



Stafford County Fire and Rescue Department Office of the Fire Marshal

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Guidelines and Specifications For:

Tents

Applicable Codes and Standards:

VSFPC - Virginia Statewide Fire Prevention Code (2018)

Permit Requirements	Code Section
Any temporary tent or air-supported structure over 900 square feet in size requires a Fire Prevention Code Permit and inspection from the Fire Marshal's Office. Permanent tents or tents attached to permanent structures require approval from the Building Official.	VSFPC 107.2 VSFPC 3103.8.4
A detailed site and floor plan shall be provided with ALL permit applications. The plan shall be signed and dated by the permit applicant or responsible party and designate the physical address and date/duration of the associated event. The site plan: shall illustrate the location of the tent on the property and proximity to property lines, buildings, tents or other structures. It shall also show any parking areas and emergency access roads/paths provided. The floor plan: shall illustrate the seating arrangement or other operations under the tent and indicate if/where side walls are to be used. It shall also note the maximum occupant load and locations of aisles, exits, fire extinguishers, heating devices or other hazards.	VSFPC 3103.6
Where an indoor or outdoor gathering of persons has an adverse impact on public safety, the fire official shall have the authority to order the development of or prescribe a formal public safety plan which may include a designated fire watch or crowd managers.	VSFPC 403.11

General Requirements	Code Section
Tents shall be located not less than 20 feet from property lines, buildings, parked vehicles, cooking or other large tents, etc.	VSFPC 3103.8.2
A fire break passage way or fire road not less than 12 feet wide (free from guy ropes or other obstructions) shall be maintained between tents.	VSFPC 3103.8.6
Tents shall be adequately roped, braced and anchored to withstand the elements of weather and prevent collapsing.	VSFPC 3103.9
Tent fabric flame resistance certification documentation must be on site at all times.	VSFPC 3104.4
"No smoking" signs shall be provided throughout the tent and fire extinguishers mounted at each exit.	VSFPC 3104.6 and 3104.12
Where the occupant load is greater than 49 persons, illuminated exit signs and, in some cases, emergency (battery powered) lighting is required to be provided.	VSFPC 3103.12.6
Combustible vegetation, waste or other hazardous materials shall be located within or around tents. Vehicles and generators shall be located at least 20 feet from tents unless otherwise approved.	VSFPC 3104.22 3104.19
Heating and cooking equipment shall not be located within 10 feet of exits or combustible materials. Designated cooking tents or outdoor cooking areas shall be at least 20 feet from other tents or other structures. Cooking with grease-laden vapors within a tent shall have an approved means of ventilation to the exterior.	VSFPC 3104.15.2 3104.15.3 3104.15.6
Warming of food with small, approved, solid flammables, butane or similar devices which do not pose an ignition hazard are not considered cooking and may be use when approved by the Fire Official.	VSFPC 3104.15.4
Any type of fireworks shall not be used within 100 feet of a tent and any hazardous operations/demonstrations in or around tents shall be approved by the Fire Official.	VSFPC 3014.20