



TENTS, CANOPIES, & TEMPORARY MEMBRANE STRUCTURES FIRE PERMIT GUIDELINES

References: California Fire Code (CFC) Chapter 31 (Current edition), & California Code of Regulations, Title 19

SCOPE

- ❖ Tents and membrane structures having an area in excess of 400 sq. ft. shall not be erected, operated or maintained for any purpose without first obtaining a permit and approval from the Salinas Fire Department.

Exceptions:

1. Tents used exclusively for recreational camping purposes.
2. Tents open on all sides which comply with all of the following:
 - 2.1. Individual tents having a maximum size of 700 sq. ft.
 - 2.2. The aggregate area of multiple tents placed side by side without a fire break clearance of 12 ft., not exceeding 700 sq. ft. total.
 - 2.3. A minimum clearance of 12 ft. to all structures and other tents.

FIRE PERMIT AND USE PERIOD

- ❖ A Fire permit shall be required as set forth in CFC. Temporary tents & membrane structures shall not be erected for a period of more than 180 days within a 12-month period on a single premise.

INSPECTIONS

- ❖ The tent or membrane structure system shall be inspected at regular intervals, but not less than two times per permit use period, by the permittee, owner or agent to determine that the installation is maintained in accordance with this chapter.

Exception: Permit use periods of less than 30 days.

ACCESS, LOCATION, AND PARKING

- ❖ Fire Department access road minimum 20ft. wide, and an unobstructed vertical clearance of 13ft., 6in.
- ❖ Tents or membrane structures shall not be located within 20 ft. of lot lines, buildings, other tents or membrane structures, parked vehicles or internal combustion engines. For the purpose of determining required distances, support ropes and guy wires shall be considered as part of the temporary membrane structure or tent.

Exceptions:

1. Separation distance between membrane structures and tents not used for cooking is not required when the aggregate floor area does not exceed 15,000 sq. ft.
2. Membrane structures or tents need not be separated from buildings when all of the following conditions are met:
 - 2.1. The aggregate floor area of the membrane structure/tent shall not exceed 10,000 sq. ft.
 - 2.2. The aggregate floor area of the building and membrane structure or tent shall not exceed the allowable floor area including increases as indicated in the California Building Code.

TENTS AND CANOPIES FIRE PERMIT GUIDELINES

2.3. Required means of egress are provided for both the building and the membrane structure or tent including travel distances.

3. When approved by the enforcing agency, tents may be located in or on permanent buildings provided such use does not constitute an undue hazard.

- ❖ **Parking of Vehicles.** Vehicles necessary to the operation of the establishment shall be parked at least 20 ft. from any tent. No other vehicle shall be parked less than 100 ft. from any tent except vehicles parked on a public street shall park at least 20 ft. from any tent.

STRUCTURAL STABILITY

- ❖ Anchorage required. Tents or membrane structures and their appurtenances shall be adequately roped, braced and anchored to withstand the elements of weather and prevent against collapsing. Documentation of structural stability shall be furnished to the fire code official on request.

FLAME RETARDANT TREATMENTS

- ❖ Structure shall be composed of certified flame resistant material or treated with retardant.
- ❖ Floor coverings and decorative material shall be labeled fire resistant or treated with approved retardant.

PORTABLE FIRE EXTINGUISHER

- ❖ 2-A: 10-BC placed with a maximum travel distance of 75ft.
- ❖ Class K rated extinguishers placed for deep fryers.

MAXIMUM OCCUPANT LOAD (Assembly) CFC 1004.9

- ❖ Any occupant load over 50 shall be posted near the main exit.

SEATING ARRANGEMENTS (Assembly)

- ❖ Prior to setup a floor plan showing all seating arrangements shall be provided for Fire Department review and approval.
- ❖ Minimum 12 in. horizontal clearance between rows, measured from the back of the row ahead and front edge of seat behind.
- ❖ When more than 300 chairs, they shall be bonded together in groups of not less than three.
Exception: Where tables are provided for dining purposes.

MEANS OF EGRESS (Assembly)

- ❖ All points in structure shall be 100 ft. or less from any exit.
- ❖ Exit openings shall remain open unless covered by flame resistant curtain, provided:
 - Curtain shall be free sliding the entire width of the opening
 - Color of the curtain shall contrast with the color of the tent
 - Door shall swing in the direction of exit travel
- ❖ Minimum clear aisle width shall be 36 in., and 44 in. with seating, tables, or displays on either side.
- ❖ Guywires and ropes shall not cross the means of egress at a height of less than 8 ft.
- ❖ Emergency lighting shall be provided with approved backup power.
- ❖ Exit signs required to be self-luminous (occupant load less than 300) or internally illuminated if occupant load is more than 300 persons and provided with approved back up power.

TENTS AND CANOPIES FIRE PERMIT GUIDELINES

SOURCES OF IGNITION

- ❖ Where hay, straw or other combustible materials are stored or used “NO SMOKING” signs shall be conspicuously posted.
- ❖ Fireworks, open flames and other hot objects shall not be used unless approved by the Fire Department.

INTERIOR COOKING AND HEATING

- ❖ **Open or exposed flame:** 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 ft. of the tent or membrane structures while open to the public unless approved by the fire code official.
- ❖ Heating or cooking equipment, tanks, piping, hoses, fittings, valves, tubing and other related components shall be installed as specified in the California Mechanical Code and shall be approved by the fire code official.
- ❖ Shall be vented to the outside by approved means.
- ❖ Vents and flues shall be no less than 12 in. from the structure.
- ❖ Solid fuel burning equipment shall be equipped with spark arrestor consisting of wire mesh with openings not exceeding ¼ inch.
- ❖ Cooking and heating equipment shall have minimum 10-ft. clearance from exits and other combustibles.
- ❖ LP containers shall be located outside.
Exception: For demonstration and public exhibition, not to exceed 12-pound water capacity.
- ❖ Operations such as warming of foods, cooking demonstrations and similar operations that use solid flammables, butane or other similar devices which do not pose an ignition hazard, shall be approved.
- ❖ Tents with sidewalks or drops where cooking is performed shall be separated from other tents or membrane structures by a minimum of 20 ft.
- ❖ Outdoor cooking that produces sparks or grease-laden vapors shall not be performed within 20 ft. of a tent or membrane structure.
- ❖ LP container shall be protected from tampering, vehicle damage.
- ❖ Electrical cooking and heating equipment shall comply with the California Electrical Code.

FLAMMABLE AND COMBUSTIBLE LIQUIDS

- ❖ Flammable-liquid fueled equipment shall not be used.
- ❖ Flammable and combustible liquids shall be stored outside at least 50 feet from structure in accordance with Chapter 34 of the CFC.
- ❖ Refueling shall take place at least 20 ft. from structure.

MOTOR VEHICLES

- ❖ Shall not be stored or parked in structure.
Exception: Display of vehicles inside of structure shall be in accordance with Chapter 314.4 of the CFC.

GENERATORS

- ❖ Generators shall be at least 20 ft. from structure and be isolated from public contact with fencing, or other approved enclosure.

TENTS AND CANOPIES FIRE PERMIT GUIDELINES

STANDBY PERSONNEL

- ❖ When, in the opinion of the fire code official, it is essential for public safety in a tent or membrane structure used as a place of assembly or any other use where people congregate, because of the number of persons, or the nature of the performance, exhibition, display, contest or activity, the owner, agent or lessee shall employ one or more qualified persons, as required and approved, to remain on duty during the times such places are open to the public, or when such activity is being conducted.

Duties: Before each performance or the start of such activity, standby personnel shall keep diligent watch for fires during the time such place is open to the public or such activity is being conducted and take prompt measures for extinguishment of fires that occur and assist in the evacuation of the public from the structure

- ❖ The operators of any tent used as a place of assemblage shall provide at least one qualified fire safety person in every tent having a capacity of 500 persons and one additional qualified person for each 1,000 additional persons or fraction thereof. Such persons shall be on duty in the tent at all times when the tent is open to the public. They shall be proficient in the handling of fire extinguishers and equipment and shall be familiar with the fire and panic safety regulations. The individual designated under this section shall meet the approval of the fire authority having jurisdiction.

Exception: The enforcing authority may waive or modify the provisions of this section if, in his opinion, public safety will not be jeopardized.

CROWD MANAGERS

- ❖ Trained crowd managers shall be provided for facilities or events where more than 1,000 persons congregate. The minimum number of crowd managers shall be established at a ratio of one crowd manager to every 250 persons. Where approved by the fire code official, the ratio of crowd managers shall be permitted to be reduced where the facility is equipped throughout with an approved automatic sprinkler system or based upon the nature of the event. **Provide the Fire Department with proof of Crowd Manager Training.**

HOUSKEEPING

- ❖ Combustible vegetation shall be removed from the area occupied by the structure and areas within 30 ft. of the structure.
- ❖ Sawdust, shavings or other combustible material used on the floor or ground shall be made flame resistant or when approved by the fire code official shall be kept adequately damp when tent is occupied.
- ❖ Untreated Hay, straw, and other combustibles shall not be allowed inside or within 30 ft. of the structure.
- ❖ All floor surfaces in and within 30 ft. of the structure shall be kept clear of combustible waste.
- ❖ Such waste shall be stored in approved containers.

Any condition that presents a fire hazard, would contribute to the rapid spread of fire, interfere with the rapid exit of persons from the tents, or interfere with or delay the extinguishment of a fire, shall be immediately corrected as ordered by the enforcing authority.