



# Evaluating Unauthorized Occupancies

The Department of Lands has recently updated and harmonized its land management standards and criteria for leases for cabins. The Department of Lands will be evaluating Unauthorized Occupancies that were constructed prior to April 1, 2014 against these standards and criteria to determine if a lease may be appropriate. If the occupancy complies with all standards, the owner may be able to apply for a lease. If you are the owner of an unauthorized structure, you are encouraged to contact the regional Department of Lands office or the Land Administration Division, Department of Lands, for further information.

If you have questions, contact the Department of Lands at 1-855-698-5263 (toll-free) or email [NWTCabin@gov.nt.ca](mailto:NWTCabin@gov.nt.ca).

## Part 1: Criteria related to the location of the structures

The first set of criteria address the physical and geographic location of the cabin and any ancillary structures. These criteria establish that the location of the cabin is in an area available and appropriate for leasing, and that the location of the cabin and ancillary structures meets environmental and safety standards. All distances are indicated in meters (m) unless otherwise specified.

### Minimum standards for locations of cabins and ancillary structures:

- |                          |  |
|--------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Public land is under the management authority of the GNWT and issuance of a surface lease is not restricted (for example: Interim Land Withdrawal) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | No known health or safety concerns   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | At least 33m meters from the Ordinary High Water Mark  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | At least 60m from the highway centerline of all Schedule A* and B* highways  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | At least 40m from the highway centerline of any Schedule C* highway  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | At least 100m from any utility corridor  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | At least 450m from any solid waste site or sewage treatment facility   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | At least 30m from the edge of a wetland  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | At least 30m from any known Archaeological or historical sites   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | At least 25m from any existing known trap line   |

\*Schedule A, B and C can be found in the *Highway Designation and Classification Regulations*.



## Minimum standards for locations of cabins and ancillary structures:

- ☐ Away from flood zones or known hazard areas
- ☐ If on an island, the island must be larger than 5 hectares in size
- ☐ If on a peninsula, the peninsula must be greater than 100m wide **and** at least 50m from the tip of the peninsula

\*Schedule A, B and C can be found in the *Highway Designation and Classification Regulations*.

In addition, the Department of Lands works with other GNWT Departments to consider certain factors on a case by case basis. As an example, the Department would work with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources to understand potential impacts on species at risk, and other environmental considerations. Other considerations that are looked at on a case by case basis include: lakes with health advisories; lands with high economic potential; areas of high recreational use; existing trails and portages; and the presence of asserted aboriginal or treaty rights in the area.

## Part 2: Criteria related to what is built on the land

The criteria outlined below summarize the newest standards for what may be constructed on a cabin lease. These standards are being applied to evaluate unauthorized occupancies that were constructed prior to April 1, 2014.

### What can be constructed:

- ☐ One (1) cabin and a maximum of four (4) ancillary structures (sheds, outhouse, etc.)
- ☐ Cabin must be fully enclosed with windows and a door and weatherproof
- ☐ Cabin footprint must be less than 100m<sup>2</sup>
- ☐ Cabin may only be 2 stories and the height cannot exceed 8m
- ☐ Total footprint of all decks must be less than 50m<sup>2</sup>.  
Uncovered decks are not counted towards cabin footprint.
- ☐ Maximum height of an ancillary structure is 5m
- ☐ Total footprint of all ancillary structures combined cannot exceed 45m<sup>2</sup>
- ☐ All buildings must be spaced a minimum of 1.5m apart
- ☐ The exterior of all structures must be painted, stained or otherwise suitably treated

## Questions?

Department of Lands  
Toll-Free: 1-855-698-5263  
NWTCabin@gov.nt.ca

[www.gov.nt.ca/needalease](http://www.gov.nt.ca/needalease)

