



SHORT TERM RENTAL REGISTRY FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Updated October 27, 2025

The Short Term Rental (STR) requirements are found in [Lewis County Code Chapter 17.105](#).

Q1: When can I register my STR?

A1: The STR permit will be available starting January 1, 2026 through the online permit portal (link coming soon). Owners/operators will have until December 31, 2026 to register their STR.

Q2: What if I don't have my building permit number or a certification of occupancy?

A2: If your building was permitted through Lewis County, you may provide the site address or parcel number to the Lewis County Permit Center and they will provide the building permit number and/or certificate of occupancy. Older buildings that predate permitting can opt for a life/safety inspection by a qualified professional. Lewis County offers life/safety inspections for \$100, apply online.

Q3: How is occupancy calculated?

A3: Occupancy is based on standard septic system design capacity of 2 people per bedroom, plus 3 additional people. Therefore, a 3-bedroom STR can have 9 occupants. If the owner can demonstrate that the septic system is designed for more capacity, the occupancy may be determined based on design capacity.

Q4: What if I built a shed and converted it into a STR without knowing I needed permits from Lewis County?

A4: The shed will need to get a retroactive permit for the conversion. If you've applied for the STR registry, the Planner will put the application on hold while you start the Master Site Review process retroactively. All relevant Lewis County Codes need to be met.

Q5: What if I built a detached bedroom without knowing I needed permits from Lewis County?

A5: The detached bedroom will need to get a retroactive permits. If you've applied for the STR registry, the Planner will put the application on hold while you start the Master Site Review process retroactively. All relevant Lewis County Codes need to be met.

Q6: Can I use my own RV as an STR?

A6: Yes, your RV can be used as a STR as long as the RV has been placed as a residence and has obtained all necessary permits. If you did not place the RV as a residence, then the Planner will put the application on hold while you start the Master Site Review process retroactively. All relevant Lewis County Codes need to be met.

Q7: Can I rent out 1 camping spot on my property for people to bring their own tent or RV?

A7: Yes. While this is not defined as a short term rental because it is not a structure, this is allowed similar to a short term rental. However, if you are renting out two (2) or more spots on your property for camping in a tent or RV, then you are required to comply with Chapter 17.144, RV Parks and Campgrounds, of the Lewis County Code.

Q8: What if I have three or more structures being used as STRs on one parcel?

A8: In most cases, any single parcel is allowed no more than 1 primary residence and 1 accessory dwelling unit (ADU), both of which can be provided STRs. If you want to have more STRs than the residential density allows, you can apply for a permit as a motel or a cabin/yurt village use. All relevant Lewis County Codes need to be met.

Q9: What if I don't recertify my STR and the permit is revoked?

A9: The owner/operator will have to apply for a new STR permit. The intention is to maintain an accurate record of how many STRs are operating in Lewis County. If a property is sold and the next owner decides to use the structure as a vacation home or residence, not a STR, Lewis County would not know unless the STR permit is not recertified. The burden is on the owner, or new owner, to maintain the STR permit if that is their intended use.