



HUNTING AND FISHING CABINS

This is a supplement to the Citizen's Guide, which provides basic information about Adirondack Park Agency regulations.

For Adirondack Park Agency purposes, a “dwelling unit” is a single unit providing complete independent living facilities for one or more persons, including permanent provisions for living, sleeping, eating, cooking, and sanitation. Dwelling units are usually considered single family dwellings or mobile homes, and are subject to specific permitting and other requirements. However, a dwelling unit that would otherwise be defined as a single family dwelling or mobile home but meets the following criteria is instead considered a hunting and fishing cabin, and is subject to fewer requirements:

1. The cabin contains only one story, or one story and a loft;
2. The cabin is built on posts or piers and does not have a permanent foundation;
3. The cabin does not have a conventional on-site wastewater treatment system, and a pit privy or chemical toilet serves instead as a permanent facility for septic;¹
4. The cabin does not have pressurized or indoor plumbing, though it may have a sink and grey water leach pit; and
5. The cabin is not connected to any public utilities, such as electric, phone, cable, water, or sewer.²

Permitting Requirements

The need to obtain an Agency permit differs between single family dwellings/mobile homes and hunting and fishing cabins in two instances. First, on Resource Management lands, construction of any new single family dwelling or mobile home requires a permit regardless of the structure's size, while construction of a new hunting and fishing cabin requires a permit only if the cabin contains 500 square feet or more of

¹ Pit privies and chemical toilets do not always constitute permanent facilities for septic. Please contact the Agency for any specific determination.

² Hunting and fishing cabins should also be designed for only occasional occupancy, primarily for hunting, fishing, and similar purposes.

floor space.³ Second, on Moderate Intensity Use, Low Intensity Use, and Rural Use lands, construction of multiple single family dwellings or mobile homes may require a permit, while construction of multiple hunting and fishing cabins generally does not.⁴

Density Requirements

When an Agency permit is required for an activity, the associated property must contain a minimum acreage per “principal building,” depending on the land use classification. Single family dwellings and mobile homes are defined under the Adirondack Park Agency Act as principal buildings, but hunting and fishing cabins generally are not.⁵ Therefore, even when a permit is needed for construction of a hunting and fishing cabin, in most circumstances the Agency does not need to determine whether the associated property meets the minimum size requirement.

This flyer is intended to provide general information regarding Agency jurisdiction. Other provisions or restrictions may apply if an Agency permit or variance is required or if the property has previously been subject to Agency review.

Please contact the Agency with any questions at 518-891-4050. For a binding written response as to whether a specific proposal requires Agency review, please submit a Jurisdictional Inquiry Form (JIF). The JIF form is available on the Agency website at www.apa.ny.gov/Forms/jiform.pdf.

³ For Agency purposes, the floor space of a building is the area in square feet measured from the structure’s exterior walls, and includes the sum total of all floor areas, as well as all porches, covered decks, and other components with a roof or cover. Lofts are not included in the floor space calculation.

⁴ Note that a permit is also required for any dwelling unit, regardless of its classification as a single family dwelling, mobile home, or hunting and fishing cabin, if the structure will be located within a designated “critical environmental area” or a scenic or recreational river area, or will be within or will substantially impair wetlands. In addition, the terms of an earlier Agency permit or variance or a current permit application may require review of new development. The Agency’s shoreline restrictions also apply to all dwelling units.

⁵ A hunting and fishing cabin with more than 1,250 square feet of floor space may be considered a principal building instead of an accessory structure.