



RVs and Tiny Homes – No Year-Round Use?

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RVs and Tiny Homes in the Headlines Again



Courtesy of the [ActivistPost](#)

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) has a proposed rule on the docket that would modify a current exemption in the Manufactured Home Procedural and Enforcement Regulations.

HUD's new proposed rule would define an RV as "a factory build vehicular structure, not certified as a manufactured home, designed only for recreational use and not as a primary residence or for permanent occupancy."

HUD's rule would require that units claiming the RV exemption display a notice that identifies the standards used to construct the unit and state that the unit is designed only for recreational use, and not as a primary residence or permanent dwelling.

This sounds like government intrusion by regulating how we can live in RVs (including park models that are on trailers and licensed as vehicles) as well as Tiny Homes (built on trailers), but this wording has always been in the document.

As the tiny house and RV living trend grows, more people are choosing to live in alternative types of homes with less space and less overhead.

According to the proposed docket information, “questions have arisen regarding whether park model recreational vehicles are regulated by HUD’s manufactured home program.” [Editor: The question is now answered by this change in the regulation.]

RVs are, according to the docket, now being built with screened in porches, and other extensions. Marketed as suitable for year round living, many people are doing just that. [Editor: Should they be regulated under HUD authority or not? Apparently this was confusing to some Federal authorities (no surprise). Some reading and research might be required to answer this question if the "built on wheels" part was overlooked, so just make a change in the regulation already.]

Tiny Homes

For the effect this regulation change may have on Tiny Homes, see this comprehensive article in [Timber Trails](#).

According to the [NewBoston Post](#), this new proposal has angered thousands of RV and tiny house on wheels (THOWs) enthusiasts.

It would also require manufacturers claiming the RV exemption to “display a notice that identifies the standards used to construct the unit and states that the unit is designed only for recreational use, and not as a primary residence or permanent dwelling.”

The change proposal seems to center around the total square feet of living space. According to HUD, some park model recreational vehicles (PMRVs) – defined as being between 320 and 400 square feet – “are being produced with patio roofs, screened in porches, and other extensions that exceed the 400 square foot maximum exemption in the current regulations...[and] marketed as suitable for year round living.”

RV Park Industry Loves It

The proposal garnered praise from the RV manufacturing industry, which has been pushing for clarification of the regulations for the past decade. The RV park industry, however, should have the biggest argument against this change, but apparently not.

The [National Association of RV Parks and Campgrounds \(ARVC\)](#) had this to say: “We applaud HUD for working with ARVC and our industry allies at RVIA and RVDA to clarify the language in the HUD code so that federal, state and local authorities will no longer confuse park model RVs with manufactured homes,” said Paul Bambei, ARVC president and CEO.

RVIA Loves It!

RVIA (Recreation Vehicle Industry Association) issued a press release calling HUD’s proposed rule “great news for the RV industry” that would give RV manufacturers, dealers and campgrounds “critical regulatory clarity.” [Editor: not sure what this means.]

“The laws and regulations governing the use of RVs are set at the state and especially at the local municipal and county levels, not by HUD. So the new rule does not affect full-time recreational RVing in any way,” the press release stated, calling the proposed rule the result of “the RV

industry's 10-year effort to draw a brighter and clearer line between recreation vehicles and manufactured housing.”

“Under this rule, the modern RV lifestyle cannot be regulated out of existence,” the association stated.

[Editor: Do you think this is true, or just a glossy cover-up?]

From the [Snopes.com site](http://Snopes.com) (designed to ferret out whether press items are true or false) comes this summary:

“While a number of confused commenters flooded HUD's proposal page based on inaccurate rumors, the proposed rules were seen as a net positive by tiny home experts, RV enthusiasts, RV trade groups, and anyone deeply involved with full-time RVing or tiny house living. A handful of blogs broadly misinterpreted the proposed rule changes as HUD "outlawing" tiny homes; despite the fact HUD doesn't possess the authority to pass such laws.

The proposed rule rumored to be a "tiny house ban" was in fact simply a clarification of classifications for RVs and similar dwellings and in no way banned or criminalized tiny home ownership or building.”

So...there you are folks. This new clarification does not seem to affect city, county, and state zoning laws. Possibly, it could be a springboard to other regulations that impose a negative effect on the full-time RV lifestyle. To me, it just looks like a construction regulation change that applies only to manufactured housing.

Read the document and decide for yourself [HERE](#).

The RV Lifestyle Collection by Margo Armstrong

