

Temporary Accommodation

Caravans and camping

All camping and caravan use is regulated by the [Caravan Parks and Camping Grounds Act 1995](#) (Act). This legislation ensures that:

- camping occurs in a safe manner
- caravan parks and camping grounds provide a sufficient level of services to their customers
- local governments can enforce health and safety standards.

Caravan parks

Under the Act, all caravan parks must be licensed by their local governments.

The park owner must renew their licence annually and ensure that their park is up to standard and has all the buildings and services required by the Act.

Residents of caravan parks must also comply with certain standards to ensure that the park is safe and enjoyable for everyone.

The complete list of standards is set out in the [Caravan Parks and Camping Grounds Regulations 1997](#). Additional standards can also be imposed on the park depending on the terms of the park's licence.

More than one (1) caravan and/or Tiny Homes on Wheels (THOW) on a property would be considered a caravan park/camping ground, and development and building approvals will be required.

Temporary accommodation and camping outside of a caravan park

It is recognised that not everyone wants to camp inside a licensed caravan park. From 1 September 2024, changes to WA's Caravan Parks and Camping Grounds Regulations 1997 enables Local Governments to approve the use of a caravan and/or THOW on private land for up to two years.

Duration of camping	Type of temporary accommodation permitted	Approval Required
Up to 5 nights on private land	Tent, camper trailer, caravan, THOW*	Approval required from property owner
Greater than 5 nights and up to 24 months on private land	Camper trailer, caravan, or THOW*	Approval required from the property owner and City of Kwinana
Re-applying after 24 months	Camper trailer, caravan, or THOW*	Approval required from the property owner and City of Kwinana

**Must be capable of being towed/easily removable if required.*

If a property owner allows short-term camping to occur regularly on their property, they will be operating a caravan park/camping ground and need to comply with the requirements of the Act and obtain the necessary planning and building approvals.

Requirements for caravans and THOWs

Caravans and THOWs are used by many people in WA for a variety of reasons including:

- temporary housing following a natural disaster
- staying in a caravan or tiny home on wheels while building or renovating a permanent home
- for seasonal worker housing
- to support someone ageing-in-place
- for holidaymakers
- other personal circumstances.

It is important that caravans and THOWs are used in a safe and healthy manner. That's why WA legislation generally restricts the use of caravans to licensed caravan parks, where a certain level of services and utilities must be supplied.

If a person uses a caravan or THOW outside a licensed park without approval or exemption, they risk committing an offence, regardless of whether the land is private or public.



For further information or clarification, please refer to the FAQs – Temporary Accommodation OR contact the City’s Environmental Health Services on (08) 9439 0250 or health@kwinana.wa.gov.au

FAQs – Temporary Accommodation

The following FAQs relate to temporary accommodation approved under Regulation 11B of the Caravan Parks and Camping Grounds Regulations 1997.

General	
What is considered a Tiny House on Wheels (THOW) under the Caravan Parks and Camping Grounds Act 1995?	If a THOW fits the statutory definition of a caravan (i.e. a vehicle fitted for habitation and capable of being towed) then it will fall under the powers of the Caravan Parks and Camping Grounds Act 1995 .
Do I need approval to occupy a Tiny Homes on Wheels (THOW) or caravan on my property?	Yes – Regulation 11 and 11A of the Caravan Parks and Camping Grounds Regulations 1997 allows a person to occupy a THOW or caravan on land that they own or have a right to legally occupy for more than 5 nights in any period of 28 consecutive days, subject to the City’s approval. The THOW or caravan must be capable of being towed and will need to comply with certain health, safety and amenity requirements.
How long can I park a THOW or caravan on my private land or land that I have a right to occupy?	The Caravan Park and Camping Ground Regulations 1997 enable Local Governments to approve the use of a caravan or THOW on private land for up to two years , subject to compliance with health, safety and other standard conditions relevant to the City of Kwinana.
Can I live permanently in my THOW or caravan on my vacant property?	THOWs and caravans are considered temporary accommodation for the purpose of Regulation 11 of the Caravan Park and Camping Ground Regulations 1997 . The construction of a building or permanent structure on private land is subject to development and building approvals and cannot be approved under the Regulations.
Can a THOW or caravan be removed from the trailer base?	To be approved under the Caravan Parks and Camping Grounds Regulations 1997 , the THOW or caravan needs to remain on its trailer base as it must be capable of being towed / easily removed. If it is removed from the trailer base, the THOW or caravan is considered a permanent structure and development and building approvals will be required.
Can I move my THOW or caravan to different locations?	Yes , however a new location would require a new approval to be obtained, unless you are only staying for a maximum of 5 days in any period of 28 consecutive days.
Can I have more than one caravan or THOW on my property?	No – the City will grant approval for only ONE caravan or THOW to be parked and occupied on your property at any one time. Any more than one would be considered a caravan park/camping ground, and development and building approvals will be required.
What size can my caravan or THOW be?	As a caravan or THOW must be capable of being towed/easily removed, it must meet the requirements for it to be licensed under the Road Traffic (Vehicles) Act 2012 . Other considerations will be the ability for the caravan or THOW to be appropriately located on site to comply with all standard requirements.
Can I, or a member of my family, live in a caravan or THOW on my property, which has an approved existing dwelling (house)?	Yes – however you can have no more than one (1) THOW or caravan on your property.
Can I apply for approval to holiday let (e.g. AirBnB) a caravan or THOW on property I own or have a legal right to occupy?	No – Short-term rental accommodation (STRA) in Western Australia is dealt with under the Short-Term Rental Accommodation Act 2024 . Further information can be obtained from the WA State Government website: Short Term Rental Accommodation .
Can I privately let out (> 3 months) a caravan or THOW on property I own or have a legal right to occupy?	Yes – however you will need to meet all health, safety, building, amenity and bushfire requirements. You will also need to include a management plan that addresses how any potential public health impacts and nuisances (e.g. noise, non-compliant disposal of waste) will be managed. In addition, you may be subject to requirements of the Residential Tenancies Act 1987 . It is recommended that you seek independent advice on the requirements that apply to your own arrangement.
Can I camp in a tent on private land if I have the landowner’s approval?	Yes – however you can only camp in a tent for up to 5 nights in any period of 28 consecutive days.

Standard Requirements For Approval

Health requirements	<p>Evidence of unrestricted and immediate access to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a source of electricity (may include an off-grid solar system) • supply of potable drinking water • hot water system • flushable toilet • shower • basin • kitchen sink • cooking stove • laundry facilities • washing line/drier <hr/> <p>Evidence that wastewater (effluent and greywater) and domestic waste will be disposed of adequately and to the satisfaction of the City's Environmental Health Services.</p> <hr/> <p>Management Plan – this will apply where a caravan or THOW is let out privately (> 3 months) and must detail how any potential public health impacts and nuisances caused by the occupants of the caravan or THOW (e.g. noise, non-compliant disposal of waste, rubbish, keeping of animals) will be managed by the owner.</p>
Building requirements	<p>Minimum setback of 900mm from boundary of adjoining lot(s)</p> <hr/> <p>Minimum setback of 1.8 metres from existing dwelling on lot</p> <hr/> <p>Essential safety measures (smoke alarm, RCD)</p>
Planning / Amenity requirements	<p>In Residential Zones, a caravan or THOW must be located:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At rear of property, if easily accessed, OR • Minimum setback of two (2) metres from primary street, if lot size permits, OR • Within property boundary but must not overhang onto verge or footpath, AND • Parallel to existing residence on lot, if possible, AND • Must not obstruct access to required parking bays for existing dwelling on the lot, AND • Must not obstruct line of sight or create a hazard for vehicles entering or leaving the property (minimum setback of 1.5m from where vehicle access point intersects with public street), AND • Must not obstruct pedestrian pathways. <hr/> <p>In Rural Zones, a caravan or THOW must be located:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As far as possible from primary street, however consideration will need to be given to connection to services/utilities (water, electricity, wastewater disposal), AND • Must not obstruct access to required parking bays for existing dwelling on the lot, AND • Must not obstruct line of sight or create a hazard for vehicles entering or leaving <hr/> <p>No more than six (6) unrelated people living on property (including existing household).</p> <hr/> <p>One (1) parking bay must be provided, in addition to the number of bays required for the existing residence.</p> <hr/> <p>Clothesline/dryer must be screened from public view.</p>
Bushfire requirements	<p>Compliance with City of Kwinana's Fire Hazard Notice</p> <hr/> <p>Three (3) metre defensible space around caravan or THOW (only applicable in bushfire prone areas).</p>
Miscellaneous requirements	<p>All weather access must be provided to enable the easy removal of the THOW or caravan</p> <hr/> <p>Caravan or THOW AND the land on which a caravan or THOW is located on must be maintained in such a condition that it is not a hazard to safety or health OR negatively impacts visual amenity or character of the surrounding area.</p> <hr/> <p>Occupation of the caravan or THOW must not affect or cause a nuisance to the occupants of other properties.</p>
How do I manage wastewater and what kind of toilet is acceptable inside the caravan or THOW?	<p>All wastewater must be contained within the land and diverted to the stormwater drainage system on the land. The toilet (and any other fixtures producing greywater) will need to be serviced by an onsite wastewater management (septic tank/ATU) system or connected to reticulated sewer.</p> <p>Approval will firstly need to be obtained prior to connection/installation and occupancy. The City's Environmental Health Services issues approvals for onsite wastewater management systems (which is a separate process) and Water Corporation is responsible for overseeing any connections to reticulated sewer.</p>
How can I provide electricity to my caravan or THOW?	<p>You can connect to the power supply on the property or have a separate connection to the electricity network.</p> <p>If your caravan or THOW is close to an existing dwelling on the lot, you can power it by running an RCD protected, caravan-rated, extension cord from the dwelling.</p> <p>The use of solar power is another option. This could be portable such as a solar trailer (must be appropriately sited) or fixed to the structure.</p> <p>It is important to note that any electrical installation needs certification from a licensed electrical contractor.</p>

Standard Requirements For Approval

If my caravan or THOW is not fully self-contained, is it acceptable to use the facilities in the existing dwelling house on the property?	Yes – however you will need to provide evidence that you have unrestricted access to the facilities within the existing dwelling house on the property.
How many people can live in my THOW or caravan?	This will be determined by the capacity of the THOW or caravan. In addition, no more than six (6) unrelated persons who do not comprise a single family (inclusive of occupants in primary/existing residence on lot) can reside on the property.
What planning zones can I occupy a caravan or THOW as temporary occupation?	All planning zones EXCEPT commercial and industrial zones.

Rates And Service Charges

Do I need to pay rates for my THOW or caravan?	There are no changes to rates for properties where a THOW or caravan is parked. However, if a waste service (e.g. additional bins) is required, then fees will be payable. Failure to pay any required fees may result in approval not being granted or a permit being revoked.
--	---

Application & Approval Process

How do I apply for approval?	You will be required to complete and submit the Application for Temporary Accommodation (<i>up to 24 months</i>) to the City's Environmental Health Team and pay the applicable fees. Your application must include the following details: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Written permission from landowner to park on property / evidence of right to occupy land and use of any existing facilities within the main residence on lot. 2. Site plan showing where the caravan or THOW will be located, including setback distances from primary street, secondary street, boundaries of adjoining lots and existing dwelling (if applicable). 3. Details of how wastewater (effluent and greywater) will be disposed of. 4. Details of hot water system, potable water source, power supply, waste disposal. 5. Floor plan showing sleeping areas and location of all facilities including flushable toilet, shower, basins, kitchen sink, cooking stove laundry facilities and washing line/drier. NOTE: If you will be using facilities inside an existing permanent dwelling on the lot, please include a floor map showing location of facilities and approval from property owner that you will have unrestricted access to the facilities. 6. Evidence of essential safety measures (smoke alarm; residual current device and relevant certifications including electrical, gas and fire equipment). 7. Photo of caravan or THOW together with any fixtures. 8. Management plan if tenanted. 9. Specifications and certification provided by the caravan / THOW supplier. 10. Evidence of registration under the Road Traffic (Vehicles) Act 2012.
What is the application process?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Apply for approval by completing the <i>Application for Temporary Accommodation</i> (up to 24 months) and submitting it to the City's Environmental Health Services. 2. Pay the relevant application fee and inspection fee(s). 3. Applications are assessed for suitability, and additional information may be requested to complete the assessment. 4. An inspection will be undertaken by a City Officer to ensure compliance with the relevant standards. 5. If approval is recommended, a permit will be issued with conditions. 6. If approval is sought for a period exceeding 12 months, an inspection will be conducted after the initial 12 months to confirm compliance with the permit conditions.
How long will the application process take?	Applications will be processed within 14 business days . NOTE: Processing times commence upon receipt of a full application (including all supporting documentation) and payment of applicable fees.
How much will the application and/or permit cost?	When applying, you will be required to pay an application fee and inspection fee(s). Fees and charges are contained within the City of Kwinana's Schedule of Fees and Charges .
What happens after the permit expires?	You will be required to remove the THOW or caravan from the property OR apply for an extension to your existing approval – this will require the submission of a new application form, payment of applicable fees and assessment for compliance with required standards.
Can my permit be revoked before the expiry date?	Yes – a breach of any of the conditions of your permit may result in the City revoking your permit and requesting you to remove the THOW or caravan.