



COMMUNITY RISK REDUCTION BUREAU MANUAL
CODE REQUIREMENTS
423.7 TEMPORARY TENTS AND MEMBRANE STRUCTURES
EFFECTIVE: APRIL 1, 2016
AUTHORIZED: *R. Pearce*

SCOPE

This policy applies to temporary tents, air-supported, air-inflated or tensioned membrane structures, as defined by the fire code, having an area in excess of 400 sq. ft. that will be erected for a period not to exceed 180 days within a 12-month period on a single premise.

Structures that will be erected in excess of 180 days are regulated by the California Building Code. An operational permit shall be issued under the approval of the local Fire Marshal with associated fees for this permit.

Exceptions:

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

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to describe the necessary information that must be provided to the Fire District to evaluate and issue a permit for a temporary tent or membrane structure, and what will be expected of the applicant as part of the permit process. The goal is to create a consistent, user-friendly document to assist the permit applicant in preparing submittal documents that may be readily approved.

REQUIREMENTS

Note: This bulletin is a summary of Fire Service interpretations of County and State Codes pursuant to tents and membrane structures. Information contained herein applies to typical instances and may not address all circumstances. These standards shall apply to any temporary membrane structure or tent in accordance with the California Code of Regulations (CCR) Title 19 and the California Fire Code (CFC) as adopted by the Tiburon Fire Protection District.

Permit Application Submittal Timeline

Permit applications must be submitted at least five (5) business days prior to the requested start date of tent installation or operation when the tent/membrane structure does not exceed an occupant load of 50 or more persons. Any submittal for tents containing 50 plus occupants shall be submitted at least ten (10) business days prior to the requested start date of tent installation or operation. The Tiburon Fire Protection District may elect to accept and review applications with a shorter timeline; however, such permits may be subject to overtime charges for review and approval, and no guarantee of a quick review is given or implied when submittal deadlines are missed.

Submittal Requirements

All applications for permits for temporary tents or membrane structures must be accompanied by two (2) copies of detailed site plans prepared on paper no less than 11" x 17" (larger if necessary depending on the size of the site). The plans shall comply with all of the following:

1. Indicate the type of structure: i.e. tent, membrane structure with Manufacturer's information.
2. Be drawn to scale at a minimum of 1/8 inch to the foot.
3. All text on the plans shall be minimum 1/8 inch in height.
4. Indicate size of each structure in sq. ft. and show dimensions of each side of the structure.
5. State location of structure (address, block and lot).
6. Indicate the duration of permit (from construction until take-down).
7. Indicate the name of the company erecting tent or membrane structure, the name of the organization sponsoring the event, the name of the

property owner at the tent location, and the name and cell phone numbers of the on-site contact personnel.

8. State that the plans are in compliance with the 2013 California Fire Code, and when applicable, the 2013 Electrical Code, and 2013 Mechanical Code.
9. Indicate the proximity (in feet) of tent or membrane structure to nearby buildings, property lines, other tents or membrane structures, parked vehicles, or internal combustion engines. Tents and /or membrane structures shall be located a minimum of 20 ft. from these items. Vehicles parked on a public street or necessary for the operation of the establishment should be kept twenty (20) ft. from these structures; all other vehicles shall be 100 feet away. See exceptions in the Fire Code.
10. Show fire department access roads with a width of no less than 20 feet wide and 13'6" clearance above.
11. Indicate the use of all areas of the temporary structures.
12. Show proposed furniture lay-out (table, chairs, bleachers, grandstands, and stages) properly scaled with aisles and exit access. Aisles shall be in accordance with Section 1014 of the CFC, and shall be a minimum of 44 inches (Ref. CFC 3103.12). The dimension between tables and between tables and adjacent walls and/or other obstructions shall be shown.
13. When bleachers, folding and telescopic seating, and/or grandstands are used, they shall comply with the 2007 ICC 300 Standard. Documentation of compliance from the vendor providing the seating is required.
14. Show the exits and indicate the clear exit width provided. All points within the tent shall be 100 ft. or less from an exit and exiting shall comply with Section CFC 3103.12.
15. Exit curtains shall be of a color, or colors, that contrasts with the color of the tent.
16. On sloped sites, where stairs or ramps are necessary, stairways, ramps, landings, handrails, and guards shall meet Chapter 10 of the CFC. Details shall be shown on plans.
17. Include the proposed occupant load and justification for each area (based upon CFC 1004).

18. Shall show the locations and size of fire extinguishers that will be provided. Travel distance to fire extinguishers shall not exceed 75 ft. Additional extinguishers are required at each cooking area and at each fuel powered generator.
19. Show locations of all exit signs. Exit signs must be illuminated when serving occupant loads of more than 49 occupants. When occupant loads exceed 300, an approved emergency system is required for exit sign illumination. All back-up sources of illumination shall have a minimum duration of 90 minutes (Ref. CFC 3103.12.6.1). A spotlight is also required to light the exterior means of egress to a safe area of refuge.
20. All temporary electrical distribution boxes (spider) shall be grounded per CEC.
21. Show locations of "NO SMOKING" signs and occupant load signs.
22. All cooking areas shall be shown (inside and outside of tents), and shall indicate the fuel source for each cooking appliance (sterno, LP-gas, etc). Generally, only food warming with sterno is permitted inside assembly tents. Cooking tents must be separated by a minimum distance of 20 ft. from other tents or membrane structures. Outdoor cooking that produces sparks or grease laden vapors shall not be performed within 20 ft. of a tent or membrane structure. Ref: CFC 3104.15. 5.
23. Gas, liquid and solid fuel burning equipment designed to be vented shall be vented to the outside air as specified in the California Mechanical Code. All venting shall be shown on plans, including clearances from tents or membrane structures. Such vents shall be equipped with approved spark arresters when required. Where vents or flues are used, all portions of the tent or membrane structure shall be not less than 12 inches from the flue or vent.
24. Show location of all LP-gas containers (must be a minimum of 10 ft. from any tent/membrane structure). Ref: CFC 3104.16. Indicate the configuration for anti-tip prevention on all pressured containers (staked & strap/egg crates/clustering).
25. Show locations of emergency generators and fuel storage that are onsite. Generators must be at least 20 ft. from tents/membrane structures. Ref: 3104.19.

26. Show all flammable or combustible fuel storage (shall be a minimum of 50 ft. from any tent or membrane structure). Ref: CFC 3104.17.
27. Show location, type, and fuel source of all heating equipment and/or any other appliances in tent. Manufacturer's installation instructions shall be made available on request.
28. Vehicles or equipment used for competition, demonstration, or display in tents shall be shown on plans and shall comply with 3104.18.
29. Membrane structures shall comply with other relevant requirements shown in the CFC.
30. A Certificate of Flame Resistance for each tent, membrane structure, and/or interior decorative fabrics or materials proposed shall accompany the application. If no flame resistance certificates are submitted, then a flame test in the field will be required per CCR Title 19 standards.
31. Plans shall state that the applicant will provide trained crowd managers at a ratio of one crowd manager for every 250 occupants, or as approved.
32. A Safety Plan shall be provided when 50 or more people are gathered.

Additional Documentation

1. Tents and membrane structures, as defined and differentiated within Chapter 31 of the California Building Standards Code, shall be subject to applicable provisions of Section 3102 and 3103 when erected on a building, balcony, deck or other structure; or when erected in connection to a building, balcony, deck or other structure; regardless of its duration of use. Evidence of review and approval from the appropriate Building Official must be provided prior to permit issuance. Be advised that the Building Department may have different requirements for submittal information and review timelines.

2. Applicants proposing to install tents and/or membrane structures that meet any of the following three criteria shall provide a report of installation inspection prepared by a California licensed structural engineer after the installation is complete, but prior to occupancy:

- The square footage of the structure is 1500 sq. ft. or more
- The approved occupant load is 100 or more
- The clear span width of the structural support is 60 ft. or more

The report shall minimally state that in the engineer's professional opinion, the tent is designed, installed, and anchored to withstand expected forces and climate conditions including a minimum wind force of 80 mph. The report shall be signed and stamped with the engineer's professional seal.

Alternative materials and methods:

1. The fire code official is authorized to approve an alternative material or method of construction where the fire code official determines the alternative meets the intent of this standard and is at least the equivalent in effectiveness, fire resistance and safety.

Fees: Per Tiburon Fire Protection District Fee Schedule

Inspections: An operational permit shall not be valid without an inspection prior to occupancy of a tent and/or membrane structure. Inspection requests shall be made during business hours M-F 0800-1700 hours with the Community Risk Reduction Staff. Any weekend or off-hour inspection may be subject to overtime rates. It is a recommended practice to schedule your inspection time well within a timeframe to make any necessary changes or corrections before your event. **You know what it takes to make your event successful, so plan ahead to ensure that what you have submitted is EXACTLY what is to be re-produced in the field. Any deviations from the plan shall require notification to the Community Risk Reduction Bureau prior to inspection. As in any project, the Tiburon Fire Protection District reserves the right to deny any application should it be found to be unsafe or dissimilar to an approved site plan for the operational permit. Appeals can be made to the Fire Marshal and Fire Chief.**

CROSS REFERENCES

California Fire Code