

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS - VILLAGE OF EPHRAIM

SHORT-TERM RENTAL ORDINANCE



A license must first be obtained before operating or advertising a Short-Term Rental.

WHAT IS A SHORT-TERM RENTAL?

A Short-Term Rental (STR) means a residential dwelling that is offered for rent for a fee for periods of fewer than thirty (30) consecutive days. If you are advertising on Airbnb, VRBO, or other similar platforms, you are likely operating a Short-Term Rental. This type of residential dwelling is issued a Tourist Rooming House License by the State of Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade, and Consumer Protection "DATCP".

WHY HAS THE VILLAGE OF EPHRAIM ADOPTED A SHORT-TERM RENTAL ORDINANCE?

In the past, the Village of Ephraim has regulated short-term rentals through its zoning code. Governor Scott Walker signed into law 2017 WIS ACT 59 (passage of the State Budget) establishing State Law for municipal regulation of Short-Term Rentals. WIS ACT 59 generated a need for a Short-Term Rental Ordinance for the Village of Ephraim. Public meetings were held over the course of several months. Through deliberate, transparent, and responsive dialogue, the Village of Ephraim Short-Term rental ordinance was created. The Village carefully considered its proposed ordinance, including several drafts to balance 2017 WI ACT 59, preservation of residential property rights and the local interests in protecting the public health, safety, and welfare.

WHY DO I NEED A LICENSE?

The purpose of the Short-Term Rental ordinance is to establish and ensure minimum standards and expectations for Owners and Short-Term Rental guests in the Village of Ephraim. Protecting the character, stability, and culture of Ephraim's communities is a forward-looking, long-term goal for the Village. Short-term rentals are recognized as an integral part of the local tourism economy. The Village of Ephraim is granted authority to adopt the Short-Term Rental ordinance under Wisconsin Statute §61.34, §60.22(3), and §66.1014 - 2017 Wisconsin ACT 59.

HOW DO I APPLY FOR A VILLAGE OF EPHRAIM SHORT-TERM RENTAL PERMIT?

If the property has been issued a DATCP Tourist Rooming House License issued by the State of Wisconsin for up to four (4) units or otherwise would be subject to said license, a Village of Ephraim Short-Term Rental License shall be applied for. Under a Tourist Rooming House License, an operator may rent as many as four (4) units (e.g., rooms, cottages, cabins).

The property owner, not the designated agent (or property management company) must complete the Village of Ephraim Short-Term Rental permit application. Up to four (4) units can be applied for on the same permit application as long as the property owner, as reflected in Door County Land Records, is listed **exactly** the same (person/entity) for each property.

Example 1: Unit 1 is owned by Jim Smith. Unit 2 is owned by Jim Smith. Both units can be applied for on the same permit application.

Example 2: Unit 1 is owned by Jim Smith. Unit 2 is owned by Amazing Sunset Destination LLC. Both units CAN NOT be applied for on the same permit application.

WHEN DOES THE ORDINANCE TAKE EFFECT?

The ordinance will be effective on January 1, 2023. All provisions of the ordinance will be enforceable as of the effective date.

WHAT IS THE LICENSE DURATION?

The annual license term begins January 1 and ends December 31. Renewal applications must be filed with the Village on or before November 30 of each year.

WHAT HAPPENS IF I DON'T GET A LICENSE?

If you fail to obtain a license and/or continue to operate in violation of the Village's ordinance, you may be subject to the penalties stated in Section 3 of the Short-Term Rental ordinance.

I LIVE OUTSIDE OF DOOR COUNTY; DO I NEED A DESIGNATED AGENT?

Yes, if an Owner resides more than 100 miles of the rental property, the Owner will need to select a Designated Agent that resides within 100 miles of the property (local contact) that is available 24/7 and is authorized to act as the agent for the Owner during operational periods.

WHAT DO I NEED TO APPLY FOR A VILLAGE OF EPHRAIM SHORT-TERM RENTAL LICENSE?

Please include the following with the Short-Term Rental Application:

- ☐ A completed Village of Ephraim Short-Term Rental License Application by the property owner, not the designated agent (or property management company).
- ☐ Payment of the License fee \$200
- ☐ Proof of design capacity of Private Onsite Wastewater Treatment System (POWTS) from the Door County Sanitarian if applicable. (Properties served by holding tanks or municipal sewer are exempt).
- ☐ Copy of the [State of Wisconsin Department of Agriculture & Consumer Protection \(DATCP\) Tourist Rooming House License](#).
 - To obtain a license through DATCP, call 608-224-4926 or [email](#) their licensing specialists.
 - Review the Tourist Rooming House information [page](#).
- ☐ Copy of the [Door County Tourism Zone Lodging Permit](#).
 - info@doorcountytourismzone.com / 920-854-6200
 - For permit holder information, [checklist](#) and [permit application](#) go to the DCTZC website.
- ☐ If you book your property outside of platforms like Airbnb and VRBO, commonly referred to as "Book Direct":
 - [Wisconsin Department of Revenue Seller's Permit](#).
 - Proof of registration for [Premier Resort Area Tax](#).
- ☐ At a minimum, property rules must include all information contained in the Village of Ephraim Good Neighbor Best Practices (Village Requirements). You can obtain the Village of Ephraim Good Neighbor Best Practices on the Village of Ephraim website or in your information packet.
- ☐ Sketch of Floor Plan with information on square footage and rooms labeled with a bedroom count.
- ☐ Refuse/Recycling Plan.

- ❑ Site Plan showing onsite parking spots, designated fire pit area, and trash/recycling storage area.
- ❑ Neighbor notification letters. (See sample letter on the last page).
- ❑ Attest that you have read the Village of Ephraim Short-Term rental ordinance in its entirety.

WHY ARE THERE OCCUPANCY MAXIMUMS IF I AM ON A SEPTIC SYSTEM (POWTS)?

A septic system is designed based on the number of bedrooms for a maximum daily flow into the absorption field. If the system is oversized, you will be allowed a greater occupancy. Overloading the system will result in discharges of sewage into the groundwater, onto the surface, or back into your home. A common misconception is that if the system is heavily used for a few days, it will “catch up” when no one is there. Unfortunately, this is not the case. The absorption field is designed based on the rate of infiltration of the soils where the system was installed and it will fail if the maximum daily load is frequently exceeded.

HOW DO I OBTAIN PROOF OF DESIGN CAPACITY FOR MY SEPTIC SYSTEM (POWTS)?

You can find your sanitary permit information by using [City Squared](#). Click on “Property Search”. Enter your address or owner name and click the search icon. Click on the correct property result for your property, then click on “Permit”, then “Asset”. Click on the active permit information (click listed information). Once the permit opens, print the screen (be sure to capture the system number, installation date, and “sized for x bedrooms”). *Not all parcels have sanitary permit information available online.

If your sanitary permit is not available online, please contact the [Door County Sanitarian](#) at 920-746-2308 or email sanitarian@co.door.wi.us.

HOW DO I FIND MY NEIGHBORING PROPERTY OWNERS WITHIN 300 FEET OF MY PROPERTY?

Using the [Door County Land Use GIS Maps](#) website, you can easily identify your neighbors and neighboring parcels in all directions showing the owner’s name and their mailing address. On the GIS website, search for your property by last name, address, or parcel number. Once your parcel information is shown, click on “VIEW GIS Map”. Once the map opens, first click the blue identification circle in the top toolbar and then click on the parcel you wish to identify (a yellow box should surround the parcel you have searched). Record the names and addresses of your neighbors so that you can send a notification letter.

WHAT IF I HAVE A COMPLAINT ABOUT A VILLAGE OF EPHRAIM SHORT-TERM RENTAL?

Please allow the Owner or the Designated Agent the opportunity to rectify the issue. You can use the contact information provided to you via the neighbor notification letter.

If the issue(s) continue(s), please reach out to the Village of Ephraim to document the matter. Complaints made to the Village of Ephraim **must** be in writing (no phone calls will be accepted). Written emails will allow the Village to maintain a written, accurate record. All communication can be directed to bbristol@ephrain-wisconsin.com. *In an emergency, call 911.*

You can also report a complaint to the State of Wisconsin Department of Agriculture Trade and Consumer Protection by calling 608-224-2714 or emailing datcpfoodcomplaintsemergencyresponse@wi.gov

Sample Neighbor Notification Letter for neighboring properties located in residentially zoned areas within the Village of Ephraim within 300 ft

[date]

[Name of Neighboring Property Owner]

[Mailing Address]

Re: [Short-Term Rental Property Address], Ephraim WI 54211

Dear Neighboring Property Owner,

I am the [Owner/designated agent] of the above-referenced property which is offered for rent for a fee as a short-term rental for periods fewer than thirty (30) days. The Village of Ephraim recently adopted an ordinance to establish minimum standards and expectations for owners who rent out their residential dwellings as a short-term rental.

That ordinance requires the enclosed information to be provided to neighboring property owners located within three hundred (300) feet of the rental property, in all directions from this property, as follows:

- Telephone and email contact information to enable you to report an issue arising in connection with the rental of this residential dwelling.
- A copy of the Property Rules (enclosed with this letter).
- A copy of the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade & Consumer Protection (DATCP) tourist rooming house license number.
- Stated occupancy.

If you have any questions, please feel free to reach out to me. The complete ordinance is available on the Village's website (Ephraim-wisconsin.com), along with some frequently asked questions about Short-Term rentals.

Sincerely,

[name]

Address of rental property: _____

Owner Name: _____

Owner Phone: _____

Owner Email: _____

Designated Agent Name: (if applicable) _____

Designated Agent Phone: (if applicable) _____

Designated Agent Email: (if applicable) _____

Wisconsin DATCP License No.: _____

Property Rules: ENCLOSED