

# Special events and tents

## Fire and life safety requirements

### Section A - Temporary Use Occupancies or Operations Fire and Life Safety Requirements

In order to protect life and property, prevent fires and comply with local fire codes, the following is imposed.

Permits are required for the following activities:

1. To operate a place of assembly: An assembly is the gathering together of persons for such purposes as civic, social or religious functions, recreation, food or drink consumption or awaiting transportation.
2. To operate a carnival or fair.
3. To operate exhibits and trade shows.
4. To erect and/ or operate a tent or temporary membrane structure: Tents over 400 square feet. See exceptions in IFC Section 2403.2.
5. To use open flame devices: Use of open flame devices, i.e., torches, candles, glass blowing, forges, stoves, barbecues, etc; will require approval of the Fire Marshal.

#### Additional requirements

Fire Marshal approval is required for all activities listed.

**Commercial food preparation:** The commercial preparation of food, either in temporary or permanent locations, shall be conducted in accordance with the International Mechanical Code (IMC) and the International Fire Code (IFC).

Ventilating hood and duct systems will be IMC Type I or Type II, depending on the food products being prepared. See Appendix C for cooking conducted inside of tents, canopies or temporary membrane structures. IFC Sections 610 and 2404.15

Demonstration of commercial cooking is limited to using one heat source in a 10 foot by 10 foot area. Appliances shall be listed for intended use. Solid or gel type fuel (Sterno) shall be limited based on the recommended manufacturer's design for the warming fixture. If the manufacturer's paperwork is not available, then the fire marshal shall make the determination on the amount of (Sterno) fuel that can be used.

#### Flammable liquids / liquified

**petroleum gas:** Gasoline or liquefied petroleum gas (propane) portable containers will not be allowed inside any structure, tent, canopy or temporary membrane structure. Portable propane containers with a capacity of 500 gallons or less must be located outside of the tent, canopy or membrane structure and at least five (5) feet from ignition sources, and must be adequately protected to prevent tampering, damage by vehicles or other hazards. Safety release valves shall be pointed away from the tent, canopy or membrane structure. Outside use and storage shall be a minimum of 20 feet from a building and approved by the Fire Marshal. IFC Sections 102.8, 2404.16 and 3804.3

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**Electrical heaters:** Portable electrical heaters are not permitted in a building unless approved by the Fire Marshal and the owner of said building or his/her representative. IFC Section 305.1

**Smoking prohibited:** The Fire Marshal's Office shall enforce a no smoking policy in those areas specifically posted by the Fire Marshal or his/her designee. IFC Section 310

**Barbecues:** Barbecues, portable or pit require approval of the Fire Marshal or his/her designee.

**Indoor locations:** Barbecue pits used for commercial cooking operations in buildings shall be constructed as commercial food heat-processing equipment in accordance with the International Mechanical Code.

Used barbecue coal ash shall be put into an approved container, labeled "**hot barbecue coals only**" and stored in an approved location.

**Outdoor locations:** Barbecue pits or equipment in outdoor locations shall be constructed of concrete or approved non-combustible materials.

Barbecues shall not be located within 10 feet of combustible walls, roofs or other combustible material.

Outdoor cooking that produces sparks or grease-laden vapors shall not be performed within 20 feet from a tent or membrane structure. IFC Section 2404.15.6

At least one, 2-A 20 BC fire extinguisher shall be available within 20 feet of the barbecue. Extinguisher shall not be located inside another temporary stand. Used barbecue coal ash shall be put into an approved container, labeled "**hot barbecue coals only**" and stored in an approved location.

Barbecues shall not be installed or placed inside a structure unless permitted by the Fire Marshal or his/her designee.

**Fire lanes and hydrants:** Fire lanes shall be maintained to a minimum unobstructed width of 20 feet. Overhangs or other like material shall not obstruct the vertical clearance of a fire lane less than a minimum of 13 feet 6 inches. Posts, fences, vehicles, growth, trash, storage and other materials or objects shall not be placed or kept near fire hydrants, fire department inlet connections or fire protection system control valves in a manner that would prevent such equipment or fire hydrants from being immediately discernible. A minimum of 3 feet of clearance shall be maintained around the circumference of all hydrants. IFC Sections 503 and 508

**Obstruction of fire safety systems:** Exit doors, aisles, exit ways, exit lights, stairways, hose cabinets, fire extinguishers, fire hydrants or any other fire suppression appliances shall not be concealed or obstructed by any decorative material, displays, fixtures, storage, structures or demonstration equipment. IFC Sections 508.5.4 and 1003.6

**Dumpsters:** Commercial dumpsters and containers with an individual capacity of 1.5 cubic yards or greater shall not be stored or placed within five feet of combustible walls, openings or combustible roof eave lines without specific approval of the Fire Marshal or his/her designee. IFC Section 304.3.3

**Tents and temporary membrane structures:** Tents and temporary membrane structures shall comply with IFC Section 24 and Appendix C of these requirements.

Temporary, site-constructed, wood structures, shall comply with standards listed in Section C.

**Note:** Open flame devices, electric stoves, hot plates, and any other form of equipment used for the preparation of food or any other purpose shall not be used within the confines of a tent or temporary membrane structure, unless the tent conforms to the definition of a “cooking tent”. See definition.

**Exception:** This requirement may be waived if "fire watch" personnel are on scene, all required setbacks are available and the tent or temporary membrane structure is not open to the public. This exception shall be approved on a case by case basis by the Fire Marshal or his/her designee.

**Compressed gas cylinders:** Compressed gas cylinders, in service or in storage, shall be adequately secured (chained) to prevent falling or being knocked over. Ropes, cords, rubber and other combustible material will not be approved for this purpose.

Compressed gas container, cylinder or tank protective caps or collars shall be in place except when the containers, cylinders or tanks are in use or are being serviced or filled. IFC Sections 3003.3.3, 3003.4.1 and 3003.4.2

**Fire extinguisher required:**

An approved, minimum 2A-10 BC rated fire extinguisher, or larger, shall be available at each temporary stand. The fire marshal may waive this requirement if the temporary stand is less than 200 square feet and no heating, cooking, electrical or other possible ignition source is located within the temporary stand.

**Combustible waste:** Combustible waste matter shall not be allowed to accumulate in or near any stand. IFC Section 304.1

**Equipment confined:** All equipment, mechanical or otherwise, shall be installed, maintained and secured within the confines

of the stand, i.e., refrigerators, freezers, cash registers, etc.

**Liquid and gas fueled vehicles and equipment:** Display of liquid and gas fueled vehicles and equipment inside an assembly occupancy shall be in accordance with IFC Section 314.4 and shall meet the following requirements:

1. Batteries shall be disconnected with the ends taped in an approved manner.
2. Vehicles or equipment shall not be fueled or defueled within any building.
3. Fuel tanks shall not be more than 1/4 full nor exceed 5 gals, whichever is less, and fuel systems shall be inspected for leaks.
4. Fuel tanks shall be locked or sealed to prevent escape of vapors.
5. The location of vehicles or equipment shall not obstruct or block exits.

**Violations of any of the above requirements or any other requirements of the International Fire Code shall be corrected immediately.**

## **Section B - Electrical Equipment and Wiring**

**Use of temporary wiring:** Special Events - Temporary wiring for electrical power and lighting installations is allowed for a period not to exceed 90 days for holiday decorative lighting, carnivals, and similar purposes.

**Abatement of electrical hazards:** Electrical wiring, devices, appliances, and other equipment which are modified or damaged and constitute an electrical shock or fire hazard shall not be used.

**Electrical motors:** Electrical motors shall be maintained in a manner free from accumulation of oil, dirt, waste and other

debris which will interfere with required motor ventilation or create a fire hazard.

**Extension cords:** Extension cords shall not be used as a substitute for permanent wiring.

Minimum 14 gauge extension cords shall be used to extend electrical service provided:

1. Extension cord shall only be used with portable appliances while such appliances are in immediate use.
2. Extension cords shall be plugged directly into an electrical outlet and shall, except for approved multi-plug extension cords, serve only **one** portable appliance.
3. The ampacity of the extension cords shall not be less than the rated capacity of the portable appliance supplied by the cord.
4. Extension cords shall be maintained in good condition without splices, deterioration or damage.
5. The extension cords shall be grounded when servicing grounded portable appliances.
6. Extension cords and flexible cords shall not be affixed to structures, extend through walls, ceilings, floors, under doors or floor coverings, or be subject to environmental or physical damage.

**Power taps:**

1. Power taps shall be of the polarized or grounded types and shall be listed.
2. The power taps may be directly connected to permanently installed receptacles, or extended by the use of one 50' extension cord that is rated at a minimum of 14 gauge.
3. Power tap cords shall not extend through walls, ceilings, floors, under doors or floor coverings, or be subject to environmental or physical damage.

**Access to switchboards and panelboards:** A clear and unobstructed means of access with a minimum width of

30 inches and a minimum height of 78 inches shall be maintained from the operating face of the switchboard or panel board to an aisle or corridor.

Also, remember the following parameters:

1. Extension cords that are less than 14 gauge in size will not be allowed to extend electrical service.
2. Extension cords shall supply power to one plug only.
3. Approved multi-plug adapters/power taps with a testing laboratory's label stamped on them, or attached to them, are allowed. Adapters must have over current protection that will activate and shut off the current if the adapter is overloaded.

If you are unable to reach the outlet with the plug connected to the appliance, you will require an extension cord of 14 gauge or larger. Larger would be 10 or 12 gauge.

**Violations of any of the above requirements or any other requirements of the International Fire Code, shall be corrected immediately.**

**Section C - Tents and temporary membrane structures**

**Tent:** A structure, enclosure or shelter, with or without sidewalls or drops, constructed of fabric or pliable material supported by any manner except by air or the contents it protects.

Plastic material will not be allowed for roof cover or side enclosure cover unless it is certified as being flame retardant and will not melt and drip under fire conditions. IFC Section 2402.1

**Cooking tents:** Tents where cooking is performed shall be separated from other tents or membrane structures by a

minimum of 20 feet and will not be open to the public. IFC Section 2404.15.5

Based upon the intended cooking medium, an approved 40BC and/or K Class rated fire extinguisher shall be provided to protect all cooking and food processing. IFC Section 906

**Temporary membrane structure:**

Any air-inflated, air supported, cable, or frame-covered structure as defined by the IBC, which is erected for less than 180 days and not otherwise defined as a tent.

Tents and temporary membrane structures of any size shall comply with the following standards as well as all other requirements that apply:

Exits from tents and temporary membrane structures shall comply with IFC Section 2403.12

Cooking and heating equipment shall not be located within 10 feet of exits or combustible materials. IFC Section 2404.15.3

**Flame retardant treatment and standards:**

The sidewalls, drops and tops of all tents and temporary membrane structures and their floor coverings, bunting, combustible decorations or effects, including hay or wood chips shall be of flame resistant material or shall be treated with a fire retardant in an approved manner.

An approved certification shall be retained on the premises indicating the following:

1. Identification of tent or temporary membrane structure, size, and fabric type.
2. Date tent or temporary membrane structure and other flammable materials were last treated with flame retardant solution.

3. Trade name and type of solution utilized in flame-retardant treatment.
4. Name of persons and firm treating materials.
5. Name and address of tent or temporary membrane structure.  
IFC Section 2404.4

In the event the flame-retardant application is performed by other than a "Certified" commercial applicator, a *Flame Retardant Verification Statement* shall be completed prior to the site inspection.

Tents and membrane structures shall have a permanently affixed label bearing the identification of size and fabric or material type. IFC Section 2404.3

**General:**

1. No temporary stand shall be located within ten (10) feet of any permanent building or within fifty (50) feet of any gasoline pump, oil storage tank, or premises where flammable liquids are kept.
2. Open flame or other devices emitting flame, fire or heat or any flammable or combustible liquids, gas, charcoal or other cooking device or any other unapproved devices shall not be permitted inside or located within 20 feet of the tent or membrane structures while open to the public unless approved by the Fire Marshal.
3. Unless otherwise allowed by the Fire Marshal, all cooking appliances which produce grease laden vapors shall have approved ventilating hood and duct systems and shall be protected by an approved automatic fire extinguishing system. Exception: Cooking appliances in the open air with no covering or roof.
4. Smoking shall not be permitted in temporary structures and approved "No Smoking" signs shall be conspicuously posted.

**Site-built, wood structures:**

1. When a temporary stand is to be occupied and utilized for the purpose of food preparation where heat of any kind is required, the construction of the stand shall meet the minimum requirements listed below and in addition, other requirements of the IFC when required by the Fire Marshal.
2. No such stand shall be located within ten (10) feet of any permanent building or within fifty (50) feet of any gasoline pump, oil storage tank, or premises where flammable liquids are kept.
3. No foundation is required for less than 400 square feet.

**Floor framing:**

Joist Size	Spacing	Maximum Span
2 x 6	24"	8'6"
	16"	9'11"
2 x 8	24"	11'3"
	16"	13'1"

- 1/2" plywood sub-floor minimum for 16" joist spacing
- 3/4" plywood minimum for 24" joist spacing

**Wall framing:**

- 2 x 4 studs minimum
- 3/8" plywood minimum for stud spacing of 16"
- 1/2" plywood minimum for stud spacing of 24"
- Openings in walls to be supported with appropriately sized headers.

**Roof/ceiling framing:**

- 2 x 6 rafters at 24" spacing will span 11'5"
- 2 x 6 rafters at 16" spacing will span 13'11"
- 3/8" plywood may be used with rafters spaced at 16"
- 1/2" plywood may be used with rafters spaced at 24"

Roofing materials per code based on roof pitch.

Awnings, overhangs and any other appurtenances shall be at least eight (8) feet above any public walkway or sidewalk.

Roof coverings of fabric, canvas, or other material shall be certified as being flame retardant. This certification shall be in writing from the manufacturer or other recognized agency.

**Trailers, motorhomes, other vehicles and pre-built structures that can be transported to a site and used as a temporary stand:**

**General:** No such trailers, motor-homes, other vehicles and other pre-built structures shall be located within ten (10) feet of any permanent building and shall not be erected or installed within fifty (50) feet of any gasoline pump, oil storage tank, or premises where flammable liquids are kept.

They shall meet all requirements of these rules and regulations including required licenses, permits, and Sections A, B, and C.

**Violations of any of the above requirements or any other requirements of the International Fire Code shall be corrected immediately.**