



STATE OF MAINE
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, CONSERVATION & FORESTRY
LAND USE PLANNING COMMISSION
22 STATE HOUSE STATION
AUGUSTA, MAINE 04333-022

JANET T. MILLS
GOVERNOR

AMANDA E. BEAL
COMMISSIONER

Memorandum

To: LUPC Commissioners
CC: Stacie R. Beyer, Executive Director
From: Stacy Benjamin, Chief Planner
Date: May 7, 2025
Re: Short-term Rentals – Best Practice Educational Materials

After significant consideration and deliberation, the Land Use Planning Commission (LUPC or the Commission) opted for a phased approach to regulating short-term rentals in the Commission's service area. The first phase includes making best practice educational materials available and adopting a notice-only requirement for short-term rental activity without additional standards. If the Commission continues receiving complaints or identifies areas of concern in the future, a second phase considering additional standards could be initiated.

At the Commission's March 12, 2025, regular business meeting, the Commission voted to initiate rulemaking for the notice requirement and requested that staff share best practice materials at an upcoming meeting. Drafts of the best practice documents are attached to this memo and will be presented for feedback at the May Commission meeting. The proposed rules related to short-term rentals will be posted for public comment in the coming weeks.

Overview of Proposed STR Best Practices Education Program

The following components are proposed to help ensure the broadest distribution and availability of the best practices information for short-term rental owners, renters, and neighbors.

- 1) A series of publications related to short-term rentals, including (see attachments):
 - For Short-term Renters - Be A Good Neighbor
 - For Short-term Rental Neighbors
 - Checklist for Short-term Rental Owners
 - Checklist for Short-term Renters
 - Short-term Renter Health and Safety Information Sheet

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- 2) Create a web page with links to each publication and the online notice portal.
- 3) Include best practice information on the notice document and online notice form.
- 4) Distribute copies of the materials at any public meetings with relevant audiences.

Timeline and Next Steps

Once suggestions from the Commission have been incorporated into the draft publications, they will be distributed to a representative group of interested parties for another round of feedback. This test group will likely include:

- 1) Several local officials serving the more populous regions of the Commission's service area (for example, plantations in the Rangeley region);
- 2) Some of the short-term rental owners and neighbors who provided input during the rulemaking process; and
- 3) State agency staff supporting some of the programs linked in the documents.

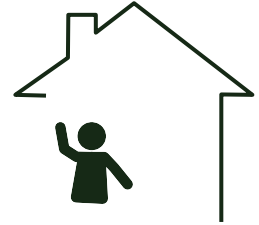
When the documents are finalized, they will be posted to the LUPC website on a new page dedicated to this topic, and a GovDelivery notification will be sent. The publication may happen prior to implementing a notice requirement (should the proposed rule changes be adopted). Should this occur, the Checklist for Short-term Rental Owners will be temporarily edited to remove the reference to the notice requirement.

Attachments:

- *For Short-term Renters - Be A Good Neighbor*
- *For Short-term Rental Neighbors*
- *Checklist for Short-term Rental Owners*
- *Checklist for Short-term Renters*
- *Short-term Renter Health and Safety Information Sheet*



For Short-term Renters



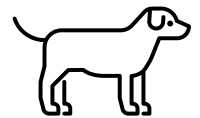
Be A Good Neighbor

Though it may feel remote, your short-term rental is most likely located near other year-round or vacation homes. Please respect your neighbors and follow Maine State Laws and regulations. You are responsible and liable for any disturbances, and your host can notify rental platforms of your conduct while at their property. Here are some things to be aware of:

1. **Noise:** Maine criminal code considers loud unreasonable noise a Class E offense ([M.R.S. 17-A §501-A](#)).
2. **Fireworks:** Certain fireworks are legal in the State of Maine, but be sure to check the [State Law](#) and any local rules if you plan to use allowed fireworks. Towns and plantations have the authority to create rules prohibiting or limiting the use of fireworks. In areas without local rules, Maine state statute applies.

For more information on fireworks: [Fireworks / Office of State Fire Marshall \(maine.gov\)](#)

3. **Pets:** Pets are not allowed to enter or remain on the private property of another without permission, or be unattended on any local, county or state road or highway. Owners will receive one warning from law enforcement ([M.R.S. 7 §4041](#)). If pets are allowed at your short-term rental, please be sure to keep them off neighboring private property, keep them on a leash when necessary, and pick up pet waste.



4. **ATV and Snowmobile Use:** Most of the extensive snowmobile and ATV trail networks located throughout Maine are on private land and maintained by local clubs. Please respect their wishes and their land as if it were your own. Before you ride, familiarize yourself with the laws about ATV use ([M.R.S. 12 §13157-A](#)) and snowmobile use ([M.R.S. 12 §13106-A](#)).



5. **Parking**: It is illegal to park in a way that prevents passage into private drives ([M.R.S. 17 §3853-C](#)). This is for your safety and your neighbor's safety.
6. **Discharge of Firearms**: Firearms or archery equipment may not be discharged over or within 10 feet of a public paved way, within 100 yards of a building or residential dwelling without permission of the owner or occupants, or within 300 feet of a state boat ramp. Projectiles should not pass within 100 yards of a building or residential dwelling. ([M.R.S. 12 §11208 - §11209-A](#)).
7. **Hunting and Fishing Regulations**: Please be sure to follow all state and local hunting, [fishing](#), and [trapping](#) regulations.



Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife Rules and Regulations: [Hunting & Trapping: Maine Dept of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife](#)
[Fishing & Boating: Maine Dept of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife](#)

8. **Environment**: Heavy use of rental properties can lead to environmental degradation and affect the plants and wildlife of the area. Please be aware of the natural environment and adhere to the best practices of "leave no trace" (e.g., don't overuse trails, pick up litter, prevent unnecessary noise impacts on wildlife, leave what you find, and don't bring in invasive species). [Buy firewood where you burn it!](#)

Important Note: Under [M.R.S. 38 §419-C](#), failure to remove aquatic plants or parts of plants from personal vehicles, boats, watercraft, boat trailers or other equipment on a public road is a crime.

Learn how to leave no trace when visiting Maine's great outdoors.

<https://Int.org/why/7-principles/>

Learn about how noise affects wildlife and biodiversity.

https://www.nps.gov/subjects/sound/effects_wildlife.htm



Learn more about invasive plants from the Maine Natural Areas Program:

https://www.maine.gov/dacf/mnap/features/invasive_plants/invasives.htm

*Do **NOT** transport firewood into the State of Maine:*

https://www.maine.gov/dacf/mfs/forest_health/invasive_threats/firewood_out_of_state_ban_or_der.html



LAND USE PLANNING
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For Short-term Rental Neighbors



Reporting Short-term Rental Issues

Nuisance and Illegal Activity

In an emergency, dial 911. To report renter activity that you believe is illegal (e.g., noise, pets, ATVs, parking, firearms, fireworks), please call your local police department, the county sheriff, state police, warden service, or forest rangers. All agencies are equipped to deal with such violations.

- **Find your local State Police Troop:** [Find your local Troop | Maine State Police](#)



AUGUSTA 207-624-7076 or 1-800-452-4664
BANGOR 207-973-3700 or 1-800-432-7381
HOULTON 207-532-5400 or 1-800-924-2261



- **Find your County Sheriff:** [Sheriff's Offices: State of Maine Judicial Branch](#)

For laws and rules pertaining specifically to inland fishery and wildlife resource management and protection, registration and operation of snowmobiles, watercraft, and all-terrain vehicles, and general laws:

- **Maine Warden Service:** [Maine Dept of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife](#)



AUGUSTA 1-800-452-4664
BANGOR 1-800-432-7381
HOULTON 1-800-924-2261



For laws and rules pertaining to illegal dumping, timber theft, timber trespass, water quality, wildfire arson, open burning violations, and logging vandalism:

- **Maine Forest Service:** [Report Violations/Concerns/Problems: Maine Dept. of Agriculture Conservation and Forestry \(accessgov.com\)](#)

1-800-750-9777



Reporting Septic System Concerns

If you have a concern about the septic system of a short-term rental, please get in touch with your Local Plumbing Inspector (LPI): [Subsurface Wastewater Unit, Division of Environmental Health, Maine CDCP - Division of Environmental Health | MeCDC | Maine DHHS](#) or call (207) 287-2070.

Contacting the STR Owner

If you feel comfortable, contact the owner to inform them of nuisance or criminal activity at their property. The police may not notify them about illegal renter activity, and they may want to report renters to rental platforms.

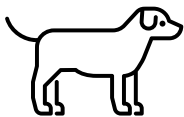
Reporting on Rental Platforms

Some short-term rental platforms provide resources for reporting nuisance activities:

Airbnb Neighborhood Support:

<https://www.airbnb.com/help/article/3290>

VRBO: https://help.vrbo.com/category/SN_Community_Member





Checklist For Short-term Rental Owners



- ☐ Make renters aware of rules (for example, maximum occupancy and parking) and safety features for the rental property.
- ☐ If there are special septic system considerations, post clear instructions to avoid polluting nearby water bodies through system failures.
- ☐ Submit a Short-term Rental Notice Form to the LUPC
- ☐ Provide renters with the *Be a Good Neighbor* publication and state laws and best practices for renting your property, including:
 - ☐ Parking
 - ☐ Noise
 - ☐ Pets
 - ☐ ATVs and Snowmobiles
 - ☐ Firearms
 - ☐ Transporting firewood
 - ☐ Preventing the spread of invasive species
- ☐ Provide renters and neighbors with a contact number for the property to ensure that any emergency or complaint can be dealt in a timely manner.
- ☐ Provide contact information for emergency services, the E9-1-1 address, and any instructions for contacting emergency services. For remote locations, include any special driving instructions for emergency evacuations.





Checklist For Short-term Renters



- ☐ Know the local rules, regulations, ordinances, and laws. Being a good guest ensures that short-term rentals aren't a nuisance for neighbors. If you wouldn't do it at home, don't do it here!



- ☐ Check the safety information for the property. Are there adequate smoke alarms? Does the owner provide information about testing the drinking water?
- ☐ Make sure you don't invite too many guests. Stick to the occupancy limit on the rental listing for the safety of the community and the environment.

- ☐ Plan where to dump your holding tank if you're staying at a residential campsite with your recreational vehicle.



- ☐ Understand how to contact emergency services, where local emergency services are, and how to get them to your rental property if needed.



- ☐ Check and clean all boats and vehicles to remove invasive plants.

- ☐ If you are planning a campfire, leave firewood at home and [buy it where you burn it](#)! Be sure to apply for the [proper permits](#) and check to make sure they are legal at the rental. Visit [Forest Protection: Maine Forest Service: Maine ACF](#) for more information about campfires.



- ☐ If you wish to bring allowed fireworks, make sure your rental allows them and follow state laws. Visit [Fireworks | Office of State Fire Marshal](#) for more information.



For Short-term Renters



Your Health and Safety

Visiting Maine's remote areas is a unique experience but comes with unique challenges. When renting in a remote area, you should familiarize yourself with how to contact emergency services and the steps that property owners have taken to ensure your health and safety.

- Emergency Services: Your rental property should have the E9-1-1 address prominently displayed on the outside of the property so that emergency services can quickly locate the dwelling. The E9-1-1 address should also be available to you inside the dwelling so you can quickly get ahold of the appropriate entity.

The owner/manager of your property should have numbers for emergency services prominently displayed. If you don't have telephone or cellular service at the rental property, you should determine where the nearest location with service is. You should also familiarize yourself with the route to the nearest main road in case you need to leave quickly or evacuate.

- Fire Safety: Smoke detectors are required by [Maine State law](#) in family dwellings. Smoke alarms should at least be placed in every bedroom and just outside bedroom areas. If this is not the case, the owner of the property and rental platform you used to book the property should be notified. You should note where the fire extinguishers are located, too.

FEMA fire safety for short-term rentals:
[short-term-fire-safety-flyer.pdf \(fema.gov\)](#)



- Drinking Water Safety: Many homes in Maine have private wells. Maine CDC recommends that well water be tested once a year for bacteria and every five years for arsenic, fluoride, uranium, radon, lead, and manganese. Regular well testing isn't currently a requirement in Maine. If you're concerned about well safety, you can ask the owner/manager for this information if it is not available at the rental.

- Certified Safe Short-Term Rentals: Safety certification for short-term rentals is possible through private companies. If safety is a concern for you, please feel free to reach out to the owner or manager of the property you are renting to check for safety certification. Please also be aware that certification might not be comprehensive. For example, well water testing may not be included in certification procedures.
- Septic Use and Environmental Safety: Septic systems are designed for human waste and toilet paper. No other materials, such as baby wipes, feminine products, paper towels, pharmaceuticals, or household cleaner, should be flushed down the toilet.

For more information, see guidance from the Environmental Protection Agency:

[How to Care for your Septic System | US EPA](#)

Residential Campsites and Waste

Recreational vehicles with onboard holding tanks for waste must dump waste at designated dump sites. Many campgrounds allow dumping for free if you are a registered guest or for a small fee if you are not a registered guest. The Sanidumps website provides a comprehensive list of all dump sites in Maine, which allows you to plan where to dump your holding tank before starting your trip.

For more information about dump stations near your STR:

[Sanidumps.com Dump Station Map for Maine](#)

