

State of Idaho Division of Building Safety



Tiny Houses, Manufactured Homes, Modular Buildings & Recreational Vehicles

Idaho Division of Building Safety
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Idaho Division of Building Safety

Tiny Houses, Manufactured Homes, Modular Buildings & Recreational Vehicles.

All structures built for use as a dwelling place, including "tiny houses", must fall into one of the following classifications and are required to comply with the requirements for that classification.

Site Built – A building constructed at the location where it is to be used. Not intended or designed to be moved.

Modular Building – Any building or building component other than a manufactured home that is of closed construction and either entirely or substantially prefabricated or assembled at a place other than the building site. (IC§39-4301)

Manufactured Home – A structure built in compliance with HUD manufactured home construction and safety standards established under 42 U.S.C. section 5401 et seq. (IC§39-4105)

Recreational Vehicle - A motor home, travel trailer, truck camper or camping trailer designed for recreational or emergency human habitation. (IC§49-119) Park trailers are recreational vehicles. Maximum width is 8½ feet.

Construction Requirements & Codes

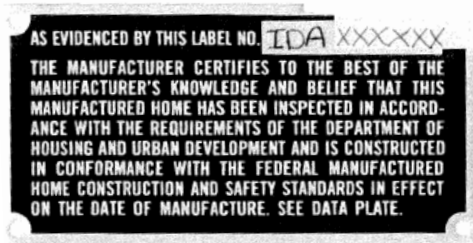
Site Built – Site built dwellings fall under jurisdiction of the city or county in which the building is located. You should contact the city or county regarding their permit and inspection requirements. Electrical, plumbing and HVAC systems require permits and inspections by the Idaho Division of Building Safety (DBS) unless the local government administers those codes.

Modular Building – Modular buildings - residential or commercial - are regulated by DBS; when approved they will bear an insignia from the state of Idaho. Work done at the place of manufacture is not subject to further regulation by local governments. However, work done at the site, including the installation, is regulated by the local government. Modular buildings are regulated by local planning and zoning ordinances the same as site built structures. Details of the DBS approval process are on the internet at <http://dbs.idaho.gov/programs/modular/index.html>



Example of Modular Insignia

Manufactured Homes – Are regulated by the Federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and are legal for use only as a single family dwelling. The approval process is intended for manufacturing facilities and is not suitable for one time construction.



Example of HUD Label

Recreational Vehicles - The Idaho Transportation Department regulates RVs as vehicles for title and licensing purposes through your county vehicle licensing agency. Their width is limited to 8½ feet and temporary recreational lodging is the only legal use. The placement and occupancy of RVs is regulated by local planning and zoning ordinances.

RVs must comply with American National Standards Institute (ANSI) Standard A119.2 for Recreational Vehicles or ANSI A119.5 Standards for Park Trailers (IC§39-4202). The Recreational Vehicle Industry Association (RVIA) issues an insignia for compliant RVs and Park Trailers.

How does all of this apply to Tiny Houses?

If you are planning to build or purchase a dwelling of any kind, including a “tiny house”, it must comply with the requirements of one of the classifications listed above. For a “tiny house” classified as an RV, you may have challenges in obtaining planning and zoning approval. If the building is wider than 8½ feet it cannot be an RV but it can be a modular building. Contact the Recreational Vehicle Industry Association about compliance with the appropriate ANSI standards, 703.620.6003.

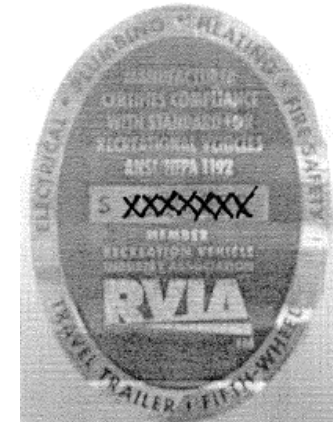
Use of the modular classification will require approvals and inspections similar to those required for site built dwellings. Use of the modular building option is intended for manufacturers but may be used by anyone.

Both site built and modular buildings must comply with minimum area requirements of the building code. The smallest a house can be and still meet these requirements is about 150 square feet of floor area.

The HUD manufactured home standard is intended for manufacturing facilities and is very difficult to apply to one time construction.



Example of Park Trailer Tag



Example of RV Trailer Tag

Costs associated with this publication are available from the Division of Building Safety in accordance with Section 60-202, Idaho Code. DBS-02-26-15