



Office: (540) 942-6730
Fax: (540) 942-6731

300 W. Broad Street
Waynesboro, VA 22980

Tents and Air Supported Membranes

Review the following requirements for application process, plan review and permit.

Submit completed application with all required attachments to the City of Waynesboro Fire Department no later than ten (10) working days prior to event date.

If a permit is issued based upon this application, it shall be valid only at the location listed on the application and for the specific dates(s) and time(s) for which it is issued.

Applications and attachments may be submitted via e-mail, fax, USPS or hand delivered.

Waynesboro Fire Department
300 West Broad Street
Waynesboro, VA 22980

Deputy Fire Marshal George Fitzgerald
540-942-6730 540-942-6731 fax
FitzgeraldGG@ci.waynesboro.va.us

Virginia Statewide Fire Prevention Code Chapter 31 Tents and Other Membrane Structures

General. All temporary tents and membrane structures shall comply with this section.

Approval required. Tents and membrane structures having an area greater than or equal to 900 square feet (84 m²) shall not be erected, operated or maintained for any purpose without first obtaining a permit and approval from the fire code official.

Exceptions:

1. Tents used exclusively for recreational camping purposes.
2. Tents open on all sides which comply with all of the following:
 - a. Individual tents having a maximum size of 700 square feet (65 m²).
 - b. The aggregate area of multiple tents separated by less than 12 feet (3658mm) shall not exceed 900 square feet unless a permit is obtained and approved from the fire code official.
 - c. A minimum clearance of 12 feet (3658 mm) to all structures and other tents.

Place of assembly. For the purposes of this chapter, a place of assembly shall include a circus, carnival, tent show, theater, skating rink, dance hall or other place of assembly in or under which persons gather for any purpose.

Permits. Permits shall be required as set forth in Section 107.2 of the VSFPC.

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Construction documents. A detailed site and floor plan for tents and membrane structures with an occupant load of 50 or more shall be provided with each application for approval. The tent and 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.

Fire Break. An unobstructed fire break passageway or fire road not less than 12 feet (3658 mm) wide and free from guy ropes or other obstructions shall be maintained on all sides of all tents and membrane structures unless otherwise approved by the fire code official.

Label. Tents and membrane structures shall have a permanently affixed label bearing the identification of size and fabric material type.

Certification. An affidavit or affirmation shall be submitted to the fire code official and a copy retained on the premises on which the tent or membrane structure is located. The affidavit shall attest to the following information relative to the flame propagation performance criteria of the fabric:

1. Names and address of the owners of the tent or air supported structure.
2. Date the fabric was last treated with flame-retardant solution.
3. Trade name or type of chemical used in treatment.
4. Name of person or firm treating the material.
5. Name of testing agency and test standard by which the fabric was tested.

Smoking. Smoking shall not be permitted in tents and membrane structures. Approved "No Smoking" signs shall be conspicuously posted in accordance with Section 310 of the VSFPC.

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 structure while open to the public unless approved by the fire code official.

Anchorage required. Tents and 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 code official on request.

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Water barrels can **only** be used in place of stakes for anchoring tents when **all** of the following criteria are met:

1. Enough water barrels are used to overcome the 55-gallon smooth plastic barrel friction coefficient of 0.4. Meaning, a 55-gallon plastic barrel full of water does not have a holding weight of 480 pounds; it only has a holding weight of approximately 192 pounds, 40% (one gallon of water = 8.34 pounds and using the recommended holding power for a tent being 1.5-2 times the forces imposed on the tent). The number of water barrels needed would be increased by 155%
2. In addition to Criteria 1, you will need to add a third more barrels to overcome the one third loss of holding power that comes with anchoring the guy lines to the top of the barrels (approximately 3' in height from ground level) versus anchoring at ground level with stakes.

Example: 20' x 20' Tent requires approximately 37 full 55-gallon barrels of water, averaging 4-5 barrels at each leg

Portable fire extinguishers. Portable fire extinguishers shall be provided as required by Section 906 of the VSFPC.

Location. Cooking and heating equipment shall not be located within 10 feet (3048 mm) of exits or combustible materials.

Operations. Operations such as warming of foods, cooking demonstrations and similar operations that use solid flammables, butane or other similar devices which do not pose an ignition hazard, shall be approved.

Location of containers. LP-gas containers shall be located outside. Safety release valves shall be pointed away from the tent or and membrane structures.

Containers 500 gallons or less. Portable LP-gas containers with a capacity of 500 gallons (1893L) or less shall have a minimum separation between the container and structure not less than 10 feet (3048 mm).

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.

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Separation of generators. Generators and other internal combustion power sources shall be separated from tents and membrane structures by a minimum of 20 feet (6096 mm) and shall be isolated from contact with the public by fencing, enclosure or other approved means.

CHECKLIST:

1. _____ A COMPLETE application packet must be submitted ten (10) business days prior to event. After receipt of complete packet, an inspection date/time may then be scheduled. (Any section that is "not applicable" should be indicated as such.)
2. _____ Set-up of the tent/s, including tables, chairs, etc., will need to be COMPLETE before an inspection can take place, and a representative of the applicant needs to be present for the inspection.
3. _____ Copy of the following documents are attached:
 - a. _____ Site Plan
 - b. _____ Flame Resistant Certificate(s)
 - c. _____ Floor Plan Layout
4. _____ All conditions and requirements are to be in accordance with Virginia Statewide Fire Prevention Code pertaining to the above application.
5. _____ Final approval is based upon plan review and inspection upon setup the day of the event.

Site and location plans shall include the following:

1. All plans shall be done to scale.
2. Location name and address of event where tent or membrane structure is to be erected.
3. Event date(s).
4. Size of tent (length by width in feet). If multiple tents or membrane structures are used, all tents and membrane structures must be shown including fire break distance of twelve (12) feet on all sides.

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