



**Caldwell Fire Department
Fire Prevention Division**

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TENTS, TEMPORARY SPECIAL EVENT STRUCTURES AND OTHER MEMBRANE STRUCTURES

Scope

Tents, temporary special event structures and membrane structures shall comply with the requirements outlined below and Chapter 31 of the 2018 International Fire Code (IFC).

Temporary membrane structures and tents shall be used for a period of not more than 180 days within any 12-month period at a single facility unless approved by the local building code official.

Approval Required

Tents and membrane structures having an area in excess of 400 square feet shall not be erected, operated or maintained for any purpose without first obtaining approval from the fire code official or designee.

Exceptions:

- Tents used exclusively for recreational purposes
- Tents open on all sides that comply with all of the following
 - Individual tents having a maximum size of 700 square feet
 - An aggregate area of multiple tents placed side by side without a fire break clearance of 12 feet, not exceeding 700 square feet total
 - A minimum of 12 feet clearance to all structures and other tents.

Procedures

A fire safety review is required to ensure public safety in a place of assembly, or any other place where people congregate, including but not limited to; amusement buildings, carnivals and fairs, exhibits and trade shows, open burning, flames and torches, candles, places of assembly, temporary membranes structures and tents, pyrotechnics and special effects, live audiences and any event with public attendance over 250.

A written plan must be submitted to the fire code official 30 days prior to each event. Written submittal requirements will be in accordance with International Code. A field inspection verifying compliance of fire and life safety conditions must be conducted prior to public occupancy of the event. If modifications or additions to the event areas are made, an updated fire review and inspection must be completed.

The following written submittals are required:

- Contact information for the Management Team: crowd managers, fire watch and emergency medical staff. Emergency support staff shall include a reasonable and prudent number of trained and experienced emergency medical staff, with the equipment and ability to manage simultaneous medical incidents.
- Written Fire Safety and Evacuation Plans
- Overall site plan showing public roadway access, fire access, and general layout of event.
- Detailed site plan of event (floor plans)

Site Plans shall include the following:

- An accurate scale or dimensioned site diagram indicating distances from any tents or temporary structures, location of planned event in proximity to permanent buildings, access drives, emergency access roads, parking areas, other tents or canopies, cooking and heating appliances and equipment, propane tanks, flammable liquids, pyrotechnic activities, stage locations, food or beverage service, and property lines, and roadways.
- Locations of management team, crowd managers, and first aid stations and/or roaming EMT.
- A statement which identifies the intended use of all structures and the dates for which the permit is required.
- Flame retardant certificate(s) for tent/canopy material.
- Dimensions for all tents, canopies and membrane structures.

Upon in person inspection, additional hazards may become apparent and together, we will create a plan to mitigate the hazard. If you have any questions prior to the event contact Fire Prevention at 208.649.1266.

Requirements:

- A copy of this inspection shall be posted in the tent and signed by the vendor. By signing this form, the vendor agrees to comply with these regulations. (IFC 3103.7.1)
- Tents or membrane structures shall not be located within 20 feet 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.
- (IFC 3103.8.2) Membrane structures having an area of 15,000 square feet or more shall be located not less than 50 feet from any other tent or structure as measured from the sidewall of the tent or membrane structure unless joined together by a corridor. (IFC 3103.8.3)
- Tents or membrane structures and their appurtenances shall be adequately roped, braced and anchored to withstand the elements of weather and prevent collapsing. Documentation of structural stability shall be furnished to the fire code official on request. (IFC 3103.9)
- Exits shall be spaced at approximately equal intervals around the perimeter of the tent or membrane structure, and shall be located such that all points are 100 feet or less from an exit. (IFC 3103.12.1)
- Tents, or membrane structures or a usable portion thereof shall have at least one exit and not less than the number of exits required by Table 3103.12.2. The total width of means of egress in inches shall not be less than the total occupant load served by a means of egress multiplied by 0.2 inches per person. (IFC 3103.12.2)
- Exit openings from tents shall remain open unless covered by a flame-resistant curtain. The curtain shall comply with the following requirements: 1. Curtains shall be free sliding on a metal support. The support shall be a minimum of 80 inches above the floor level at the exit. The curtains shall be so arranged that, when open, no part of the curtain obstructs the exit. 2. Curtains shall be of a color, or colors, that contrasts with the color of the tent. (IFC 3103.12.3)
- Exit doors (if any) shall swing in the direction of exit travel. (IFC 3103.12.4)
- Exits shall be clearly marked. Exit signs shall be installed at required exit doorways and where otherwise necessary to indicate clearly the direction of egress when the exit serves an occupant load of 50 or more. (IFC 3103.12.6)
- Exit signs shall be either listed and labeled in accordance with UL 924 as the internally illuminated type (IFC 3103.12.6.1)
- Means of egress shall be illuminated with light having an intensity of not less than 1 footcandle (11 lux) at floor level while the structure is occupied. Fixtures required for means of egress illumination shall be supplied from a separate circuit or source of power. (IFC 3103.12.7)

- The required width of exits, aisles and passageways shall be maintained at all times to a public way. Guy wires, guy ropes and other support members shall not cross a means of egress at a height of less than 8 feet. The surface of means of egress shall be maintained in an approved manner. (IFC 3103.12.8)
- The sidewalls, drops and tops of tents and canopies shall be of flame resistant material or treated with a flame retardant in an approved manner. A NFPA 701, CPAI-84 or the State of California Fire tag or other acceptable listing agency shall be permanently fixed to the structure. (IFC 3104.2)
- Hay, straw, shavings or similar combustible materials shall not be located within any tent or membrane structure containing an assembly occupancy, except the materials necessary for the daily feeding and care of animals. Sawdust and shavings utilized for a public performance or exhibit shall not be prohibited provided the sawdust and shavings are kept damp. Combustible materials shall not be permitted under stands or seats at any time. (IFC 3107.2)
- Smoking shall not be permitted in tents or membrane structures. Approved "No Smoking" signs shall be conspicuously posted (IFC 3106.4.5)
- 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 code official. (IFC3107.4)
- Fireworks shall not be used within 100 feet of tents or membrane structures. (IFC 3107.5)
- A portable fire extinguisher shall be provided. The minimum size for the extinguisher is 2A 10B: C (5 lbs.). Extinguishers shall have a current inspection tag. (IFC 3105.9, 3106.9.9, 3107.9)
- Fire extinguishers shall be attached in an accessible and visible location, between 3 and 5 feet above the ground. (NFPA 10) Cooking and heating equipment shall not be located within 10 feet of exits or combustible materials. (IFC 3107.12.3.1)
- 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. (IFC 3107.12.4)
- Cooking Tents: Tents with sidewalls or drops where cooking is performed shall be separated from other tents or membrane structures by a minimum of 20 feet (IFC 3107.12.5)
- Cooking appliances that produce sparks or grease-laden vapors or flying embers (firebrands) shall not be used within 20 feet of a tent or temporary structure. (IFC3106.5.1)
- LP-gas containers shall be located outside in accordance with Table 6104.3. Safety release valves shall be pointed away from the tent or membrane structure (IFC 3107.13.2)

- Portable LP-gas containers with a capacity of 500 gallons or less shall have a minimum separation between the container and structure not less than 10 feet. (IFC Chapter 61 Table 6109.12)
- Portable LP-gas containers with a capacity of more than 500 gallons shall have a minimum separation between the container and structures not less than 25 feet (IFC Chapter 61 Table 6109.12)
- Portable LP-gas containers, piping, valves and fittings, which are located outside and are being used to fuel equipment inside a tent or membrane structure shall be adequately protected to prevent tampering, damage by vehicles or other hazards and shall be located in an approved location. Portable LP-gas containers shall be securely fastened in place to prevent unauthorized movement. (IFC 3107.13.3)
- Flammable-liquid-fueled equipment shall not be used or stored in tents or membrane structures. (IFC 3107.14.1)
- Flammable and combustible liquids shall be stored outside in an approved manner not less than 50 feet from tents or membrane structures. (IFC 3107.14.2)
- Generators shall be installed not less than 10 feet from combustible materials, and shall be isolated from the public by physical guard, fence or enclosure installed not less than 3 feet away from the internal combustion power source. (IFC 3106.6.2)
- Combustible vegetation that could create a fire hazard shall be removed from the area occupied by a tent or membrane structure, and from areas within 30 feet of such structures. (IFC 3107.18)
- The floor surface inside tents or membrane structures and the grounds outside and within a 30-foot perimeter shall be kept free of combustible waste and other combustible materials that could create a fire hazard. Such waste shall be stored in approved containers and removed from the premises at least once a day during the period the structure is occupied by the public. (IFC 3107.19)