



# TOWN OF MILFORD

## FIRE DEPARTMENT

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MILFORD, NEW HAMPSHIRE 03055



### Bureau of Fire Prevention & Investigation

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## MEMO REGARDING FOOD TRUCK SAFETY REQUIREMENTS

April 4, 2023

To Food Truck Owners, Operators and Event Planners,

Food trucks, trailers and other temporary mobile cooking operations offer many ways to enhance the culture and enjoyment of our communities and local events. While they bring much happiness to a community or event through great food, these operations have some unique fire safety risks that are not found in our everyday homes and businesses. The tight work space created by the need for mobility, along with the common use of propane gas as a cooking fuel and the variety of conditions under which the units are assembled, can create a recipe for disaster. In fact, there have been at least 10 reported food truck or trailer explosions and fires in the last year alone, seriously injuring a dozen people, causing hundreds of thousands of dollars in damage, and completely destroying those businesses.

In late summer 2022, the State of NH adopted new editions of the NFPA Fire and Life Safety Codes, which contain new requirements to help ensure the safety of food truck owners, operators, patrons and the community. The purpose of this memo is to help you as the food truck owner or operator understand what these requirements are, and how to achieve them so you can be prepared to operate safely at events in Milford.

### **Gas Leak Detection**

The 2018 Fire Code, as amended by the State of NH, requires: *“All mobile and temporary cooking operations equipped with a propane appliance and an electrical system shall be equipped with a propane detector listed and marked on the device as being suitable for use in the vehicles under the requirements of UL 1484, and installed according to the terms of the listing.”* Also, *“The LP-Gas leak detection system shall be tested monthly.”*

Nearly all food truck fires and explosions have been caused by some sort of leak or failure in the propane gas system. Installing a propane gas detector provides reliable early-warning of a potentially dangerous buildup of gas. Detectors meeting these requirements are commonly available from RV and Camper supply stores and range in price from approximately \$50 to \$150, and can remain in service for 5 years or more before replacement. Before purchasing and installing a detector, be sure that it meets the UL 1484 requirements, and is marked as such. Use caution on online mass-sales sites, as products featured there are frequently advertised as meeting standards while lacking the documentation and markings required to prove it. If you are

unsure if the detector you are considering meets the requirements, please contact the fire prevention office for assistance.

## **Safety Training**

The Fire Code also requires safety training for workers:

*“Prior to performing mobile or temporary cooking operations, workers shall be trained in emergency response procedures, including the following:*

- 1. Proper use of portable fire extinguishers and extinguishing systems*
- 2. Proper method of shutting off fuel sources*
- 3. Proper procedure for notifying the local fire department*
- 4. Proper refueling*
- 5. How to perform leak detection*
- 6. Fuel properties*

*Refresher training shall be provided every year. Initial and refresher training shall be documented and made available to the AHJ on request.”*

Studies of emergencies have long shown that people who are trained for how to react in an emergency are more likely to reduce injuries, fatalities and damage when an actual emergency occurs. While specific fuel shutdown and refueling procedures may vary from unit to unit, the Milford Fire Department can assist with providing fire extinguisher training. For more information on training, contact the fire prevention office.

## **Inspections**

The Milford Fire Department is already inspecting food trucks and temporary mobile cooking operations at events and regular sites in the community. We will continue to inspect units prior to the start of each event. To help you prepare for these inspections, we can provide a courtesy fire code inspection of your food truck or trailer during normal business hours. This inspection won't provide the truck or trailer with an approval certificate or exemption from future inspections, but will allow you to identify potential code violations or repair needs that could prohibit you from operating at later events if uncorrected.

The Milford Fire Department is distributing this information to the local food truck community to provide education in new or changed requirements. We appreciate the value that food trucks bring to our community, and want to help you ensure that you have a long, safe and successful business. The requirements highlighted in this memo do not represent all the applicable codes, for more information visit <https://www.nfpa.org/Codes-and-Standards/Resources/Standards-in-action/Food-truck-safety> and download the Food Truck Fact Sheet

For more information, contact Deputy Chief Riley Stanchina via email at [rstanchina@milford.nh.gov](mailto:rstanchina@milford.nh.gov) or by phone at 603-249-0680