Technical Guidance: Fix-a-Potty™

The purpose of this guidance

The Plumbers, Gasfitters, and Drainlayers Board has issued this guidance to assist vehicle inspectors and certification authorities in determining whether a toilet fixed in a vehicle using a Fix-a-Potty™ bracket meets the toilet requirements for certification as self-contained.

Certification authority must determine compliance

Whether a vehicle will meet the requirements for certification as self-contained, including the requirements relating to the toilet, will be a decision for the certification authority based on information gathered during the inspection of the vehicle.

This guidance may assist certification authorities in making that decision but cannot determine in any case whether or not a vehicle meets the requirements.

Toilet requirements

The requirements for toilets in vehicles are set out in the Plumbers, Gasfitters, and Drainlayers Act 2006 (**Act**) and the Plumbers, Gasfitters, and Drainlayers (Self-Contained Vehicles) Regulations 2023 (**Regulations**).

Specific requirements relating to toilets

The specific requirements relating to toilets are:

- the toilet is fixed to the vehicle and usable within the vehicle (**section 87U** of the Act)
- the toilet is fixed and collects human waste securely and hygienically (**regulation 13(b)** of the Regulations)
- the toilet must (**regulation 17** of the Regulations):
  - be fit for purpose*
  - be fixed to the motor vehicle with the base of the toilet rigidly mounted in position and not require removal in order to empty waste
  - drain or flush directly into a suitably designed and fitted blackwater tank or removable blackwater holding tank.

*From 29 August 2024, the toilet must also be installed in accordance with its design and specifications. The purpose of this requirement is to prevent toilets from being inappropriately modified.

General requirements relating to all facilities

Along with all other self-containment facilities in a vehicle, a toilet must (**regulation 14** of the Regulations):

- be of sufficient size, volume, and durability to operate for a minimum of 3 days for the maximum number of occupants of the vehicle
- be constructed from fittings or items of equipment including non-toxic, non-corrodible, and stable materials
- installed in a sound and appropriate manner including being securely fixed or fastened.

Purpose and objective of self-containment requirements

Finally, when considering the self-containment requirements it is important to remember the purpose of the certification regime and the objective of the self-containment requirements:

- *"to manage the adverse effects of freedom camping on the natural environment"* (**section 87A** of the Act)
- *"to protect the natural environment from contamination and pollution from wastewater and solid waste by ensuring that all certified self-contained vehicles provide the prescribed minimum facilities needed to contain the waste that vehicle occupants produce"* (**regulation 12** of the Regulations)

Assessing a toilet using a Fix-a-Potty™ against the requirements

A Fix-a-Potty™ is a metal bracket that attaches to the handle of a 10 litre CHH portable toilet and is screwed to the floor or other flat surface securing the toilet in place.

Specific requirements

The Board considers that a toilet installed in a vehicle using the Fix-a-Potty ™ could satisfy the self-containment requirements relating to toilets.

In particular, the Board considers that the use of this bracket could satisfy (or not impede) the requirements that the toilet:

- is fixed to the vehicle and usable within the vehicle
- collects human waste securely and hygienically
- is fit for purpose
- does not require removal for emptying
- drains or flushes directly into a removable blackwater tank.

General requirements

It will be for vehicle inspectors and certification authorities to determine whether or not a toilet installed using a Fix-a-Potty™ bracket meets the general requirements relating to self-containment facilities.

Vehicle inspector and certification authority must determine in each case

In this guidance, the Board has advised that it considers a toilet installed using a Fix-a-Potty™ *could* meet the self-containment requirements in the Act and Regulations. However, it will be for the vehicle inspector and certification authority to determine whether a toilet installed in this way does meet those requirements in any particular case.