



A publication of Fairfax County, Virginia



Office of the Fire Marshal
Fire Inspections Branch
10700 Page Avenue
Fairfax, Virginia 22030
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CODE COMPLIANCE GUIDELINE **TEMPORARY TENTS**

OVERVIEW

This publication outlines Fire Prevention Code safety requirements for temporary tents erected within Fairfax County and the Towns of Clifton, Herndon, and Vienna. The objective of this publication is to provide essential information to event planners and organizers that will ensure a safe and successful event.

Questions about the content of this publication should be directed to the Fire Inspections Branch of the Office of the Fire Marshal by calling 703-246-4849 during normal business hours, Monday through Friday, 7:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

INSTRUCTIONS AND APPLICATIONS

1. Please review the requirements for permits, application processing, and plans review.
2. Complete the attached application. All information must be printed in ink or typewritten.
3. Submit three (3) copies of the completed application and all required attachments to the Fairfax County Office of the Fire Marshal not less than five (5) business days prior to the event.

PERMITS

The following permits/plan submissions are requirements of the Fire Prevention Code (SFPC), depending on size of the tent and other factors.

Virginia Statewide Fire Prevention Code (SFPC)

SFPC-108.5.12 - Approval shall be obtained from the fire code official for erecting or the use of a **tent exceeding 900 square feet**. A Fire Prevention Code Permit (FPCP) is required.

FPCP Type - F3TENTS

Tents & Air Supported Structures: Tent, 900+ Square Feet (120 Day Permit)
Permit Fee \$125

Tents erected for 180 or more days require a building permit from the Fairfax County Department of Public Works & Environmental Services (DPWES).

Building Permits

Permit Application Center
12055 Government Center Parkway, 2nd Floor.
Fairfax, VA 22035
703-222-0801

If electrical service or temporary wiring is to be provided to the tent/canopy, an electrical permit and inspection by the electrical inspector is required. It is not necessary to obtain an electrical permit prior to issue of the Fire Prevention Code Permit, but the electrical inspection must be approved prior to the Fire Prevention Code Permit approval by the Fire Marshal.

Electrical Permits

Permit Application Center
12055 Government Center Parkway, 2nd Floor
Fairfax, VA 22035
703-222-0801

Demonstration of adequate restroom facilities is required. Food preparation permits and sanitary safety guidelines may be obtained from the Health Department.

Fairfax County Health Department

10777 Main Street
Fairfax, VA 22030
703-246-2444

A Temporary Special Permit may be required when a tent is used in conjunction with an event which is held outdoors and which is open to the public. Weddings with invited guests are not considered open to the public.

If a temporary special permit is required, it must be obtained prior to application for the Fire Prevention Code Permit. No Fire Prevention Code Permit will be issued without proof of the temporary special permit. If in doubt as to whether a temporary special permit is required, please contact the Department of Zoning and Planning at the number below.

Zoning

Department of Zoning and Planning
Zoning Permit Review
12055 Government Center Parkway, Suite 249
Fairfax, VA 22035
703-222-1359

TENT PLAN APPLICATION PROCESSING CHECK-IN PROCEDURES

Tent plan review and onsite inspections have critical time deadlines; consequently, it is important to provide **ALL** the information requested on the Fire Prevention Code Permit Application for Display of Tents. Fire Prevention personnel must be able to contact the responsible party to resolve any issues in a timely manner. Please:

1. Complete a Fire Prevention Code Permit (FPCP) application for Temporary Tents. The permit application is available online at:
<http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/fr/prevention/fmpublications/tentappl.pdf>
2. Submit three (3) copies of the completed application and all required attachments not less than five (5) business days prior to the event. Submit plans to: Fairfax County Office of the Fire Marshal, 10700 Page Avenue, Fairfax, Virginia 22030, during normal business hours, Monday through Friday, 7:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.
3. If required, submit proof of issuance of the Temporary Special Permit (TSP) by Zoning to the Fire Prevention Division, 10700 Page Avenue, Fairfax, VA. 22030; 703-246-4803. The fee for the Fire Prevention Code Permit is \$125. (Cash or check only. Credit cards are not accepted.)

Plan Review

1. Plans must be submitted in three (3) copies and **ALL** plans shall use an acceptable scale, such as 1:10 (1 inch equals 10 feet).
2. Site/Location Plan shall clearly show the following on each drawing:
 - a. Location name and address where tent is to be erected.
 - b. Date(s) of event.
 - c. Size of tent (length in feet by width in feet). If multiple tents are used, all tents must be shown, including the firebreak distance between tents.
 - d. Distance from tent to any combustible materials, including combustible trim on adjacent buildings. SFPC-2403.8.2 requires a tent less than 15,000 square feet to be a minimum of 20' distance from any combustibles and a tent over 15,000 square feet to be a minimum of 50' distant.
 - e. Maximum number of guests expected to include wait staff and any other persons (e.g. D-Jay).
3. Tent Contents/Layout Plan shall clearly show the following on each drawing:
 - a. Scaled layout of tables & seats, with proper size of tables and seats shown around the tables. Allow 19" radius from the perimeter edge of the tables for seats, 36" clearance between the fabric sides of the tent and all contents within the tent, and a minimum of 12" between chair-backs placed back-to-back. If standing only (no seats), then state so on the plan. If a dance floor, stage, or platform is used, show these items on the plan.
 - b. Scaled layout of aisles. Aisles shall not be less than 44" wide and shall be maintained at all times. All aisles shall lead to designated exits with exit signs. See table below for requirements for minimum number of exits required based upon occupancy load.

OCCUPANT LOAD	MINIMUM NUMBER OF DESIGNATED EXITS
10 to 199	2
200 to 499	3
500 to 999	4
1,000 to 1,999	5
2,000 to 2,999	6
Over 3,000	7

- c. An "**EXIT**" sign installed above all designated exits. If there are sides on the tent or use is at night, the exit signs shall be illuminated and shall also have emergency white lights.
 - d. If any walls are attached to the tent and if so, their location.
 - e. The location and type of any approved heating, air-conditioning and electrical equipment being used.
 - f. The location of at least two fire extinguishers. Minimum size 2A:10B:C.
 - g. The location of not less than four "**NO SMOKING**" signs.
4. Flame Resistance Certificate(s) shall be submitted for each tent and have the following clearly identified on each certificate:
 - a. Date, time and address of the event
 - b. Manufacturer/Applicator
 - c. Certification number
 - d. Tent fabric, size, and number of sections

5. Requests for approval of use of open flames, devices emitting fire, flame or heat, any flammable or combustible liquid, gas, charcoal, or other cooking devices (including warming trays) shall be submitted. Include any manufacturer's documentation, pictures and/or samples.
6. If time permits, the tent plan application package will be reviewed by a Fire Protection Plans Reviewer while you wait (8:00 - 11:30 a.m. & 12:30 - 3:00 p.m., **Tuesday through Thursday**), dependent upon the prior number of "walk-ins" ahead of your application. If you choose not to wait, most tent plan applications will normally be reviewed within one (1) business day. Please call (703-246-4803) to check on the review status of your plans prior to picking them up.

Approved Plans

The approved tent plan application package must be picked up and the Fire Prevention Code Permit application must be completed.

ALL APPROVED PLANS MUST BE ON SITE AT TIME OF THE INSPECTION BY THE FIRE MARSHAL.

Inspections - After plans have been approved, an inspection shall be scheduled, the tent or canopy shall be completely erected, and all contents shall be in place ready for use, according to the approved plan. You may schedule the Fire Marshal by calling 703-246-4849 during normal business hours, Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Building Inspections: If an electrical inspection is required, it must be completed prior to the Fire Marshal Inspection. Please see the section entitled "Electrical Code."

ASSOCIATED PERMITS

A Fire Prevention Code Permit shall be obtained prior to the use of candles, open flames, or other devices emitting flame, fire or any flammable or combustible liquids or other cooking devices. A Fire Prevention Code Permit is required when propane is used for tent heaters.

OPEN FLAME & CANDLES: PUBLIC MEETING/GATHERING (EACH EVENT)

A person shall not utilize or allow to be utilized, an open flame in connection with a public meeting or gathering for purposes of deliberation, worship, entertainment, amusement, instruction, education, recreation, awaiting transportation, or similar purpose in assembly or educational occupancies without first obtaining a permit

Permit Type- F3FLM2

The permit fee is \$65.

LIQUIFIED PETROLEUM GAS (LPG), HANDLING, STORAGE & USE

A one-time FPCP is required when LPG is handled, stored, or used in any amount.

Permit Type: F3LP5

LP-Gas: Temporary Storage, Use & Handling - Site Installation (Up to One Year)

The permit fee is \$125. (Example: Circus Tent Heating)

Permit Type: F3LP6

LP-Gas: Temporary Storage, Use & Handling - Each Vendor (Each Event)

The permit fee is \$65. (Example: Food Vendor)

Important Notice about portable LPG Cylinders. Portable LPG cylinders shall be recertified at a minimum of every 12 years and date-stamped on their protective collars or shall be in compliance with NFPA 58, *Liquefied Petroleum Gas Code* (2001 Edition).

Fairfax County is committed to a policy of non-discrimination in all county programs, services, and activities. Upon request, the Office of the Fire Marshal can provide documents and publications in alternative formats and in different languages. Please call 703-246-4753 (TTY: 711 or 1-800-828-1120) or write us at the following address: Office of the Fire Marshal, 10700 Page Avenue, Fairfax, VA 22030. Allow at least seven to ten working days for preparation of material.