

Camping policy to be revised

The ZHA board conducted a first reading at its Nov. 18, 2022, meeting on a revised camping policy.

The governance committee was not aware of county regulations on camping and the requirement for OWTS/septic systems. Now that we are, it is important that we update the policy. We learned recently that our policy is not in alignment with Alamosa County regulations and we need to clarify it in a number of places (including the policies and the architectural guidelines). Currently the board has recommended that the 14 day limit to camp on vacant property should remain with the exception of when an owner is in the process of building their home. Alamosa County regulations must also be followed.

Alamosa County **does not** allow chemical/composting toilets under any circumstance.

Specifics can be found in the [Alamosa Land Use and Development Code](#) (LUDC) : Section 2.3, permitted land uses; Section 3.3, civic uses; Section 3.7, temporary uses; Section 4.2.3, off-street parking; Section 4.4, outdoor storage and display; and Section 11.3, defined terms. The recent updates from 2022 shown below have not been added to LUDC. As always, county regulations can change so property owners need to be aware of the most current regulations.

Alamosa County Land Use Regulations for Camping, Campgrounds, and RV use Amended 2/9/22 and 6/8/22

Section 2.3 Permitted land uses

2.3.2 Permitted use table

Group	Specific Uses	RU	RE	RH	RL	RM	RMH	C	I	
P= Permitted S=Special use										
Civic Uses										
RV parks and campgrounds		S						S		3.3.3

Section 3.3 Civic use standards

3.3.3 Campgrounds and Recreational Vehicle Parks

Campgrounds and RV parks satisfy the needs of the visiting public and promote the outdoor recreation opportunities and economy of Alamosa County. They may also provide an alternative development opportunity for seasonal vehicle-based occupancy. It is the intention of Alamosa County to allow a variety of development paradigms while establishing basic minimum standards of development. In addition to these regulations, all campgrounds or RV parks must also comply with the requirements of the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE).

- A. Minimum Site Requirements and Setbacks.
 1. Recreational vehicles sites, camping structures, and/or tent sites shall be designated on the site plan and shall be at least 1000 square feet in area, measuring at least 25 feet in the smallest dimension, and of adequate size to accommodate any applicable vehicle parking.
 2. Any structures or RV/camp sites shall be setback at least fifty (50) feet from the lot frontage and twenty-five (25) feet from any side or rear lot line.
 3. A Campground/Recreational Vehicle Park shall not be located within one thousand (1,000) feet of another campground/recreational vehicle park as measured in a straight line from the boundary of the proposed development to the nearest property line of the existing development.
- B. Minimum Park Area. A Campground/Recreational Vehicle Park shall contain a minimum of twelve (12) acres.
- C. Maximum Park Density. A Campground/Recreational Vehicle Park shall not have an average density greater than eight (8) campsites per acre.
- D. Parking & Circulation. A Campground/Recreational Vehicle Park shall comply with Section 4.2 Off-street parking and loading, and any application for development shall include details of the parking and circulation on the site plan.
- E. Sanitation. Campgrounds and Recreational Vehicle Parks shall provide adequate sanitation through either a connection to a central sewer system, an Onsite Wastewater Treatment System (OWTS) subject to Alamosa County regulations and CDPHE Regulation 43, or Domestic Wastewater Treatment Works subject to CDPHE Regulation 22. Sanitation facilities can be provided by a public access common area (e.g. bathhouse) or by individual collection lines and sites. Any campground facility providing accommodation for RVs or other camping vehicles must provide individual sewer connections or a central dump station. Campgrounds that only accommodate tent camping or the use of fixed camping shelters shall provide bathroom and

shower facilities.

- F. Water. Campgrounds and Recreational Vehicle Parks shall provide legal and adequate potable water of at least 75 gallons per day per campsite, consistent with CDPHE Regulation 6 (campgrounds) and Regulation 11 (community water systems).
- G. Lighting. All Campgrounds and Recreational Vehicle Parks shall manage lighting to limit light pollution and promote dark skies consistent with Section 4.5, regardless of location.
- H. Application. Any application for development of a Campground or Recreational Vehicle Park shall include the following:
 - 1. Site plan illustrating the layout and dimensions of the RV parking sites and/or camp sites, parking and circulation, sanitation and water facilities, electric/water/sewer utility lines, and all other proposed structures.
 - 2. Engineered design for sanitation system approved by the county or ready for submittal to the state.
 - 3. Proof of legal water source and engineered design for potable water system ready for submittal to the state.
 - 4. Project Narrative describing operational details, including site management.

Section 3.7 Temporary Uses

3.7.3 Temporary use permit required

The following temporary uses are allowed in the frequency stated below except that no property shall have more than four of the events listed below in one calendar year, without the approval of the board of county commissioners:

G. Recreational vehicle occupancy, temporary

This section is intended to provide opportunities for camping on private property and housing during construction by the landowner. It is not intended for, nor does it permit, the rental of camping spaces, regardless of compensation, or the commercial hosting of campers.

- 1. Temporary recreational vehicle occupancy, including all RV's, trailers, campers, pull campers of any vehicle type, tents, or other temporary structures not meeting the definition of a dwelling unit on any parcel or site shall be permitted only for a cumulative total of 180 calendar days per year provided that the following criteria must be met prior to approval. This shall not apply to accessory use of an approved residential structure.
 - a. The RV or self-contained camping vehicle will be hooked to an approved Onsite Wastewater Treatment System (OWTS) or sanitation facilities connected to the OWTS and permitted by the Land Use & Building Department will be provided. Privies and outhouses are not allowed in Alamosa County.
 - b. There are no violations on the property of any County regulation/ordinance or state statute
 - c. The applicant has proven ownership for the applicable property and RV.
 - d. The temporary occupancy is not used for commercial purposes and no charge is made for use of the premises.
- 2. Temporary recreational vehicle occupancy during the construction of a residence, including all RV's, trailers, campers, pull campers of any vehicle type, tents, or other

temporary structures not meeting the definition of a dwelling unit on any parcel or site shall be permitted only for a period of 12 months with a potential for renewal for a cumulative total of two years (24 months) provided that the following criteria must be met prior to approval.

- a. The RV or self-contained camping vehicle will be hooked to an approved Onsite Wastewater Treatment System (OWTS) or sanitation facilities connected to the OWTS and permitted by the Land Use & Building Department will be provided. Privies and outhouses are not allowed in Alamosa County.
- b. Proof of a well or other legal and adequate water source
- c. There are no violations on the property of any County regulation/ordinance or state statute
- d. A building permit for a residence has been obtained
- e. The applicant has proven ownership or approval of owner for the applicable property and RV.
- f. The temporary occupancy is not used for commercial purposes and no charge is made for use of the premises.
- g. To qualify for renewal, the Applicant must show substantial progress on construction, defined as at least one inspection passed in the prior 180 days and the renewal of the building permit. Applications for renewal of the temporary use permit must be submitted at the time of application to renew the building permit.

Section 4.2.3 Off-street parking

B. Parking ratios

1. Minimum off-street parking

The following minimum off-street parking ratios shall be applicable to all zoning districts. Where in the opinion of the applicant, a listed ratio requires too much or too little parking, the applicant may provide an alternative parking plan with data submitted in support of higher or lower ratios (see Section Error! Reference source not found.).

Commercial Uses		
Outdoor recreation (commercial)*	Campground /RV Park Golf course All other uses	1 per campsite can be included in RV parking site 2 per hole + 1 per 200 GFA As determined by administrator

Section 4.4 Outdoor storage and display

4.4.1 Applicability

- A. Any merchandise, material or equipment stored outside of a fully-enclosed nonresidential building, including Recreational Vehicles on vacant land, shall be subject to the requirements of this section.

Section 11.3 Defined terms

Dwelling unit	<p>A building, or portion thereof, permanently affixed to the ground, designed for and providing complete and permanent living facilities for one household and includes the following (see also Section 2.3.1)</p> <p>Alley-loaded house. Multi-family dwelling. Single family detached. Townhouse. Two-family house. Upper-story residential. Zero lot line house. Manufactured Home</p>
Manufactured home park	<p>Any plat of ground upon which two or more manufactured homes, occupied for dwelling purposes, are located, regardless of whether a charge is made for such accommodations.</p>
Campground or Recreational vehicle (RV) park	<p>Land used or intended to be used, let, or rented for occupancy by vacationing transient campers traveling by automobile or otherwise, or for occupancy in Recreational vehicles, fixed structures not meeting the definition of a dwelling unit (e.g. yurts, tents, or other movable or temporary sleeping quarters of any kind), together with automobile parking spaces and incidental utility structures and facilities required and provided in connection with the use. This definition shall not include trailer sales lots where unoccupied trailers are parked for inspection and sale.</p>
Recreational vehicle	<p>A camping trailer or tent trailer (folding structure constructed of canvas, plastic or similar water repellent material); motorized camper, motor home, recreational conversion van or bus; pick up camper; tent or travel trailer. This definition shall include park-model or other “tiny homes” constructed on a trailer frame or axles and titled as a vehicle but shall not include Manufactured homes.</p>