.

10. Bare hand contact with food is to be avoided. A suitable barrier between hand and food such as clean disposable gloves, napkins, deli tissues, or tongs must be used.
11. All openings to the outside shall be screened or fitted with other devices to repel or prevent the entrance of flies, insects, and vermin (except when foods are being served through a serving window). Insects or vermin should not be present in the mobile unit.
12. A Mobile Eating Establishment that sells only pre-packaged potentially hazardous foods (i.e., self-service vending vehicle), may not require the potable running water, wastewater storage, cleaning and sanitizing sinks, and hand washing sink as previously indicated. Within this type of vehicle, hand washing can be addressed with the use of moist disposable wipers and alcohol hand sanitizers (60- 70% alcohol).

CLASS 2: Pushcarts

(Examples: hotdog, hamburger, sausage carts, packaged ice cream carts, etc.)

1. All mobile units must comply with the “General Construction” requirements of this Guideline.
2. All Class 2 units moved with the assistance of a motor vehicle require a valid trailer inspection permit through the Registry of Motor Vehicles, per the ***Nova Scotia Motor Vehicle Act*** prior to pre-inspection for approval by the NSDA Food Safety Specialist.
3. Foods that can be sold from pushcarts are limited. The Department limits the type of foods served based on the principals of food safety. Only non-potentially hazardous foods and prepared ready-to-eat foods, (i.e., hot dogs, pre-cooked sausages, pre-cooked hamburger patties, etc.), are permitted. The Food Safety Specialist will advise you on what foods may or may not be allowed.

All foods must be from an approved source, federally or provincially inspected facility.

Raw meats or other perishable foods that are not-ready-to-eat are not permitted on pushcarts.

4. Refrigeration facilities capable of maintaining foods at a temperature of 4C (40F) or less are required on all pushcarts. Though mechanical refrigerating (propane, battery, or generator) is preferred, ice or gelled ice packs in insulated containers are acceptable provided the foods are maintained at 4C (40F) or below.
5. When gelled ice packs or ice are used:
 - Foods must be completely surrounded.

- Foods must be kept in tight, waterproof containers.
 - Foods must not be in direct contact with ice or water.
 - An accurate indicating thermometer is required in the refrigeration unit.
 - Ice must be obtained from a source satisfactory to the Food Safety Specialist.
 - Coolers should be provided with a drain to allow for draining of ice water.
6. Pushcarts, on which unpackaged potentially hazardous foods are handled or heated, shall be provided with a supply of potable water in a suitable holding tank or container, a hand wash sink with adequate wastewater storage (15% larger than the potable supply container), liquid soap and paper towels.
 7. Pushcarts on which only pre-packaged foods are dispensed do not require a hand wash sink, though single use, moist disposable wipes and alcohol hand sanitizers (60-70% alcohol) are required.
 8. Bare hand contact with food is to be avoided. A suitable barrier between hand and food such as clean disposable gloves, napkins, deli tissues, or tongs must be used.
 9. Condiments shall be available in single service packages or covered dispenser bottles.
 10. A covered receptacle for waste disposal should be attached to the pushcart.
 11. Reusable utensils (i.e., tongs, spoons, spatulas, etc.), must be replaced every two hours with clean, sanitized utensils. Separate plastic bags or similar containers should be provided for the storage of dirty and clean utensils to prevent cross contamination. Dirty utensils are to be returned to the commissary for washing and sanitizing.
 12. All food must be protected by means of covers, packaging or by enclosure.
 13. Sanitized wiping cloths, stored in sanitizing solution of at least 200 ppm shall be provided for use on pushcarts. Alternatively, single use paper towels and a sanitizing solution of 200 ppm available chlorine in a spray bottle can be used. A solution of 200 ppm available chlorine is made by diluting 5 ml (1 tsp) of 5.25 % household bleach in 1 L (4 cups) of water. This solution must be reconstituted on a daily basis.
 14. All equipment, (tanks, food storage containers, utensils etc.), and food must be stored on the pushcart. Cleaning supplies must be available, but stored separately from food items. An ice chest, used for the storage of extra ice/gelled ice packs, or non-perishable beverages in their original containers, may be stored off the cart but must be a minimum of six inches off the ground. Use of propane for barbecues may require approval of the Fire Marshall. Operators are advised to check with the Fire Marshall. Pushcarts using propane should carry an approved fire extinguisher.

CLASS 3: Meat/Fish Vendor

(Examples: meat/fish/lobster peddler, etc.)

The foods that can be sold from mobile meat/fish vendor are restricted. The Department limits the type of meat, meat products, fish and fish products that can be sold from a permitted mobile food service unit. The Food Safety Specialist will advise you on what foods may or may not be allowed.

Mobile Meat Vendor:

1. All mobile Meat Vending units must comply with the “General Construction” requirements of this Guideline.
2. All Class 3 meat mobile meat units require a valid vehicle or trailer inspection permit through the Registry of Motor Vehicles, per the *Nova Scotia Motor Vehicle Act* prior to pre-inspection for approval by the NSDA Food Safety Specialist.
3. All meat and meat products must be from an approved source, federally or provincially inspected facility.
4. If meats are to be further processed (i.e., cutting) within this mobile unit, Class 1 Unit requirements would apply.
5. If meats have been previously processed at a licensed facility and are displayed for sale and packaged within this mobile unit, the following is required:
 - Hot and cold potable running water.
 - Adequate wastewater storage equipment and disposal method approved by Nova Scotia Environment.
 - A hand-wash sink with liquid soap and single use paper towels. This sink is to be solely for the purpose of handwashing.
6. If only pre-packaged meats are offered for sale, the mobile unit will not require potable water, wastewater storage, or an equipped hand wash sink. Hand cleaning can be maintained through the use of single use, moist disposable wipes plus an alcohol hand sanitizer (60-70% alcohol).
7. Meats must be displayed in adequate, mechanically refrigerated units. These units must be sanitarily maintained and equipped with an accurate indicating thermometer to ensure meats are kept at 4C (40F) or below.
8. Bare hand contact with food is to be avoided. A suitable barrier between hand and food such as clean disposable gloves must be used.

9. All meats must be protected by means of covers, packaging or by enclosure.
10. Sanitized wiping cloths, stored in sanitizing solution of at least 200 ppm shall be provided for use in the mobile unit. Alternatively, single use paper towels and a sanitizing solution of 200 ppm available chlorine in a spray bottle can be used. A solution of 200 ppm available chlorine is made by diluting 5 ml (1 tsp) of 5.25 % household bleach in 1 L (4 cups) of water. This solution must be reconstituted on a daily basis.

Mobile Fish Vendor:

1. All mobile fish vending units must comply with the “General Construction” requirements of this Guideline.
2. All Class 3 fish units require a valid vehicle or trailer inspection permit through the Registry of Motor Vehicles, per the *Nova Scotia Motor Vehicle Act* prior to pre-inspection for approval by the NSDA Food Safety Specialist.
3. The sale of all fish and fish products must comply with requirements of the Food Safety Specialist.
4. If fish are to be further processed on-site (i.e., filleting) within this mobile unit, Class 1 Unit requirements would apply.
5. Refrigeration facilities capable of maintaining foods at a temperature of 4C (40F) or less are required on all units. Though mechanical refrigerating (propane, battery or generator) is preferred, ice or gelled ice packs in insulated containers are acceptable provided the foods are maintained at 4C (40F) or below.

When gelled ice packs or ice are used:

- Fish, shellfish or fish products must be completely surrounded.
 - Fish, shellfish and fish products must be kept in tight, waterproof containers.
 - Fish, shellfish or fish products must not be in direct contact with accumulated water.
 - An accurate indicating thermometer is required in the refrigeration unit.
 - Ice must be obtained from a source satisfactory to the Food Safety Specialist.
 - Coolers should be provided with a drain to allow for the draining of ice water.
6. Bare hand contact with food is to be avoided. A suitable barrier between hand and food such as clean disposable gloves must be used.
 7. All fish must be protected by means of covers, packaging or by enclosure.

8. Sanitized wiping cloths, stored in sanitizing solution of at least 200 ppm shall be provided for use in the mobile unit. Alternatively, single use paper towels and a sanitizing solution of 200 ppm available chlorine in a spray bottle can be used. A solution of 200 ppm available chlorine is made by diluting 5 ml (1 tsp) of 5.25 % household bleach in 1 L (4 cups) of water. This solution must be reconstituted on a daily basis.

FOOD HANDLING AND MAINTENANCE

1. Work surface wipers shall be disposable articles, or cloth that are stored in sanitizing solution and laundered on a daily basis.
2. The replenishment of all supplies and regular thorough cleaning of mobile units should take place at the commissary provided for that purpose.
3. The mobile unit shall be maintained in a clean and sanitary manner at all times

PERSONNEL

1. Every operator or employee who works within a mobile food service unit or commissary shall:
 - be clean;
 - wear clean, washable outer garments, which are used for no other purpose;
 - be free from and not a carrier of any disease which can be spread through the medium of food;
 - wear hair covering or confine hair in such a manner that will keep it from contaminating food;
 - refrain from smoking while on duty;
 - wash hands prior to food handling and after using the washroom or smoking/eating; and
 - have received an food handlers training course certificate recognized by NS Agriculture – Food Protection and Enforcement Division.