



A publication of Fairfax County, Virginia



CODE COMPLIANCE GUIDELINE

CARNIVALS / FAIRS

AND OUTDOOR FESTIVALS / PUBLIC ASSEMBLAGES 500+ PERSONS

Office of the Fire Marshal

10700 Page Avenue
Fairfax, Virginia 22030
Telephone: 703-246-4849
Fax: 703-246-6044
TTY: 711 or 1-800-828-1120

**** PERMIT REQUIRED ****

This publication outlines the *Virginia Statewide Fire Prevention Code* (i.e., Fire Prevention Code or SFPC) permit and public safety plan requirements related to carnivals, fairs, festivals, and outdoor public assemblages of 500 people or more within Fairfax County and the towns of Clifton, Herndon, and Vienna. This publication does not address circuses and temporary tents, nor does it address special amusement buildings defined by the Fire Prevention Code.

*** PLEASE REVIEW THIS ENTIRE PUBLICATION BEFORE TAKING ACTION ***

Questions regarding the content of this publication should be directed to the Fire Inspections Branch at 703-246-4849 during regular office hours, Monday thru Friday, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

OVERVIEW

In Fairfax County and the towns of Clifton, Herndon, and Vienna, a variety of carnivals, fairs, festivals and large outdoor public assemblages are conducted throughout the year. Many of these events draw large crowds, stage shows, temporary tents/structures, and special amusement devices which can impede emergency access to buildings, structures, fire hydrants, and fire lanes. In addition, outdoor events such as these can adversely affect the response of public safety services such as emergency medical, fire, and police.

PERMIT(s) REQUIRED. In accordance with Section 108.1 of the Fire Prevention Code, an operational permit (i.e., Fire Prevention Code Permit) is required for any carnival, fair, festival, and large outdoor public assemblage of 500 persons or more. In addition, the Fire Marshal issues Fire Prevention Code Permits (FPCP) for a variety of Fire Prevention Code regulated activities such as the use of liquefied petroleum gas (LPG), display of fireworks, and installation and use of temporary tents; some of these permit requirements are referenced in this guideline.

PUBLIC SAFETY PLAN REQUIRED. Through the review and approval of a public safety plan, the Fire Marshal will assist sponsors, organizers, and operators of carnivals, fairs, festivals, and large outdoor public assemblages to make certain an adequate level of public safety is provided at these outdoor events, while ensuring compliance with the Fire Prevention Code. A public safety plan is required by Section 403.11.2 of the Fire Prevention Code.

THREE STEP PROCESS. The following steps form the procedural framework for completing the public safety plan submittal/retrieval and scheduling a fire marshal site inspection.

- STEP 1 - Submit required public safety plan for review and approval.
- STEP 2 - Retrieve approved public safety plan.
- STEP 3 - Schedule a fire marshal inspection.

STEP 1 - SUBMIT REQUIRED PUBLIC SAFETY PLAN

An application for public safety plan review and permit (i.e., FPCP) for each carnival, fair, festival, or large outdoor public assemblage shall be made in writing to the Fire Marshal by the responsible party. Applications may be obtained by calling the Revenue & Records Branch at 703-246-4803, or online at: www.fairfaxcounty.gov/fr/prevention/fmpublications/festivalappl.pdf

PERMIT FEE. A \$150 FPCP fee is due at the time of permit application and plan submittal. This fee generally covers the cost of the plan review and inspection(s) associated with the permit and is authorized by Section 107.10 of the Fire Prevention Code.

PLAN SUBMITTAL INSTRUCTIONS. The following documentation (i.e., contents of the public safety plan) must be submitted along with the completed public safety plan review and fire prevention code permit application to the Office of the Fire Marshal for review and approval at least 30 days prior to the event:

- Two (2) copies of a written emergency plan. *(See page 5 for details)*
- Two (2) copies of a site layout plan. *(See page 5 for details)*
- Two (2) copies of a crowd management plan for events hosting 1000+ persons. *(See page 6 for details)*

Submit the completed plan review and permit application with the \$150 permit fee and two (2) complete copies of the public safety plan to this address:

Fairfax County Office of the Fire Marshal
ATTN: Revenue & Records Branch (Fairs & Festivals)
10700 Page Avenue
Fairfax, VA 22030

Plan Submittals in Person: Monday through Friday, between 7:30 a.m. and 3:30 p.m.

STEP 2 - RETRIEVE APPROVED PUBLIC SAFETY PLAN

After the public safety plan is reviewed and approved, please make arrangements to retrieve a copy of the approved plan. The Office of the Fire Marshal will retain one copy. A copy of the approved plan must be retrieved in person from the 10700 Page Avenue address listed above during regular office hours. Plans will only be released after the required permit fee has been paid in full. To find out the review status of the submitted public safety plan, call the Revenue & Records Branch at 703-246-4803, Monday thru Friday, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Notice about Fire Marshal Approval. In accordance with Section 107.7 of the Fire Prevention Code, plans approved by the fire official are approved with the intent that they comply in all respects to the Fire Prevention Code. Any omissions or errors on the plans (i.e., public safety plan) do not relieve the applicant (i.e., responsible party) of complying with all applicable requirements. Final approval is subject to a site inspection by the Fire Marshal.

STEP 3 - SCHEDULE A FIRE MARSHAL INSPECTION

Approval of a carnival, fair, festival, or outdoor public assemblage is finalized through a site inspection, which must be scheduled by the responsible party for a date at least one business day prior to the operation of the carnival, fair, festival, or large outdoor public assemblage. The approved public safety plan must be available at the event location. To schedule an inspection, call the Fire Inspections Branch at 703-246-4849, Monday thru Friday, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

OTHER AGENCIES & LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

When planning these types of outdoor events, particular attention should be given to notification and coordination with the following county agencies and local governments:

- Fairfax County Fire & Rescue, Operations Bureau, Special Event Notification - 703-246-2126
- Fairfax County Police Department, Public Information Office (PIO) - 703-246-2253
- Department of Planning & Zoning (DPZ), Temporary Special Permit (TSP) - 703-222-1082
- Fairfax County Health Department, Food Service Permits and Inspections - 703-246-8492
- The Herndon and Vienna Police Departments for events in the towns of Herndon and Vienna

Important Notice about Zoning Requirements and Fire Marshal Permits. The Fire Marshal will not issue a permit for a carnival, fair, festival, or large outdoor public assemblage without approval of the local zoning authority. In Fairfax County, a Temporary Special Permit (TSP) is often required for a carnival, fair, festival, or outdoor public assemblage. For information about a TSP, contact the Fairfax County Department of Planning & Zoning at 703-222-1082. The towns of Clifton, Herndon, and Vienna may also require approval for a fair, festival, or large outdoor event. Contact the appropriate municipality for detailed zoning requirements.

ASSOCIATED APPROVALS & PERMITS

- **ELECTRICAL & SPECIAL AMUSEMENT DEVICE PERMITS.** The use of an electrical generator 6500 watts or greater and/or the installation of temporary electrical wiring, circuits, and equipment may require an electrical permit and inspection. In Fairfax County and the towns of Clifton and Vienna, contact the Fairfax County Department of Public Works and Environmental Services (DPWES) at 703-222-0801 for information about electrical, special amusement device permits, and associated inspections/approvals. If your event is in the Town of Herndon, contact the town Building Official at 703-435-6850 for information about electrical and special amusement device permits associated with events in Herndon.
- **FIRE MARSHAL OPERATIONAL PERMITS.** The use of a temporary tent exceeding 900 square feet, the storage and/or use of liquefied petroleum gas (i.e., LPG, propane, butane), and the display and/or use of open-flame, fireworks, and pyrotechnic special effects each require approval from the Fire Marshal and are strictly prohibited until the appropriate permits have been issued. For detailed information about these permit requirements, contact 703-246-4803. The following are some of the more common permits (FPCP) associated with carnivals, fairs, festivals, and large outdoor public assemblages:
 - **Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG).** An operational permit (i.e., FPCP) is required for the handling, storage, and use of LPG outside where the quantity is greater than 10 gallons aggregate; e.g., more than two twenty-pound cylinders. There are two permits associated with LPG at carnivals, fairs, festivals, and outdoor public assemblages:

Temporary Single Event Use

Time Limit: *30 Days*

Permit Type: *F3LP6*

Permit Fee: *\$78*

Temporary Long-term Installation

Time Limit: *One Year*

Permit Type: *F3LP5*

Permit Fee: *\$150*

LPG Permit Application: www.fairfaxcounty.gov/fr/prevention/fmpublications/frd_069.pdf

Notice about DOT LPG Cylinders. Cylinders shall be continued in service and transported in accordance with DOT regulations. A cylinder with an expired requalification date shall not be refilled or used until requalified in accordance with DOT regulations.

- **Temporary Tents.** All temporary tents exceeding 900 square feet shall not be installed, maintained, occupied, or used for any purpose without first obtaining an operational permit (i.e., FPCP) from the Fire Marshal. Detailed procedures, requirements, and permit applications for temporary tents may be obtained by calling the Revenue & Records Branch at 703-246-4803, Monday thru Friday, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., or online at:

www.fairfaxcounty.gov/fr/prevention/fmpublications/tentguide.pdf

Notice about Tent Inspections. Two inspections are generally required for a temporary tent exceeding 900 square feet. The first inspection is performed after the initial installation and prior to the event, and must be scheduled by the person, firm, or corporation responsible for the installation. The second inspection is performed before the event opens and can be facilitated by the event operator. If installing a tent, please coordinate and plan accordingly!

- **Fireworks & Pyrotechnics.** Operational permit (FPCP) requirements associated with the display, handling, sale, storage, and use of fireworks and pyrotechnics in Fairfax County and the towns of Clifton, Herndon, and Vienna, can be obtained by contacting the Fire Inspections Branch at 703-246-4849, Monday thru Friday, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., or online at:

www.fairfaxcounty.gov/fr/prevention/fmfireworks.htm

FIRE DEPARTMENT NOTIFICATION

In accordance with sections 401.3 and 5003.3.1 of the Fire Prevention Code (as amended by Fairfax County), notification of emergency responders shall be as follows:

- **Fire Events.** In the event an unwanted fire occurs on a property, the owner or occupant shall immediately notify the fire department (911) and implement the evacuation plan. When an unwanted fire is discovered, do not delay! Notify the occupants, evacuate the structure as appropriate, and immediately call 911! Remember, a person shall not, by verbal or written directive, require any delay in the reporting of a fire!
- **Alarm Activations.** Upon activation of a fire alarm signal, employees or staff shall immediately notify the fire department (911) and implement the evacuation plan. This includes activation of monitored fire alarms designed to automatically call the fire department upon activation; employees or staff must also call 911 to report the fire alarm signal.
- **Hazardous Materials Release.** Any person who witnesses, discovers, or otherwise has knowledge of a spill, leak, or other release of a hazardous material or other material that may negatively impact the environment, regardless of quantity, shall immediately report such spill, leak, or release to the Department of Public Safety Communications (DPSC) by calling 911.
- **Out of Service Fire Protection Systems.** Where a fire protection system is out of service, the fire department and the fire code official shall be notified immediately by calling the Office of the Fire Marshal at 703-246-4821 during regular office hours (M-F, 7a-3p). Otherwise, call DPSC after-hours at 703-691-2131 to make this non-emergency notification.
- **Delayed Notification Prohibited.** A person shall not, by verbal or written directive, require any delay in the reporting of a fire to the fire department.
- **False Report Prohibited.** It is unlawful for a person to give, signal, or transmit a false alarm.
- **Interference with F.D. Operations Prohibited.** It shall be unlawful to interfere with, attempt to interfere with, conspire to interfere with, obstruct or restrict the mobility of or block the path of travel of a fire department emergency vehicle in any way, or to interfere with, attempt to interfere with, conspire to interfere with, obstruct, or hamper any fire department operation.

PUBLIC SAFETY PLAN

WRITTEN EMERGENCY PLAN shall include the following information ...

1. Name and/or description of the event (*e.g., Fall Music Festival, Art Fair, Outdoor Concert*)
2. Event date(s) and time(s) including scheduled activities and times of peak attendance.
3. The name and address of the event facility/location/site shown on each page of the plan.
4. Complete contact information for event stakeholders which includes the property owner, event sponsor or event coordinator/operator, and key event staff. Contact information should include alternates, and include cell phone numbers and e-mail addresses.
5. Approximate or estimated event set-up completion date/time prior to event operation.
6. Approximate number of attendees including all event attendants, employees, and staff.
7. Identify all means of communication available for event attendants, employees, and staff to routinely communicate with each other, summon help, and call 911.
8. Procedure for immediately reporting fire events, alarm activations, hazardous materials releases, medical emergencies, and other emergencies.
9. Evacuation procedures in the event of an emergency (*e.g., fire, weather, bomb threat, etc.*).
10. Plan to stop all music, performances, and audio-visual effects in the event of emergency.
11. List of primary and secondary evacuation routes and evacuation assembly locations.
12. Crowd management plan that clearly identifies all crowd manager positions and duties, including those persons responsible for calling 911 and meeting emergency responders.

SITE LAYOUT PLAN shall be in the form of a legible diagram and include the following ...

1. Name and/or description of the event and event date(s) shown on each site plan page.
2. Overall site map showing the boundary or perimeter of the event facility/location/site.
3. Location and dimensions of all permanent buildings within the event site boundary.
4. Location and dimensions of all temporary tents/structures, and the distance from other temporary tents/structures and permanent buildings within the event site boundary.
5. Location of all fire hydrants and fire department connections (*e.g., standpipe, sprinkler*).
6. Location and width of vehicle ingress/egress routes and all designated fire lanes.
7. Location of public accessible vehicle parking areas and event vehicle staging/storage.
8. Location of display/vendor booths identified by occupant name and/or identification #.
9. Location of all amusement devices, stages, observation decks/towers, and large displays.
10. Location of all outdoor assembly, gathering, and/or seating areas showing means of egress elements including exit access routes/widths and exit discharge locations leading to the public way. This includes detailed measurements of fenced areas and egress gates.
11. Location of all designated primary and secondary evacuation routes within the event site boundary and all crowd manager stations and location assignments.
12. Location of all temporary generators and/or temporary electrical service connections.
13. Location of all permanent and/or temporary LPG installation/storage/use areas.
14. Location of approved fireworks or pyrotechnic special effects discharge and fallout areas.

KEY POINTS TO REMEMBER ...

- **Use This Plan.** The contents of this public safety plan including the written emergency plan and site layout plan shall be reviewed with all event staff, which includes all attendants, employees, crowd managers, and designated fire watch personnel.
- **Don't Delay.** In case of emergency, event staff must be able to give their location within the event site, summon help from other event staff as needed, and call 911 without delay.

FIRE WATCH PERSONNEL

In accordance with Section 403.11.1 of the Fire Prevention Code, when in the opinion of the fire code official, it is essential for public safety in a place of assembly or any other place 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 provide one or more fire watch personnel, 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.

- **General Duties.** All attendants, employees, and staff of fairs, festivals, and outdoor public assemblages should maintain a constant fire watch, which involves keeping a diligent watch for smoke and fire, obstructions to means of egress and emergency vehicle routes, and other hazards during the event. Attendants, employees, and supervisors should take prompt measures for remediation of hazards, calling 911 when required, and assisting with the evacuation of impacted areas in accordance with the written emergency plan.
- **When Required.** Fire watch personnel, other than designated crowd managers, may be required by the Fire Marshal depending on the unique circumstances related to the event. In addition, final determination related to the actual number and special duties of designated fire watch personnel may be identified during a fire marshal inspection.

CROWD MANAGEMENT

In accordance with Section 403.11.3 of the Fire Prevention Code, 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. The focus areas related to crowd management include the following:

- **Crowd Managers.** Individual persons or job/staff positions designated as crowd managers shall be identified in the written emergency procedures part of the public safety plan and/or approved fire safety and evacuation plan. It is recommended that alternate crowd managers also be designated and be trained as required.
- **Crowd Manager Training.** Designated crowd managers shall be familiar with the approved public safety plan and/or approved fire safety and evacuation plan, and be properly trained in the emergency procedures described in the plan.
- **Crowd Manager Duties.** Designated crowd managers shall appropriately implement the emergency procedures described in the approved public safety plan and/or approved fire safety and evacuation plan. In addition, crowd managers shall also act as fire watch personnel and keep diligent watch for fires, obstructions to means of egress, and other hazards during the time such place is open to the public or such activity is being conducted and take prompt measures for remediation of hazards, extinguishment of fires that occur, and assist in the evacuation of the public from the event areas (i.e., structures, premises).
- **Crowd Management Plan.** The crowd management plan is part of the public safety plan, and should clearly identify all crowd manager positions and duties including those persons responsible for calling 911 and meeting emergency responders. Crowd manager stations and location assignments, where provided, shall be illustrated on the site layout plan.

Fairfax County is committed to nondiscrimination on the basis of disability in all county programs, services and activities. Reasonable accommodations will be provided upon request. Materials such as this publication may be available in alternate formats. To request reasonable ADA accommodations or materials in alternative formats, call the Office of the Fire Marshal at 703-246-4803 (TTY: 711 or 1-800-828-1120) or write us at the following address: 10700 Page Avenue, Fairfax, VA 22030