



TOWNSHIP OF UPPER PROVIDENCE OFFICE OF THE FIRE MARSHAL

TENTS AND TEMPORARY STRUCTURE SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Tents and Temporary Structures shall be installed in accordance with the 2018 International Fire Code.

Tents and temporary structures that are over 400 square feet require a permit. Please submit a completed building/Zoning/Fire Protection permit application that includes the following information:

- **Construction Documents:** A detailed site and floor plan for tents or membrane structures with an occupant load of 50 or more shall be provided with each application for approval. The tent or membrane structure floor plan shall indicate details of the means of egress facilities, seating capacity, arrangement of the seating and location and type of heating and electrical equipment. The construction documents shall include an analysis of structural stability.
- **Clearance Requirements:**
 - Tents or membrane structures shall not be located within 20 feet (6096 mm) of lot lines, buildings, other tents or membrane structures, parked vehicles, or internal combustion engines. For the purpose of determining required distances, support ropes and guy wires shall be considered as part of the temporary membrane structure or tent.
Exception: Separation distance between membrane structures and tents not used for cooking is not required when the aggregate floor area does not exceed 15,000 square feet (1394 m²).
 - Tents larger than 15,000 square feet require an edge-to-edge clearance of fifty (50) feet, with the exception of an approved connecting corridor
 - A twelve (12) foot fire break is required alongside tent walls unless authorized by the Fire Marshal.
- **Anchorage required:** Tents or membrane structures and their appurtenances shall be adequately roped, braced, and anchored to withstand the elements of weather and prevent against collapsing. Documentation of structural stability shall be furnished to the Fire Marshal's Office on request.
- **Inspections:** The entire tent, air-supported, air-inflated, or tensioned membrane structure system shall be inspected at regular intervals, but not less than two times per permit use period, by the permittee, owner or agent to determine that the installation is maintained in accordance with this chapter.
Exception: Permit use periods of less than 30 days.
- **Flame propagation performance treatment:** Before a permit is granted, the owner or agent shall file with the Fire Marshal's Office a certificate executed by an approved

testing laboratory certifying that the tents and membrane structures and their appurtenances; sidewalls, drops and tarpaulins; floor coverings, bunting and combustible decorative materials and effects, including sawdust when used on floors or passageways, are composed of material meeting the flame propagation performance criteria of NFPA 701 or shall be treated with a flame retardant in an approved manner and meet the flame propagation performance criteria of NFPA 701, and that such flame propagation performance criteria are effective for the period specified by the permit.

- The fabric must be inspected for tears and flaws. Damage is to be repaired immediately.
- **Egress Safety:**
 - **Distribution of exits:** Exits shall be spaced at approximately equal intervals around the perimeter of the tent or membrane structure and shall be located such that all points are 100 feet (30 480 mm) or less from an exit.
 - **Number of exits.** Tents, or membrane structures or a usable portion thereof shall have at least one exit and not less than the number of exits required in the table below.

Occupant Load	MINIMUM NUMBER OF MEANS OF EGRESS	MINIMUM WIDTH OF EACH MEANS OF EGRESS (inches)	MINIMUM WIDTH OF EACH MEANS OF EGRESS (inches)
		Tent	Membrane Structure
10 to 199	2	72	36
200 to 499	3	72	72
500 to 999	4	96	72
1,000 to 1,999	5	120	96
2,000 to 2,999	6	120	96
Over 3,000a	7	120	96

- The distance from **any** occupied area inside to an approved exit must be 100 feet or less.
- **Fire exit aisles must be at least 44 inches in width and be kept clear at all times. Clear exit paths must be available for all persons.** An aisle **must also** be minimum of one (1) foot per 50 persons. Thus a 400-person aisle must be eight (8) feet wide.
- **Exit Door or required Opening Widths** shall remain open unless covered by an approved free-sliding flame-resistant curtain of contrasting color. It must open fully and safely. Any door installed in an egress shall swing outward with an opening force not to exceed 15 pounds (66 N).

- **Egress Lighting:**
 - **EXIT signs** are required for 50 occupants and above unless the tent is open on at least 50% of the perimeter. The signs must be internally illuminated with battery back-up or be externally lighted by two separate circuits (300 or less occupants) or by an approved emergency circuit if above 300 occupants.
 - A separate circuit is required for normal tent egress lighting.
 - Tents used after daylight must be equipped with approved emergency lighting. The Fire Marshal may require emergency lighting in any case.
- **Heating and Cooking Operations:**
 - Heating and cooking equipment shall be located not less than 10' from exits or combustible material.
 - **Heaters shall be 10' away from tent structure and located outside of the tent. Heat shall be ducted into the tent to meet clearance requirements.**
 - **LP-gas Cylinder Clearance:**
 - 500 gal. or less require a **ten (10) foot** clearance.
 - Larger than 500 gal. require a **twenty-five (25) foot** clearance.
 - **Pressure relief devices** shall be pointed away from the tent or membrane structure
 - **Cooking tents.** Tents with sidewalls or drops where cooking is performed shall be separated from other tents of membrane structures by not less than 20 feet.
 - **Electrical heating and cooking equipment.** Electrical cooking and heating equipment shall comply with NFPA 70 (NEC).
- **Storage, Inside Clearances, Special Restrictions:**
 - **Combustible materials:** Hay, straw, shavings, or similar combustible materials shall not be located within any tent or membrane structure containing an assembly occupancy, except the materials necessary for the daily feeding and care of animals. Sawdust and shavings utilized for a public performance or exhibit shall not be prohibited provided the sawdust and shavings are kept damp. Combustible materials shall not be permitted under seats or at any time.
 - **Lighting** shall be electric and not located within six (6) feet of any combustible construction, unless protected with approved insulation or guards.
 - A clearance of three (3) feet is required **between tent and contents** unless otherwise approved.
 - **No fireworks** use within 100 feet.
 - **Open or exposed flame:** Open flame or other devices emitting flame, fire or heat or any flammable or combustible liquids, gas, charcoal or other cooking device or any other unapproved devices shall not be permitted inside or located within 20 feet (6096 mm) of the tent or membrane structures
 - **Smoking:** Smoking shall not be permitted in tents or membrane structures. Approved "No Smoking" signs shall be conspicuously posted in accordance with

Section 310.

- **Combustible waste material.** The floor surface inside tents or membrane structures and the grounds outside and within a 30-foot (9144 mm) perimeter shall be kept free of combustible waste and other combustible materials that could create a fire hazard. Such waste shall be stored in *approved* containers and removed from the premises at least once a day during the period the structure is occupied by the public.
- **Combustible Vegetation:** Combustible Vegetation that could create a fire hazard shall be removed from the area occupied by a tent or membrane structure, and from areas within 30 feet of such structures.
- **Portable fire extinguishers:** Fire extinguishers shall be provided in accordance with the 2018 IFC and NFPA 10, 2016 Edition. Extinguishers shall be appropriate for hazard being protected.
- **Separation of Generators:** Generators and other internal combustion power sources shall be separated from tents or membrane structures by not less than 20 feet and shall be isolated from contact with the public by fencing, enclosure, or other approved means.
- **Protection and security.** Portable LP-gas containers, piping, valves, and fittings which are located outside and are being used to fuel equipment inside a tent or membrane structure shall be adequately protected to prevent tampering, damage by vehicles or other hazards and shall be located in an approved location. Portable LP-gas containers shall be securely fastened in place to prevent unauthorized movement.
- **Crowd managers.** There shall be trained crowd managers or crowd manager/supervisors at a ratio of one crowd manager/supervisor for every 250 occupants, as approved.

Two sets of plans shall be submitted to the Fire Marshal's Office