



## Chelan County Community Development

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## PRESS RELEASE

### County not seeing the influx of short-term rental applications it expected

Chelan County Community Development reminds existing owners of vacation rentals that time is slipping away for any pre-existing short-term rentals to apply to operate legally in the county.

The department opened up the application period for existing short-term rentals on Sept. 27. That application period ends Dec. 31. But as of Oct. 18, the county has received only 40 completed applications from existing operators.

However, the department estimates Chelan County has at least 1,300 businesses in the county operating as short-term rentals.

“We didn’t want a rush of applications on Sept. 27; however, a few dozen applications at this point in the process is concerning,” said Kirsten Ryles, manager of Community Development’s Short-Term Rental Division. “If people have questions about the process, give us a call. We are here to help.”

In July, Chelan County commissioners passed a new code, Chapter 11.88.290, that establishes the operating standards of the county’s short-term rental industry, which has seen rapid growth in most recent years.

Chelan County created an application process for existing short-term rentals to give current operators the opportunity to be grandfathered into the new code and not have to comply with certain requirements, such as density caps and lot size minimums that all new rentals will have to follow. That “grandfathered” rental permit process only runs through Dec. 31.

After Dec. 31, if a full application has not been handed into Community Development, short-term rental operators must apply as a new business, meaning they will be subject to any short-term rental caps and lot size and spacing restrictions established in several areas of Chelan County known to have high numbers of existing rentals.

“If you meet the requirements for an existing short-term rental in Chelan County, we encourage you to visit our website, download the application and forms, and get started on this process,” Ryles said. “If operators put off the process, they may find themselves competing in the new year for limited opportunities with other new businesses.”

For existing short-term rental applicants, a provisional permitting process is being used for the 2021 and 2022 permitting years because of the large volume of applications expected. Upon turning in their applications and paying their fees, applicants are issued a provisional permit, giving Community Development time to review the application and determine if a final permit will be issued, or if an issue needs to be corrected prior to issuance of the final permit. Operating a short-term rental without a valid permit after the cut-off date carries a \$750 a day penalty, which may increase to \$1,500 a day for repeat violations.

The application period for new short-term rentals opens Dec. 1 and runs through July 29, 2022.

Visit Community Development’s Short-Term Rental page for more information: <https://www.co.chelan.wa.us/community-development/pages/short-term-rentals>