



Department of Permitting Services

Division of Building Construction

255 Rockville Pike, 2nd Floor, Rockville, Maryland 20850

CODE INTERPRETATION/POLICY

Policy Name:

Permits for Tents

Code/Year	Section of Code	Title of Code Section/Subsection
International Building Code 2009 (IBC)	3103.1	Temporary Structures (General)
International Fire Code 2009 (IFC)	2403.2	Temporary Tents, Canopies and Membrane Structures
Fire Code 2009 (NFPA 1)	Table 1.12.20(a)	Permit Requirements
Fire Code 2009 (NFPA 1)	25.2.2	Flame Propagation Performance

Statement/Background of Issue

Tents and other membrane structures require a building permit in accordance with IBC Section 3103.1, IFC Section 2403.2 and Table 1.12.7(a) of NFPA 1. Since many of these structures are erected for special events of short duration, it is impractical to review and approve permits according to regular procedures. Therefore, the purpose of this policy is to identify permitting requirements for temporary (less than 180 days) structures, and to ensure that these structures are inspected and certified for use prior to occupancy. Section 3103.1 of the 2009 IBC references permitting and code requirements in the International Fire Code for all Tents and other membrane structures erected for a period of less than 180 days

Division Interpretation/Policy

For tents and membrane structures having an area of 200 ft² or less, neither building permits nor use and occupancy certificates are required.

***Note- Tents containing grandstand seating, raised floors, other structural components subject to human occupancy loads, commercial cooking equipment, heating equipment, or open flame require a building permit, regardless of the duration. All tents, regardless if a permit or U & O is required or not, shall comply with all applicable sections of NFPA 101 and NFPA 1**

- A. Use and occupancy certificates only are required for tents and membrane structures which are erected and occupied for one or more days, but not for more than seven consecutive days, which exceed 200 ft². The use and occupancy certificate will be conditioned according to the requirements of the International Building Code, Uniform Fire Code, the National Electrical Code, and other applicable Montgomery County codes and regulations.
- B. Building permits and use and occupancy certificates are required for tents and membrane structures which are erected and occupied for more than seven consecutive days, which exceed 200 ft² and.
- C. An electrical permit is required for any electrical installations.
- D. Applications for use and occupancy certificates must be accompanied by the following:
 - 1. Site plan drawn to scale; and
 - 2. Seating plan, if applicable, drawn to scale; and
 - 3. Affidavit of fabric flame resistance including:
 - a. Name and address of the owners of the tent or membrane structure;
 - b. Date the fabric was last treated with flame resistant solution;
 - c. Trade name or chemical used in treatment;
 - d. Name of person or firm treating the material; and
 - e. One of the following shall serve as the evidence that the tent fabric materials have the required

flame propagation properties:

1. The AHJ shall require a certificate or other evidence of acceptance by an organization acceptable to the AHJ; or
2. The AHJ shall require a report of tests made by other inspection authorities or organizations acceptable to the AHJ.

E. Building permit applications must be accompanied by the following:

1. Five copies of the site plan drawn to scale;
2. Two copies of the construction plans and details (architect/engineer seals and signatures are optional);
3. Two copies of the seating and exit plan, if applicable, drawn to scale;
4. Code analysis (use group and type of construction only); and
5. Affidavit of fabric flame resistance including:
 - a. Name and address of the owners of the tent or membrane structure;
 - b. Date the fabric was last treated with flame resistant solution;
 - c. Trade name or chemical used in treatment;
 - d. Name of person or firm treating the material; and
 - e. One of the following shall serve as the evidence that the tent fabric materials have the required flame propagation properties:
 1. The AHJ shall require a certificate or other evidence of acceptance by an organization acceptable to the AHJ; or
 2. The AHJ shall require a report of tests made by other inspection authorities or organizations acceptable to the AHJ.

TENTS & MEMBRANE STRUCTURES
(LESS THAN 180 DAYS)

LENGTH OF OCCUPANCY (DAYS)

	1 to 7	8 or more
Building Permit Required	No	Yes
Use and Occupancy Certificate Required	Yes	Yes

Interpretation/Policy No.

BCP11-07

Replaces P99-2

Date

March 1, 2011

Division Chief

Hadi Mansouri

