How to vet a mobile RV tech

Eight questions to ask before anyone touches your rig, and the answers that should worry you.

First: have this ready before you call

Half of a bad service call is a bad description. Write these down before you dial anyone. It shortens diagnosis, and a tech who hears an organized owner treats the job differently.

Year, make, model	Of the RV itself, and separately, of the failed appliance if you can reach its data plate.
The actual symptom	“Furnace clicks three times then stops” beats “furnace is broken.” Count things. Time things.
What changed	New battery, recent travel, a storm, a repair last month. Most failures follow an event.
Power source	Shore power, generator, inverter or battery, and whether the problem changes between them.
Where you are	Address or cross-streets, plus whether a service van can physically reach and park by your rig.
Your deadline	“We check out Thursday” changes which tech is even worth calling.

The eight questions

1. Are you insured, and can you send me the certificate?

The single most important question, and the one most people skip. A tech working inside your RV can cause damage far exceeding the job. “I’ve never needed it” is not an answer. A real professional forwards the certificate without friction.

2. What training or certification do you hold?

The main credential in this industry is RVTI certification (RV Technical Institute), which runs in levels. NRVIA certifies inspectors, which is a different job from repair. Certification isn’t everything, some excellent techs are self-taught with decades in, but an evasive answer to a direct question tells you something.

3. Have you worked on this specific system before?

RVs are five trades in one box: 12V and 120V electrical, propane, plumbing, chassis and structure. A tech who is brilliant with inverters may be guessing at your absorption fridge. You want honesty here more than you want a yes.

4. How do you charge, and what is the trip fee?

Get three numbers: the hourly or flat rate, the trip or callout fee, and the minimum. Ask whether the trip fee is waived if you proceed, and whether diagnosis time is billed separately from repair time. Surprises here cause most disputes.

5. What happens if you can’t fix it?

Sometimes the honest answer is “this needs a shop with a lift.” Ask what you owe in that case, and whether they will tell you who can do it. A tech willing to hand off work is usually a tech who won’t improvise on yours.

6. Do you warranty your work, and for how long?

Ask for the term and what it covers, labor only, or parts too. Get it in writing, even if that writing is a text message. A verbal warranty from someone you will never see again is not a warranty.

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7. Are you sourcing the parts, or am I?

Both are fine. What is not fine is discovering on the day that nobody ordered anything. If they are sourcing, ask about markup. If you are, get the exact part number in writing before you buy.

8. Can I see the old part?

Ask before the work, not after. It is a routine request in every other trade, and a tech who bristles at it is telling you how the conversation will go if something else fails next month.

Answers that should worry you

- Cash only, and pressure to pay in full up front.
- No written estimate, “we’ll settle up at the end.”
- No business name, no invoice, no paper trail of any kind.
- A diagnosis over the phone, sight unseen, with a part already ordered.
- Irritation at being asked about insurance or certification.
- A quote dramatically below every other quote. Someone absorbs that difference, and it will be you.
- Pressure to decide immediately because they are “only in the area today.”

What a fair written estimate contains

Before work starts you should have something in writing, email or text is fine, naming six things: the diagnosis, the parts with numbers, the labor estimate, the trip fee, the warranty term, and what happens if the diagnosis turns out to be wrong once they are inside. If a tech won’t put those six things in a text message, that is your answer.

If it goes wrong

Ask for the work to be made right first, in writing, with a deadline. Keep every message. Photograph the work before and after. If the tech is certified, their certifying body has a complaints process. And if you paid by card, your chargeback window is shorter than you think, check the date before you spend weeks negotiating.

Don’t want to make these calls yourself?

833-FIXED-RV is a free 24/7 hotline. Tell us what’s wrong and where you are, and we find a vetted local shop or mobile tech and hand off the details. Free for RV owners, you pay only the shop, for the actual work.

833-FIXED-RV (833-349-3378) · 833fixedrv.com

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