

## Temporary Tents and Membrane Structures 2018 North Carolina Fire Code Requirements

For events on State owned properties involving the erection of tents, canopies, membrane structures, the *2018 NC Fire Code* requires the tents, canopies, membrane structures to be evaluated for fire and life safety and a permit issued. State Construction Office (SCO) is responsible for evaluation per *2018 NC Fire Code*, SCO shall issue a permit in the form of a signed approval letter/ e-mail. SCO's approval acknowledges Code compliance and does not constitute an agreement for use of the space. That is obtained from the Department of Administration – Facility Management Division or the owning Agency/University. Tents, canopies, membrane structures permit on Community College campuses shall be obtained from local authority.

The following requirements apply for the erection of Tents, Canopies, Membrane structures:

1. Structure with sides over 800 square feet. *Section 3103.2.*
2. Structure without sides over 1800 square feet, 75% to 100% open sides. *Section 3103.2.2*
3. Structures are to be certified as composed of flame resistance material or treated with flame retardant to meet flame propagation performance criteria of NFPA 701
4. Provide detailed Site and Floor Plan with permit application:
  - a. Site Plan:  
Show 20 feet wide fire lane and 20 feet from other structures, lot lines, building lines, parked vehicles, internal combustion engines etc.
  - b. Floor Plan:  
Show layout of tables, chairs, furniture, platform and equipment. 44 inches wide clear aisle shall be maintained for egress. Show location of portable fire extinguisher(s), No Smoking sign, Occupant Load sign and exits (if structure have sides).
5. Smoking is not allowed within these structures.
6. Air supported structure with more than 200 occupants shall include auxiliary emergency power that will switch on automatically and capable of running for 4 hours.
7. Calculation of occupant load shall utilize Load Table 1004.1.2 NCBC 2018: Standing only: 5 sf per person. Seating only: 7 sf per person. Seating at Table: 15 sf per person
8. Open flame or devices emitting flame, fire, heat with combustible liquids, gas, charcoal as fuel or any unapproved equipment are not allowed inside or within 20 feet of such structures while occupied by the general public.
9. Restroom accommodations provided for public use shall include accessibility access and fixtures.
10. Refer to Chapter 31, NC Fire Code 2018 for additional code requirements.

The Owner must direct the event organizer to submit plans to SCO at the address below. This must be done **30 days prior to event** is scheduled to allow ample time for review and for the vendor to respond to any resulting questions and/or a possible site visit by staff to better assess the plan. If the Owner or vendor does not submit their plans to SCO soon enough to allow a reasonable time for evaluation and approval, the event cannot be approved and must be either reschedule or cancelled.

If a situation arises where it is necessary for SCO to ask the local jurisdiction to review the event plans and/or inspect the structure on our behalf (e.g., due to a time or location issue), the cost for such local jurisdiction inspection permit will be borne by the Owner or event organizer.

For questions, contact SCO at 984-236-5463 to speak with Vibha Goel. Tent permit application and supporting documents can be email to [sco.permits@doa.nc.gov](mailto:sco.permits@doa.nc.gov)