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Tent and Membrane Structure Guide for Outdoor Dining

This guide outlines the fire safety requirements found in the 2019 Oregon Fire and Building Codes. This guide is a tool to help prepare you for your tent setup for outdoor dining and inform business owners and applicants of the expectations upon inspection.

Tents exceeding 200 sq. feet and canopies exceeding 400 sq. feet require a Fire Prevention Permit and accompanying inspection. A site and seating plan must be included with permit applications.

Tents must meet the following requirements:

- Tents and canopies are not allowed inside a structure.
- Tents and canopies shall maintain a distance of 20 feet from parked vehicles, property lines or right of ways. For the purpose of determining required distances, support ropes and guy wires are considered part of the tent or canopy.
- Tents and canopies shall be roped, braced, and anchored.
- Tents and canopies must be made of fire-resistant material (must bear label from manufacturer indicating so) or be treated with an approved flame retardant.
- Decorative materials used in tents shall be flame retardant.
- No open flame devices are allowed inside tents.
- Provide one minimum 2A: 10 BC fire extinguisher for every 3,000 square feet of floor area.
- Maximum distance to an exit shall not exceed 100 feet.
- Tents and canopies must be provided with exiting as follows:
 1. Occupant load up to 10, one exit 6 feet wide.
 2. Occupant load 10 to 199, two exits 6 feet wide.
 3. Occupant load 200-499, three exits 6 feet wide.
- Exits must be spaced evenly around the tent perimeter. For assistance in determining your occupant load contact GFES.
- Provide exits signs above each exit. For occupant capacity over 100 exit signs must be illuminated and provided with a back-up power supply.
- Overnight sleeping is not allowed in Tents.

Site & Seating Plans:

Attach a scaled and detailed floor *and* site plan to the permit application. The plans must show the following (if applicable):

- Location and width of tables, fences, exit doors, aisles.
- Seating arrangement-including any tables and chairs.
- Location and size of propane (LPG) containers and/or helium tanks.
- Distance from tents to property lines, fences, and structures.
- Location of fire extinguishers, egress lighting, and exit signs.
- Parking location/spaces.

Electrical

Safe use of electrical cords will keep your event's power need running without interruption. The following are specific requirements for the use of extension cords and power strips/taps:

- Residential type (small gauge cord) extension cords are not allowed to be used. Extension cords shall be a minimum 14-gauge, three conductor size with polarized or grounded plug and receptacle.
- Multi-plug adapters (i.e., cube adapters) are not allowed in commercial or temporary occupancies.
- Relocatable power taps may be used when plugged directly into outlet and equipped with a built-in circuit breaker.
- Extension cords used outdoors must be plugged into a GFCI protected outlet.
- Protect cord if it will be subject to foot traffic or unusual weight or tension. Cords may be protected by plastic (office style) cord covers or wood constructed (ramp style). Duct tape may be used to secure a cord if it is placed perpendicular across the cord not horizontally covering the cord.
- Decorative lighting may be used according to manufacturer's specifications.

Heaters and Open Flames

Heaters add ambience and comfort to an outdoor event but must be used with extra caution. Listed below are safe permitted uses. Approvable tent heating options are as follows

- *Ducted Tent Heaters.* Electric, propane or natural gas direct or indirect ducted tent heaters are allowed where installed in accordance with manufacturer instructions. Heaters must have UL or other NRTL listing.
- *Portable Electric Space Heaters.* Portable electric space heaters are allowed inside of a tent. Portable heaters shall have UL or other NRTL listing, over-temperature protection, ground heaters must have a tip-over switch, suspended heaters must be securely installed, and all heaters shall have clearances as required by manufacturer, but in no case less than 3 feet from any persons or combustible material including the tent or sidewall fabric. The power supply shall utilize a single listed outdoor extension cord rated for the amperage and provided with GFCI protection or be provided with temporary power supply approved by the building official.
- *Catalytic Heaters.* Propane or natural gas fueled catalytic heaters which heat by chemical reaction and have no combustion are allowed within a tent or canopy. Catalytic heaters must have UL or other NRTL listing, tip-over switch and maintain clearances as required by the manufacturer, but in no case less than 3 feet from any persons or combustible material including the tent or sidewall fabric. The propane or natural gas source cylinder is not allowed within the tent.

NOTE: Propane heaters will not be allowed inside any tent, membrane structure, or enclosed eating area.