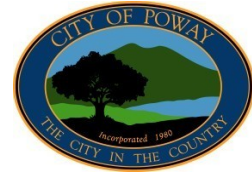




Fire Prevention Division Policies and Procedures



Tents & Temporary Special Event Structures

Chapter 31 of the 2019 California Fire Code and Title 19 of the California Code of Regulations regulates the use of temporary and permanent tents, canopies and membrane structures. The improper use of these structures may create a fire and life-safety hazard.

Definitions

- Tent – A structure, enclosure, umbrella structure or shelter, with or without sidewalls or drops, constructed of fabric or pliable material supported in any manner except by air or the contents it protects. A Large Tent is one designed for use by 10 or more people. A small tent is one designed for use by less than 10 people.
- Canopy – A structure or architectural projection of rigid construction over which a covering is attached that provides weather protection, identity or decoration, and may be structurally independent or supported by attachment to a building on one end and by not less than one stanchion on the outer end.
- Membrane Structure – An air-inflated, air-supported, cable or frame-covered structure as defined by the California Building Code and not otherwise defined as a tent.

Permitting Process

The City of Poway Fire Department requires that an operational permit be obtained to operate an air-supported temporary membrane structure, a temporary special event structure or a tent having an area in excess of 400 square feet. Exceptions include; tents used exclusively for recreational camping purposes, a single tent open on all sides or an aggregate of side by side tents having an area not greater than 700 square feet. A plan submittal and applicable fees are required to obtain a Permit to Operate. A field inspection is required prior to approval for use.

A site inspection may be required after the structure has been erected and prior to the event. Tents larger than 700-square feet and with an occupant load of 50 or more persons shall be considered a public assembly and an inspection prior to the event must be performed. All inspections shall be scheduled 48-hours prior to the event. Additional fees are charged for inspections required outside of business hours.

Plan submittal requirements include:

Plan Information

- An accurate, dimensioned site plan indicating distances from tents, canopies, or membrane structures to permanent buildings, access drives, parking areas, other tents or canopies, cooking and heating appliances and equipment, property lines and roadways.
- Specific areas for parking vehicles shall be detailed on the site plan.
- Dimensions for all tents, canopies and membrane structures.
- A statement which identifies the intended use of all structures and the dates for which the permit is required.

- Flame retardant certificate(s) for tent/canopy material as outlined in the *California Code of Regulations* Title 19 Chapter 2, Article 4.

Floor Plan Information

- Proposed seating arrangements
- Locations and dimensions of tables
- Locations and types of all other interior obstacles
- Exit locations
- Locations and types of exit signs; exit signs shall be internally illuminated, externally illuminated or of an approved self-luminous type when the occupant load exceeds 100 persons.
- Locations and types of emergency lighting, including proposed power source(s)
- For occupant load of 300 or less, two separate circuits shall be provided, one which shall be separate from all other circuits.
- For occupant load exceeding 300 persons, two separate power supplies shall be provided, one which shall be an approved emergency system. The emergency system shall be supplied from storage batteries or an approved onsite generator
- Locations of no smoking signs

Exit Requirements

- Exits shall conform to the following:

CFC TABLE 3103.12.2
MINIMUM NUMBER OF EXITS AND EXIT WIDTHS FOR
TEMPORARY MEMBRANE STRUCTURES, TENTS AND CANOPIES*

Occupant Load	Minimum Number Of Exits	Tent or Canopy Exit Opening Size	Air-supported Structure Exit Opening Size
10 to 199	2	72 in.	36 in.
200 to 499	3	72 in.	72 in.
500 to 999	4	96 in.	72 in.
1,000 to 1,999	5	120 in.	96 in.
2,000 to 2,999	6	120 in.	96 in.
Over 3,000	7	120 in.	96 in.

*The total width of means of egress in inches shall not be less than the total occupant load served by a means of egress multiplied by 0.2. Such widths of means of egress shall be divided approximately equally among the separate means of egress.

- Exits shall be spaced at approximately equal intervals around the perimeter of the temporary membrane structures, tents and canopies, and shall be located such that all points are 100 feet or less from an exit.

- Exit openings from tents shall remain open unless covered by a flame-resistant curtain as follows:
 - 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. Curtains shall be so arranged that, when open, no part of the curtains obstruct the exit.
 - Curtains shall be of a color, or bear markings that will contrast with, the color of the tent.

Exit Illumination and Signage

- Means of egress shall be illuminated with light having an intensity of not less than one (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 when occupant load exceeds more than 300.
- Exit signs shall be installed at required exit doorways and where otherwise necessary to clearly indicate the direction of egress when the exit serves an occupant load of 50 or more.
- Exit signs in temporary membrane structures, tents, and canopies with occupant loads of more than 100 persons shall be of an approved self-luminous type or shall be internally or externally illuminated by fixtures supplied in the following manner:
 - For occupant loads of 300 or less, two separate circuits, one of which shall be separate from all other circuits, shall be provided
 - When the occupant load exceeds 300, two separate sources of power, one of which shall be an approved emergency system, shall be provided. Emergency power shall be supplied from storage batteries or on-site generator set, and the system shall be installed in accordance with the Electrical Code.

Smoking and Open Flames

- Smoking shall not be permitted in any tents, canopies or temporary membrane structures. Approved “NO SMOKING” signs shall be conspicuously posted.
- Open flame or other devices emitting flame, fire or heat or any flammable or combustible liquids, gas, charcoal or other cooking devices 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.

Seating Arrangements and Aisle Spacing

- Seating arrangements and aisle spacing shall be in accordance with Chapter 10 of the *California Fire Code* and meet the approval of the Fire Marshal.
- When there are more than 200 seats, loose seats, folding chairs, or similar seating facilities that are not fixed to the floor shall be bonded together in groups of three or more. Bonding of chairs is not required when tables are provided for dining or similar purposes.

Flammable or Combustible Liquids and Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG)

- Flammable-liquid-fueled equipment shall not be used in temporary membrane structures, tents, or canopies.

- Flammable and combustible liquids shall be stored outside in an approved manner not less than 50 feet from temporary membrane structures, tents, or canopies.

Portable Fire Extinguishers

- Fire extinguishers shall be provided for each kitchen, mess hall, power generator, or transformer location where flammable or combustible liquids are used, and in other locations in accordance with the *California Fire Code* Section 906.
- At least one 3A:40B:C type fire extinguisher shall be provided for each power generator, or transformer, and at locations where flammable or combustible liquids are used, stored, or dispensed.
- When cooking appliances are capable of producing grease laden vapors, a Class K fire extinguisher shall be provided
- Minimum fire-extinguisher coverage shall be provided in every tent, canopy, and temporary membrane structure as follows:

Square Feet of Structure	Number of Fire Extinguishers Required
200 to 500 square feet	One 2-A:10-B:C
501 to 1,000 square feet	Two 2-A:10-B:C
Each additional 2,000 square feet	One Additional 2-A:10-B:C