



Guide to TENTS and CANOPIES (Temporary Membrane Structures)

PERMIT REQUIREMENTS

Tents and membrane structures having an area in excess of 200 square feet and canopies in excess of 400 square feet shall not be erected, operated or maintained for any purpose without first obtaining a permit and approval from the City of Chula Vista Fire Department. Permit applications and plans must be submitted to the Fire Department at least 10 business days prior to the event or special use. The person responsible for the parcel and / or event, in which the tent or membrane structure will be used, shall be responsible for requesting the fire permit and inspection(s).

The structures, as mentioned herein, shall be in accordance with the California Code of Regulations Title 19: State Fire Marshal Regulations; and the 2007 California Fire Code: Chapter 24 Tents, Canopies and Other Membrane Structures; and the 2007 California Building Code: Chapter 31 Special Construction Section 3102 Membrane Structures, Section 3103 Temporary Structures, Section 3105 Awnings and Canopies, and Chapter 31E Tents and Membrane Structures. All such structures require an inspection prior to occupancy.

A permit fee shall be paid to the Chula Vista Fire Department for each permitable tent, canopy or other membrane structure. Permit fee amounts are available on the City's website at www.chulavistaca.gov under the Fire Department's page. This is an operational permit only. If applicable, separate construction, special event permit fees and / or overtime fees will be totaled and collected when the Fire Department review is complete. Membrane structures greater than 5,000 square feet will require the Building Department's approval.

USE PERIOD

Temporary tents, air-supported, air-inflated or tensioned membrane structures and canopies shall not be erected for a period of more than 180 days within a 12-month period on a single premise.

STRUCTURAL STABILITY

Tents, canopies 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 as part of the permit submittal.





PORTABLE FIRE EXTINGUISHERS

Portable fire extinguishers shall be provided in accordance with the following: 200 to 500 sq. ft: a minimum of one 2-A:10B:C rated fire extinguisher; 501 to 1000 sq. ft: a minimum of two 2-A:10B:C rated fire extinguishers; each additional 2000 square feet, or fraction thereof, shall require at least one 2-A:10-B:C rated fire extinguisher. Travel distance to any extinguisher shall not exceed 50 feet.

Kitchen area, generator, transformer or location with flammable or combustible liquids shall be provided with a fire extinguisher of an approved type suitable to the hazard.

FLAME-RETARDANT TREATMENTS

Before a permit is granted, the owner or agent shall file with the fire code official a certificate executed by an approved testing laboratory certifying that the tents; canopies and membrane structures and their appurtenances; sidewalls, drops and tarpaulins; floor coverings, bunting and combustible decorative materials and effects, including sawdust when used on floors or passageways, shall be composed of material meeting the flame propagation performance criteria of NFPA 701 or shall be treated with a flame retardant in an approved manner and meet the flame propagation performance criteria of NFPA 701, and that such flame propagation performance criteria are effective for the period specified by the permit.

Membrane structures, tents or canopies shall have a permanently affixed label bearing the identification of size and fabric or material type.

An affidavit or affirmation shall be submitted to the fire code official and a copy retained on the premises on which the tent or air-supported structure is located. The affidavit shall attest to the following information relative to the flame propagation performance criteria of the fabric:

1. **Names and address of the owners of the tent, canopy or air-supported structure.**
2. **Date the fabric was last treated with flame-retardant solution.**
3. **Trade name or kind of chemical used in treatment.**

4. **Name of person or firm treating the material.**

5. **Agency name and standard by which the fabric was tested.**

ACCESS, LOCATION AND PARKING

Fire apparatus access shall be provided with an unobstructed width of not less than 20 feet and an unobstructed vertical clearance of 13 feet, 6 inches.

Tents, canopies or membrane structures shall not be located within 20 feet of lot / property lines, buildings, other tents, canopies 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, tent or canopy.

SOURCES OF IGNITION

Smoking shall not be permitted in tents, canopies or membrane structures. Approved "No Smoking" signs shall be conspicuously posted, as per the fire code official.

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, canopy or membrane structures while open to the public unless approved by the fire code official.



Fireworks shall not be used within 100 feet of tents, canopies or membrane structures.

COOKING AND HEATING

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.

EXCEPTION: 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.

All gas-, solid- or liquid-fuel-fired comfort heating equipment shall be vented to the outside air by means of a flue or vent approved for use with the type of equipment used and in such a manner that no portion of the tent is within 12 inches (305 mm) of the flue or vent. Vents for solid-fuel-fired heating equipment shall be equipped with spark arresters having openings no larger than 1/4-inch (6.4 mm) wire mesh.



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

Tents where cooking is performed shall be separated from other tents, canopies or membrane structures by a minimum of 20 feet.

Outdoor cooking that produces sparks or grease-laden vapors shall not be performed within 20 feet of a tent, canopy or membrane structure.

LP-GAS

LP-gas containers shall be located outside. Safety release valves shall be pointed away from the tent, canopy or membrane structure.

Portable LP-gas containers, piping, valves and fittings which are located outside and are being used to fuel equipment inside a tent, canopy 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.

MEANS OF EGRESS

Exits shall be spaced at approximately equal intervals around the perimeter of the tent, canopy or membrane structure, and shall be located such that all points are 100 feet or less from an exit.

Tents, canopies or membrane structures or a usable portion thereof shall have at least one exit and not less than the number of exits as required in the following chart:

| MINIMUM WIDTH EACH EXIT (IN INCHES) | | | |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------|----------------|--------------------|
| Capacity | Number of Exits | Tent or Canopy | Membrane Structure |
| 10 to 199 | 2 | 72 | 36 |
| 200 to 499 | 3 | 72 | 72 |
| 500 to 999 | 4 | 96 | 72 |
| 1,000 to 1,999 | 5 | 120 | 96 |
| 2,000 to 2,999 | 6 | 120 | 96 |
| 3,000 or more | 7 | 120 | 96 |

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.**

Exit doors shall swing in the direction of exit travel.

EXIT SIGNS

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. Exit signs shall be of an approved self-luminous type or shall be internally or externally illuminated by luminaires supplied in the following manner:



- 1. Two separate circuits, one of which shall be separate from all other circuits, for occupant loads of 300 or less; or**
- 2. Two separate sources of power, one of which shall be an approved emergency system, shall be provided when the occupant load exceeds 300. Emergency systems shall be supplied from storage batteries or on-site generator set, and the system shall be installed in accordance with the California Electrical Code.**

Means of egress shall be illuminated with light having an intensity of not less than 1 foot-candle 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.

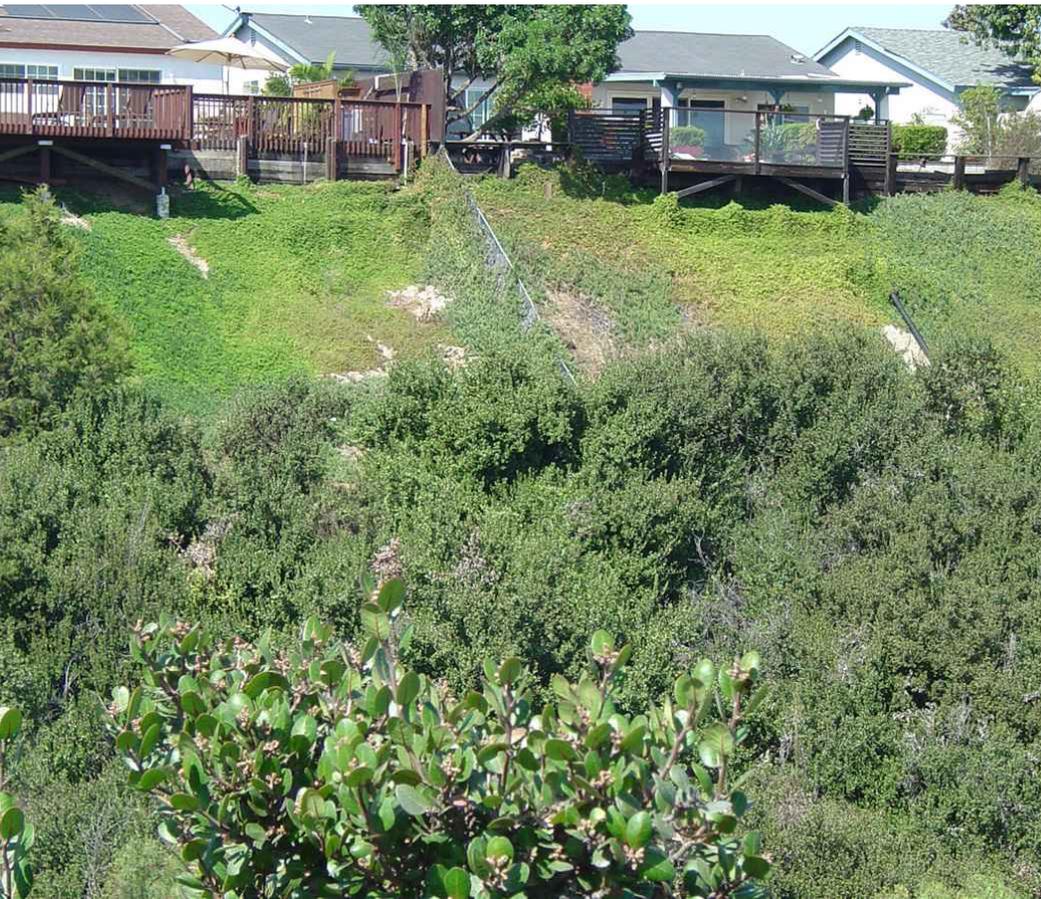
HOUSEKEEPING

Combustible vegetation shall be removed from the area occupied by a tent, canopy or membrane structure, and from areas within 30 feet of such structures.

Hay, straw, shavings or similar combustible materials shall not be located within any tent, canopy or membrane structure containing an assembly occupancy, except the materials necessary for the daily feeding and care of animals.

The floor surface inside tents, canopies or membrane structures and the grounds outside and within a 30-foot perimeter shall be kept clear of combustible waste. Such waste shall be stored in approved containers until removed from the premises.

This pamphlet is a "guide" only with the intention to assist applicants in submitting permit applications. Additional permit fees and requirements may be incurred based on the type of event. Questions associated with specific requirements should be directed to the Fire Prevention Division at (619) 691-5029.



**The mission of
the Chula Vista
Fire Department
is to protect life,
environment,
and property.**



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