



CHULA VISTA FIRE DEPARTMENT

FIRE PREVENTION DIVISION

TENT & MEMBRANE STRUCTURE REQUIREMENTS

SCOPE:

This standard is applicable to all tents, temporary special event structures, and membrane structures (collectively, "Tents") governed by the California Fire Code. The codes and regulations listed herein provide the minimum tent requirements in the City of Chula Vista:

1. California Code of Regulations Title 19: State Fire Marshal Regulations
2. California Fire Code, 2019 Edition
 - a. Chapter 31: Tents, Temporary Special Event Structures and Other Membrane Structures
3. California Building Code, 2019 Edition
 - a. Chapter 31 Special Construction, Section 3102 Membrane Structures, Section 3103 Temporary Structures and Section 3105 Awnings and Canopies.

PERMITS:

4. Tents having an area in excess of 400 square feet shall not be erected, occupied, and/or operated for any purpose without first obtaining a permit and approval from the City of Chula Vista Fire Department (CVFD).

Exceptions: (1) Tents used exclusively for recreational camping purposes, (2) Tents open on all sides that comply with all of the following: (2.1) Individual tents having a maximum size of 700 square feet, (2.2) The aggregate area of multiple tents placed side by side without a fire break clearance of 12 feet, not exceeding 700 square feet total, (2.3) A minimum clearance of 12 feet to all structures and other tents, and (3) Funeral tents.

5. Permit applications and plans must be submitted to CVFD 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 will be used, shall be responsible for requesting the fire permit and inspection.
6. Tents 7,500 square feet and greater will require submittal to and approval from the City of Chula Vista Development Services Department (DSD). For this submittal, CVFD will complete its review as part of the DSD permit submittal. Therefore, a separate submittal to the Fire Department isn't required.
7. A permit fee shall be paid to CVFD for each permissible tent. Permit fee amounts are available on the City's website at www.chulavistaca.gov under the Fire Department's page. This is a Fire Safety Engineering permit only. If applicable, separate special event permit fees and/or overtime fees will be totaled and collected when the Fire Department review is complete.

PLANS:

Plans must include the following information:

8. Exterior Site Plan:
 - a. Location of all tents
 - b. Dimensions and total area of each tent or grouping of tents
 - c. Location and type of generator, cooking, and/or heating units along with manufacturer cut sheets
 - d. Distance between tents and from tents to buildings, property lines, on-site parking areas, cooking areas/food trucks, and generators
9. Floor Plan:
 - a. Tent company information
 - b. Event host information
 - c. Permit scope
 - d. Intended use (e.g., dining, cooking, sales)
 - e. Event location

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- f. Dates and times of intended use
 - g. Tent set-up date
 - h. Respective occupant loads
 - i. Placement of fire extinguishers
 - j. Location and width of sidewalls, if any
 - k. Location, width, and type of exit doors/openings located in sidewalls
 - l. Location of exit, no smoking, occupant load, and other signage
 - m. Location of emergency lighting fixtures and their power source
 - n. Location, size, and height of stages and platforms tables and seating layout, including width of aisles between tables/seating areas
 - o. Location and type of cooking and/or heating units along with manufacturer cut sheets
10. Other Plan Information:
- a. Completed Permit Application
 - b. Provide California State Fire Marshal fire resistances certificates for the tent material
 - c. Method and details of structural stability, including tent product and specification of materials
 - d. Structural stability affidavit
 - e. Decorative materials that are not fire resistant are prohibited in tents with 50 or more people; submit fire retardant certificates or similar documentation for any draperies, paper/plastic/fabric wall coverings, artificial grass, hay bales, streamers, or other decorative materials that will be used
11. Depending on the scope of the event or other considerations, the Inspector reviewing the project may need more information in order to complete an evaluation of the event and provide conditions of approval to mitigate the potential hazards.

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS AND DISCLOSURE:

12. These general requirements are only excerpts from adopted codes; they do not represent code requirements in their entirety. These reproduced requirements have been consolidated with the intent to assist applicants in submitting permit applications. Questions associated with specific requirements should be directed to CVFD at (619) 691-5029.

USE PERIOD:

13. Tent structures shall not be erected for a period of more than 180 days within a 12-month period on a single premise.

STRUCTURAL STABILITY:

14. Tents and their appurtenances shall be designed and installed to withstand the elements of weather and prevent collapsing. Documentation of structural stability shall be furnished to the fire code official.
15. The applicant shall complete and provide the CVFD's Structural Stability Affidavit as part of the permit submittal packet.
16. Permits will not be approved until the Structural Stability Affidavit is received as part of the submittal. Structural stability affidavits are not transferrable from application to application or from permit to permit.

PORTABLE FIRE EXTINGUISHERS:

17. Portable fire extinguishers shall be provided in accordance with the following:
- a. One Class 2-A/10-BC fire extinguisher shall be provided in every tent having a floor area between 500 square feet and 1,000 square feet plus one Class 2-A/10-BC fire extinguisher in each auxiliary adjacent tent
 - b. One additional extinguisher shall be provided for each additional 2,000 square feet or fraction thereof
 - c. At least one Class 2-A/10-BC fire extinguisher shall be provided with each generator or transformer
 - d. At least one Class 2-A/10-BC fire extinguisher shall be provided in kitchen, dining areas, and at locations where flammable or combustible liquids or flammable gases are used, stored, or dispensed

ACCESS, LOCATION AND PARKING:

18. 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 shall not be located within 20 feet of lot lines, buildings, other tents, 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 tent.

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MEANS OF EGRESS:

19. Exits shall be spaced at approximately equal intervals around the perimeter of the tent, and shall be located such that all points are 100 feet or less from an exit.
20. Tents or a usable portion thereof shall have not less than one exit and not less than the number of exits required in the following chart:

MINIMUM NUMBER OF MEANS OF EGRESS AND MEANS OF EGRESS WIDTHS

Occupant Load	Minimum Number of Means of Egress	Minimum Width of Each Means of Egress (Tent)	Minimum Width of Each Means of Egress (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
Over 3,000	7	120	96

21. Exit openings from tents shall remain open unless covered by a flame-resistant curtain. The curtain shall comply with the following requirements:
- Curtains shall be free sliding on a metal support
 - The metal support shall be not less than 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
 - Curtains shall be of a color, or colors, that contrasts with the color of the tent
22. Exit doors shall swing in the direction of exit travel.

EXIT SIGNS AND EGRESS ILLUMINATION:

23. 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 where the exit serves an occupant load of 50 or more.
24. Exit signs shall be either listed and labeled in accordance with UL 924 as the internally illuminated type and used in accordance with the listing or shall be externally illuminated by luminaires supplied in either of the following manners:
- Two separate circuits, one of which shall be separate from all other circuits, for occupant loads of 300 or less.
 - Two separate sources of power, one of which shall be an approved emergency system, shall be provided where the occupant load exceeds 300. Emergency systems shall be supplied from storage batteries or from the on-site generator set, and the system shall be installed in accordance with the California Electrical Code. The emergency system provided shall have a minimum duration of 90 minutes when operated at full design demand.
25. Means of egress shall be illuminated with light having an intensity of not less than 1 foot-candle at floor level while the tent is occupied. Fixtures required for means of egress illumination shall be supplied from a separate circuit or source of power.

SOURCES OF IGNITION:

26. Smoking is not permitted in any tents and in any adjacent area where they or other highly flammable materials are kept. "No Smoking" signs shall be conspicuously posted in all tents open to the public and wherever otherwise specific by CVFD.
27. 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 while open to the public unless approved by CVFD.
28. Fireworks shall not be used within 100 feet of tents.

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HEATING AND COOKING:

29. 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 CVFD.

Exception: Operations such as warming of foods, cooking demonstrations, and similar operations that use solid flammables, butane, or other similar devices that do not pose an ignition hazard, shall be approved.

30. Gas, liquid, and solid fuel-burning equipment designed to be vented shall be vented to the outside air as specified in the California Fuel Gas Code and the California Mechanical Code. Such vents shall be equipped with approved spark arresters where required. Where vents or flues are used, all portions of the tent shall be not less than 12 inches from the flue or vent.

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

32. Tents with sidewalls or drops where cooking is performed shall be separated from other tents by not less than 20 feet.

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

LP-GAS:

34. LP-gas containers and tanks shall be located outside. Pressure relief devices shall be pointed away from the tent. Portable LP-gas containers, tanks, piping, valves, and fittings that are located outside and are being used to fuel equipment inside a tent 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 secured to prevent unauthorized movement.

GENERATORS:

35. Generator permits are required and shall be obtained from DSD when the generator is 10kW or greater.

36. Generators and other internal combustion power sources shall be separated from tents by not less than 20 feet and shall be isolated from contact with the public by fencing, enclosure, or other approved means.

37. Generator fuel shall be stored in an approved safety can away from any source of ignition or combustible materials.

38. Refueling of generators shall only be done with the machine off and cooled down.

HOUSEKEEPING:

39. Combustible vegetation that could create a fire hazard shall be removed from the area occupied by a tent and from areas within 30 feet of such structures.

40. Hay, straw, shavings or similar combustible materials shall not be located within any tent 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 that the sawdust and shavings are kept damp. Combustible materials shall not be permitted under stands or seats at any time.

41. The floor surface inside tents 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 not less than once a day during the period the tent is occupied by the public.

INSPECTIONS:

42. Upon receiving permit approval, and when the tent has been erected, the applicant shall contact CVFD to schedule an inspection. The inspection will be conducted to verify that the tent is installed and furnished in compliance with the approved plans and adopted codes.

43. If a tent is erected and occupied without first submitting plans for, receiving a permit, and/or successfully passing a fire inspection, the applicant will be issued a Cease and Desist – Do Not Occupy Order. The applicant will then also be charged with penalty fees as outlined in the approved Master Fee Schedule.

44. The entire tent 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 the California Fire Code.



CHULA VISTA FIRE DEPARTMENT

FIRE PREVENTION DIVISION

TENT AND MEMBRANE STRUCTURE STRUCTURAL STABILITY AFFIDAVIT

The purpose of this affidavit is for the tent/membrane structure company and its authorized agents to affirm that when the permitted structure(s) is installed, the structure(s) will meet the installation and structural integrity/stability requirements as declared below.

DECLARATION: the tent/membrane structure company must complete the below section and sign/date where indicated.

(Insert tent/membrane structure company's name) _____ is applying for a Chula Vista Fire Department Fire Safety Engineering Permit pursuant to Chula Vista Municipal Code: Title 15 – Buildings and Construction, Chapter 15.36 [Fire Code].

(Insert tent/membrane structure company's name) _____ acknowledges that tent(s)/membrane structure(s) and their appurtenances shall be designed and installed to withstand the elements of weather and prevent collapsing; and, Structural Stability Affidavits are not transferrable from application to application or from permit to permit.

(Insert tent/membrane structure company's name) _____ accepts full responsibility for structural integrity/stability of the tent(s)/membrane structure(s) and that the structure(s) will be installed and anchored according to the manufacturer's specifications, industry standards, and adopted codes.

(Insert tent/membrane structure company's name) _____ acknowledges and agrees that the City and other City Parties are not liable for any injury to property or persons (*including economic loss or opportunity*) arising out of, related to, or incident to any alleged acts, omissions, negligence, or willful misconduct of the signed company or any other operating party arising out of, in connection with, or in any way related to the tent(s)/membrane structure(s) installation and structural integrity/stability. To the fullest extent permitted by law, signed company agrees to defend, indemnify, and hold harmless the City and each other City Party from and against any and all claims, damages, losses, expenses, fines, penalties, judgments, demands, liabilities, and defense costs (*including, without limitation, actual, direct, out-of-pocket costs and expenses, and amounts paid in compromise, settlement, or judgment, and reasonable legal fees arising from litigation of every nature or liability of any kind or nature including civil, criminal, administrative or investigative*) arising out of, in connection with, or which are in any way related to: (i) the City's issuance of or decision to approve the request for permit to install the tent(s)/membrane structure(s), (ii) the process used by the City in making decisions concerning the tent(s)/membrane structures(s) permit review and respective inspections, (iii) any business conduct or operation of the signed company, or (iv) any violation of any law or regulation by the signed company.

Tent/Membrane Structure Rental/Installation Company Name:		Telephone:	
Mailing Address:		City:	State: Zip:
Authorized Agent Name:	Title:	Signature:	Date:

Event Host Company Name:		Telephone:	
Address/Location of Tent/Membrane Structure installation:		City:	State: Zip: