

Cabins and Park Models in Michigan Campgrounds

Camping Cabins

Camping cabins are allowed on licensed campsites in licensed campgrounds.

The campground rules define a “camping cabin” as “a recreational unit that is a hard-sided tent or shelter, that is less than 400 square feet in area, that is on skids designed to facilitate relocation from time to time, and that does not have a direct connection to a source of water.”

A cabin that meets this definition may be placed on a licensed campsite. Other types of recreational units that may fall under a camping cabin designation are yurts, tipis, Tentrr units, glamping units, canvas tents, or the like. The number of camping cabins in a licensed campground must be reported on the annual license renewal application.

Since it is prohibited to have a direct connection to a source of water, a camping cabin cannot have sinks, showers, washing machines, or toilets located inside the cabin. The campsite may have a site water connection or a convenience water outlet located outside of the cabin.

A camping cabin may have electrical outlets inside the structure. All electrical work in a licensed campground (non-residential) shall be performed by a licensed electrician and requires a permit and final inspection from the local building authority. The local building authority may also require a building permit prior to construction.

Resort Cabins

Resort Cabins may be allowed in campgrounds, but are not allowed on licensed campsites.

A resort cabin is generally any cabin that does not meet the definition of a camping cabin. If a cabin is greater than 400 square feet in area, or is not on skids but is permanently attached to the ground, or has a water connection inside the cabin then it cannot be placed on a licensed campsite.

All resort cabins located in campgrounds shall require approval from the local zoning/planning department. The local building authority will also require building, plumbing, and electrical permits prior to construction.

Since resort cabins often have water and sanitary fixtures inside, the campground water supply and wastewater disposal system must have capacity to serve each cabin. Prior to constructing or installing resort cabins in a licensed campground, the owner must contact EGLE so the sanitary facilities can be evaluated. If it is determined that modifications to the facilities are required, then the owner must apply for an EGLE Campground Construction Permit.

Park Models

Park models are allowed in licensed campgrounds in Michigan if they meet the definitions of a “park model recreational unit” as defined in the campground rules:

“a recreational unit that is built on a single chassis mounted on wheels, that has a gross trailer area of not more than 400 square feet in the setup mode, and that is certified by the manufacturer as complying with the American National Standards Institute Standard A119.5.”

A recreational unit that meets this definition of a park model may be placed on a licensed campsite.

By rule, park models require additional capacity for the water and sewer systems. The water supply must be capable of supplying each park model at one gallon per minute, and the wastewater disposal system must be capable of receiving 150 gallons per day for each park model. The rules also require a park model to be located on a campsite that is served by a site sewer connection.

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