



City of El Cajon
Building and Fire Safety Division
200 Civic Center Way
El Cajon, CA 92020
619-441-1726

Tents & Other Membrane Structures

Please read and be aware of the following requirements

DEFINITIONS:

- **Air-Inflated Structure** ~ a building where the shape is maintained by air pressure of cells or tubes and the occupants do not occupy the pressurized support areas
- **Air-Supported Structure** ~ a structure where the structure is attained by air pressure and the occupants are within the elevated pressure area
- **Membrane Structure** ~ an air-inflated, air-supported, cable or frame-covered structure
- **Tent** ~ a structure, enclosure, or shelter, with or without side walls or drops, constructed of fabric or pliable material supported by any manner except by air or the contents it protects.

California Code of Regulations, Title 19, Division 1, Section 310 (a-c)

- a) Tent. A shelter, structure or enclosure made of fabric or similar material
- b) Large Tent. A tent designed for use by 10 or more people
- c) Small Tent. A tent designed for use by less than 10 people

- A permit is required for Tents and other membrane structures over 400 square feet in area.

Exceptions:

1. Tents used exclusively for recreational camping purpose
2. Tents open on all side which complies with all of the following:
 - a) Individual tents with maximum size of 700 ft²
 - b) Aggregate area of multiple tents placed side by side without a fire break clearance of 12-feet not exceeding 700 ft²
 - c) A minimum clearance of 12-feet to all structures and other tents

PERMIT REQUIREMENTS

- A completed permit application. Include the dates of the event on the application or plan
- Submit 2 SETS of detailed site and floor plans for tents and other membrane structures with an occupant load of 50 or more.
- The floor plans shall include the following:
 - Show the egress path
 - Location of bldgs, property lines & possible hazards
 - Show seating capacity and arrangement
 - Location of generators, heating and electrical equipment
 - Location of exit signs, no smoking signs and extinguishers
- Include the State Fire Marshal flame certification with the permit application

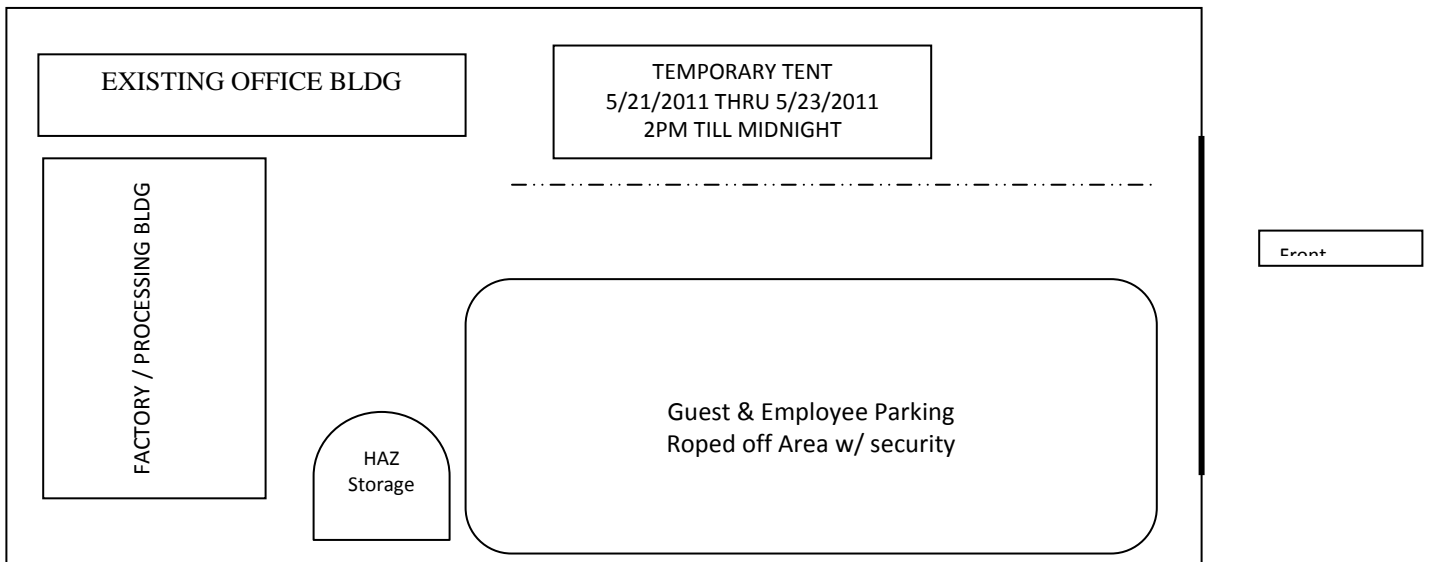
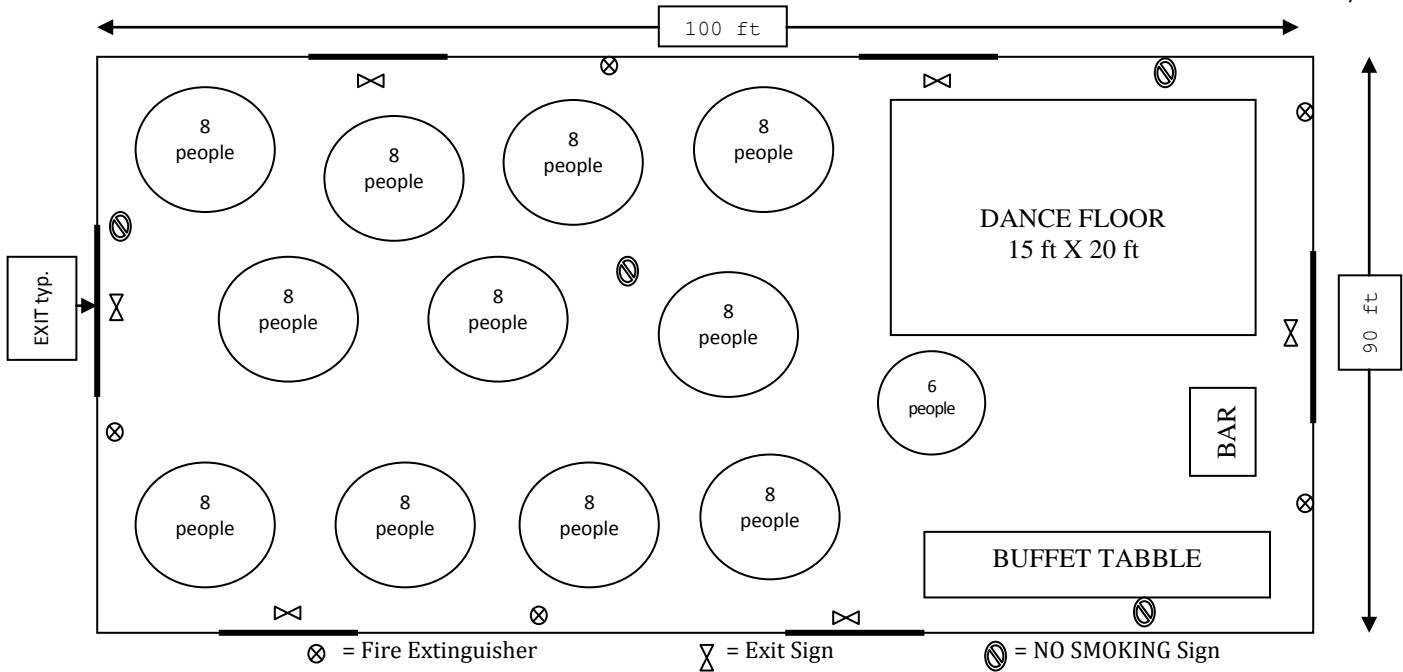
The following items will help you better prepare your plans and site for the final inspection:

1. Temporary tents and other membrane structures are not erected for longer than 180 days within a 12-month period on a single premises (CFC 2403.5)
2. Fire lanes are clear & identified with signs (CFC 503.3). Fire lanes need to be 20-ft wide by 13½-ft high (CFC 503.2.1)
3. Tent/Membrane structures are a minimum of 20 ft away from property lines, buildings, parked cars, other tent structures or internal combustion engines (CFC 2403.8.2). Support ropes & guy wires are considered part of structure or tent. *Exceptions:*
 - I. Separation Distance not required if aggregate floor area less than 15,000 ft²
 - II. Separation from buildings not required if:
 - a) Aggregate floor area less than 10,000 ft²
 - b) Required means of egress for both bldg & Structure is maintained
 - c) Fire Lanes are provided
4. All EXIT points in the structure need to be less than 100 feet from an exit (CFC 2403.12.1).
5. Aisles need to be at least 44 inches wide, getting progressively wider leading to exit (CFC 2403.12.5 #2).
6. EXITS are clearly marked and installed at required exit doorways. Additional EXIT markings may be required at the discretion of the Fire Inspector to indicate path of travel (CFC 2403.12.6)
7. EXIT signs must be internally illuminated (UL 924 listed) or be externally illuminated by 2 power sources with one being a 90-minute emergency back-up source (battery or generator) (CFC 2403.12.6.1).
8. A minimum of one 2-A: 10-B: C fire extinguisher is required inside every tent between 500 to 1,000 ft² (CFC 2404.12). Additional extinguishers required:
 - a) At generator / transformer locations
 - b) At kitchen, dining areas or where flammable liquids or gases are stored, handled or used
 - c) At the discretion of the Fire Inspector.
9. Combustible materials (including hay, straw or shavings) shall not be located within the tent structure and within 50 feet of the structure EXCEPT upon the approval of the fire inspector (CFC 2404.5).

10. There shall be a minimum clearance of 3 ft between the contents of the tent and the fabric envelope (CFC 2404.11)
11. Generators must be a minimum of 20 ft. from the structure, isolated from the public and grounded.
12. No Smoking signs need to be conspicuously posted (CFC 2404.6).
13. Tents & Membrane structure material and their accessories, including sidewalls, drops & covers, floor coverings, bunting & combustible decorative materials & Effects (including sawdust) must be flame resistant with a permanently fixed State Fire Marshal label and certificate (CFC 2404.2).
 - a) All tent fabrics and all interior decorative fabrics or materials shall be flame resistant (CCR, Title 19, 315a)
 - b) Certificates shall be retained on the premises and available upon request (CFC 2404.4)
14. No open flame or flame-producing device within 20 feet of the tent unless approved by the Fire Marshall (CFC 2404.7)
15. Outdoor cooking that produces sparks or grease-laden vapors NOT performed within 20 ft of tent or membrane structure (CFC 2404.15.6)
16. Cooking or heating equipment NOT within 10 ft of exits or combustible materials (CFC 2404.15.3)
17. Compressed gases (like helium) need to be protected from falling.
18. Uniformed and qualified standby personnel may be required at the discretion of the Fire Inspector (CFC 2404.20).

If you have any questions concerning the installation of a tent or temporary membrane structure please call the Building and Fire Safety Division.

Revised 6/2011 – KN



- - - = Fire Lane / No Parking