



**US Army Corps  
of Engineers** ®  
Rock Island District

# Cottage Site Compliance Tips

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers appreciates our lessees' interest in caring for our federal lands and waters through the Cottage Site Program. Because your cottage site is on federal land, Public Law 99-662 allows members of the public to use your leased land for recreational or other purposes, but not use of your cottage or appurtenances. To assist our lessees, the Real Estate Division has identified some "Do's and Don'ts" to assist you in being compliant with federal laws and regulations associated with your lease. Please contact us if you have questions.

Please be advised that any violations of Code of Federal Regulation (CFR) Title 36 – Rules and Regulations Governing Public Use of Corps of Engineers Water Resources Development Projects (other than failure to pay recreation use fees) may be subject to a fine of up to \$5,000 or imprisonment for not more than six months or both. Violations of Title 36 are also considered violations of Lease Paragraph 5. Violations of lease terms and conditions can ultimately lead to revocation of your lease. Violations of Title 36 and/or lease terms and conditions will also subject you to administrative fees associated with the costs of re-inspections.

**THIS LIST IS NOT EXHAUSTIVE.**

STRUCTURE MAINTENANCE AND GENERAL UPKEEP		
DO	GENERAL UPKEEP	With the exception of motor vehicles and boats, items that are not attached to the ground should be stored away unless being used that specific day. <sup>1</sup>
	MAINTENANCE	Keep your dwelling and other approved structures in a usable and safe condition by performing routine maintenance, such as minor repairs and upkeep (i.e. fixing broken boards, windows or doors). <sup>2</sup>
	CONSIDER RELINQUISHMENT IF APPROPRIATE	If you no longer wish to maintain your lease, you do have the option to relinquish or terminate your cottage site lease pursuant to Paragraph 14 of your lease. Contact the Real Estate Division for further information. <sup>3</sup>
DON'T	USE THE COTTAGE SITE AS A RESIDENCE	Occupying any lands, buildings, vessels or other facilities within water resource development projects for the purpose of maintaining the same as a full- or part-time residence without the written permission of the District Commander is prohibited. <sup>4</sup>
	LET IT FALL DOWN	Don't let your structures fall into disrepair or become safety concerns. Unsafe structures will be reported to enforcement agencies, which could result in citations and fines, condemnation notices, and possible lease revocation. <sup>5</sup>
	DIG	Don't dig, excavate, or disturb the soil without first seeking written approval from USACE Real Estate Division. <sup>6</sup>
	GIVE THE APPEARANCE OF PRIVATE PROPERTY	Leased lands are public lands so please avoid the appearance that leased areas are private property. The installation of fences, roadway gates, or signs restricting public access to public lands is prohibited. <sup>7</sup>
	INSTALL WITHOUT APPROVAL	Don't tear down an old structure and install a new one without first seeking written approval from USACE Real Estate Division. You will be required to remove at your own expense any structure installed without prior written approval. <sup>8</sup>

## NEW IMPROVEMENTS

DO	CONTACT USACE REAL ESTATE	Contact the USACE Real Estate Division 309-794-5151 to request an application. Lease Paragraph No. 6b, "Use of Premises", requires that you obtain our prior written permission before you add or alter any and all improvements. Improvements include, but are not limited to changes to any structures, new structures, temporary structures such as carports or above-ground pools, landscaping such as retaining walls, planting beds, gardens, etc. <sup>9</sup>
	HAVE A PLAN	Be sure you include construction plans and drawings, contractor information and required permits with your application. Complete applications take less time to process and will help move your application along. Call or email for a Cottage Site Real Estate Application. <sup>10</sup>
DON'T	INSTALL WITHOUT APPROVAL	If you install your improvement before receiving permission from USACE Real Estate Division, you will be required to remove the structure at your cost and liability. In addition, you may be required to perform additional work such as an archeological survey, hazardous materials survey, or you may be cited and fined for your unauthorized work on Federal lands. <sup>11</sup>
	BE IN A RUSH	The approval process can take up to 12 months to be finalized. Your application must be routed to various departments for review and comment and may also require legal review prior to being approved. <sup>12</sup>

## DOCKS, SHORELINE PROTECTION, AND WATER BASED STRUCTURES

DO	APPLY FOR A DOCK	Contact USACE Real Estate Division for information on how to apply for a dock. <sup>13</sup>
	FOLLOW RULES AND REGULATIONS	Docks approved by USACE must be installed in accordance with applicable guidelines. Storage of docks and related structures during the off-season is permitted at the cottage site so long as the structures are stored above the high water mark. <sup>14</sup>
DON'T	ALTER THE TERRAIN	Altering the natural vegetation or terrain by shoring boats or launching boats from the shore or anchoring boats to trees is not allowed. Please apply for a mooring post or dock. <sup>15</sup>
	PREVENT PUBLIC USE	Don't create obstructions or barriers to public access to Federal lands and waters. Public Law 99-662 allows members of the public to use your leased land for recreational or other purposes, but not use of your cottage or appurtenances. <sup>16</sup>

## ANIMALS

DO	BRING YOUR CATS AND DOGS	However, livestock and wild/exotic animals are not permitted on the lease premises. <sup>17</sup>
	CLEAN UP AFTER YOUR PETS	Lessees with pets are responsible for promptly and properly disposing of animal waste. <sup>18</sup>
DON'T	LEAVE YOUR PET UNRESTRAINED	Pets must be confined on a leash under 6 feet in length, or otherwise physically restrained. Such animals cannot impede or restrict the public's otherwise full and free use of Federal lands and waters. <sup>19</sup>
	LEAVE YOUR PET UNATTENDED	Pets should not unreasonably disturb other people. Further, pets must be kept under control to prevent attacks on persons entering the area. <sup>20</sup>

## VEHICLES, BOATS, TRAILERS

DO	MAINTAIN YOUR VEHICLES	Keep all vehicles, including but not limited to cars, trucks, motorcycles, trailers, and boats maintained in operating condition with current state registration displayed. Unregistered or non-operable cars and boats are not allowed on premises. <sup>21</sup>
	PARK IN DESIGNATED AREAS	Park your vehicles and trailers on designated gravel or hard-surfaced areas only. Parking on grassy surfaces damages the vegetation and is not allowed. Your vehicles and trailers must be parked in areas where they will not obstruct or impede normal or emergency traffic or create a hazard to any person, property, or the environment. <sup>22</sup>
DON'T	BRING UNAUTHORIZED VEHICLES	Do not operate your snowmobiles or all-terrain vehicles on the cottage site premises. Use of these types of vehicles cause destruction of Federal lands. <sup>23</sup>
	CAMP	Camping is permitted only at designated sites and/or campgrounds. Do not camp on the lease area. <sup>24</sup>

## NATURAL RESOURCES

DO	USE FALLEN WOOD	Fallen wood may be used for firewood. <sup>25</sup>
	MOW THE GRASS	If you mow grass, only mow within the boundaries of your leased land. Mowing or cutting vegetation beyond your site is prohibited. <sup>26</sup>
DON'T	BURN	Fires shall be confined to fireplaces, grills, or other facilities designated for this purpose. Burning of tree stumps or other vegetation is not permitted. <sup>27</sup>
	CUT TREES	Standing trees, either live or dead, may not be cut or trimmed without prior written permission from the Real Estate Division. <sup>28</sup>
	DIG/FILL	No landscaping, fill, or work requiring ground disturbance may be performed on the lease premises without prior written permission from the Real Estate Division. <sup>29</sup>
	DAMAGE FEDERAL LAND	No destruction, injury, removal, or alteration of the Federal land, including but not limited to, natural formations, mineral deposits, historical and archeological features, boundary monuments or markers may be performed without the written permission from the Real Estate Division. <sup>30</sup>

<b>SANITATION/TRASH DISPOSAL</b>		
<b>DO</b>	DISPOSE PROPERLY	Dispose or make suitable arrangements for the disposal of garbage, refuse, and all other unused or discarded personal items. Do not dispose on adjacent Federal lands or waters. <sup>31</sup>
	MAINTENANCE	Keep wells and sanitary sewage disposal facilities safe by pumping, inspecting, and testing as needed. Any new plans for wells and sanitary sewage disposal facilities must be approved by the Real Estate Division and local health authorities before work can be done. A copy of the approval from local health authorities must be furnished to the Real Estate Division. <sup>32</sup>
<b>DON'T</b>	DISCHARGE OR DUMP	Do not discharge raw sewage, garbage, litter, gray water, pollutants, or any other wastes onto Federal lands and waters. <sup>33</sup>

CFR Title 36 - Rules and Regulations Governing Public Use of Corps of Engineers Water Resources Development Projects can be accessed electronically at: <https://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?ID=8c075fee38075ea3eb5080a0d6f86fa2&mc=true&node=pt36.3.327&rqn=div5>

**Mailing Address:**                    **U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Rock Island District  
Attn: Real Estate Division (Cottage Sites)  
PO Box 2004  
Rock Island, Illinois 61204-2004**

**Telephone:**                            **(309) 794-5887**

**E-mail:**                                    **[MVR-RE-CottageSites@usace.army.mil](mailto:MVR-RE-CottageSites@usace.army.mil)**

***The following footnotes and citations are for general reference and do not necessarily represent the only source of authority for a particular “Do” or “Don’t”:***

<p><sup>1</sup> Title 36 § 327.15(a), (b)  <sup>2</sup> Lease Paragraph 6(a)  <sup>3</sup> Lease Paragraph 14  <sup>4</sup> Title 36 § 327.22  <sup>5</sup> Lease Paragraph 6(a)  <sup>6</sup> Title 36 § 327.14(a)  <sup>7</sup> Title 36 § 327.20  <sup>8</sup> Title 36 § 327.20  <sup>9</sup> Title 36 § 327.14(c)  <sup>10</sup> Lease Paragraph 6(b)  <sup>11</sup> Title 36 § 327.20</p>	<p><sup>12</sup> Title 36 § 327.20  <sup>13</sup> Title 36 § 327.19, § 327.20  <sup>14</sup> Title 36 § 327.19, § 327.20  <sup>15</sup> Title 36 § 327.14(a), (b), § 327.19  <sup>16</sup> Public Law 99-662  <sup>17</sup> Title 36 § 327.11(c), (g)  <sup>18</sup> Title 36 § 327.11(b)  <sup>19</sup> Title 36 § 327.11(a)  <sup>20</sup> Title 36 § 327.11(a), (g)  <sup>21</sup> Title 36 § 327.2(h)  <sup>22</sup> Title 36 § 327.2(b), (c)</p>	<p><sup>23</sup> Title 36 § 327.14(a)  <sup>24</sup> Title 36 § 327.7(a), (e)  <sup>25</sup> Title 36 § 327.14(b)  <sup>26</sup> Title 36 § 327.14(a)  <sup>27</sup> Title 36 § 327.10(b)  <sup>28</sup> Title 36 § 327.14(a)  <sup>29</sup> Title 36 § 327.14(a)  <sup>30</sup> Title 36 § 327.14(a)  <sup>31</sup> Title 36 § 327.9(a), (b)  <sup>32</sup> Title 36 § 327.9(c)  <sup>33</sup> Title 36 § 327.9 (a)-(e)</p>
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