

4VAC15-20-155. Camping on Wildlife Management Areas and other department-owned or department-managed lands.

~~A. Temporary dispersed camping, with no amenities provided, may only be performed on Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs) and other department-owned or managed lands when occupants are engaged in authorized activities and in strict compliance with established terms and conditions, including those listed in this section. Camping may be prohibited on certain portions or entire parcels of department-owned or managed lands, including certain WMAs.~~

B. Authorization. It shall be unlawful to camp without ~~written authorization from the department.~~ an approved camping authorization form. ~~Written authorization to camp is required in addition to any and all other licenses, permits or authorizations that may otherwise be required. Written authorization is obtained by completing and submitting a Camping Authorization Form. Only an individual 18 years of age or older who is a member of and accepts responsibility for the camp and camping group may be issued a camping authorization.~~

C. Camping periods. Unless otherwise posted or authorized, it shall be unlawful to camp for more than 14 consecutive nights, or more than 14 nights in a 28-day period on department-owned or controlled lands. ~~At the end of the authorized camping period, all personal property and any refuse must be removed.~~

D. Prohibited locations. Camping is allowed only at previously cleared and established sites. No vegetation may be cut, damaged, or removed to establish a camp site. It shall be unlawful to camp within 300 feet of any department-owned lake, boat ramp or other facility. It shall be unlawful to camp at other specific locations as posted. This section shall not prohibit active angling at night along shorelines where permitted.

E. Removal of personal property and refuse. Any person who establishes or occupies a camp shall be responsible for the complete removal of all personal property and refuse when the camping authorization has expired. Any personal property or refuse that remains after the camping authorization has expired shall be considered litter and punishable pursuant to § [33.2-802](#) of the Code of Virginia.

F. It shall be unlawful when camping on department-owned or managed lands to store or leave unattended any food (including food for pets and livestock), refuse, bear attractant, or other wildlife attractant unless it is (i) in a bear-resistant container; (ii) in a trunk of a vehicle or in a closed, locked, hard-sided motor vehicle with a solid top; (iii) in a closed, locked, hard-body trailer; or (iv) suspended at least 10 feet clear of the ground at all points and at least four feet horizontally from the supporting tree or pole and any other tree or pole. It shall be unlawful to discard, bury, or abandon any food, refuse, bear attractant, or other wildlife attractant unless it is disposed of by placing it inside an animal-resistant trash receptacle provided by the department.

G. Any violation of this section or other posted rules shall be punishable as a Class III misdemeanor, and the camping permit shall become null and void. The permittee shall be required to immediately vacate the property upon summons or notification. A second or subsequent offense may result in the loss of camping privileges on department-owned or managed properties.

Rationale: The striking of subsection A lends to regulatory simplification and reduction of unnecessary oversight. Subsection B now references the correct form required to camp and also removes unnecessary mandates regarding the administrative process of obtaining a camping form. The portion struck from subsection C is duplicative of language in subsection E regarding removal of personal property and refuse.