



City of Mansfield

Tim Theaker, Mayor

Bureau of Building Inspections, Licenses and Permits

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Tent Approval Requirements

Section 3102 Ohio Building Code provides general guidelines for membrane structures (tents). Chapter 24 of International Fire Code and section 1301:7-7-24 Ohio Fire Code also provides some guidelines for the construction of tents and membrane structures.

Code Requirements and References:

Tents and membrane structures, for temporary or permanent use, having an area larger than 200 square feet and canopies (open without sidewalls or drops on 75% or more of the perimeter) larger than 400 square feet will require approvals from the building official.

Exceptions are given for the following conditions (i.e., an application, approval, and inspection not required):

1. Tents used exclusively for recreational camping purposes,
2. Canopies open on all sides and meeting all the following criteria:
 - a. Individual canopy having a maximum 700 square feet in size
 - b. The aggregate area of multiple canopies not exceeding 700 square feet in area and placed side by side with a minimum clearance of 12 feet.
 - c. A minimum clearance of 12 feet to all structures and other tents.

Height and area limitations of tent structures:

The height and area limitations for tent structures shall be evaluated in accordance with Table 503 and section 506 OBC based on the use group and construction type classifications as specified in chapter 3 and section 3102.3 OBC.

1. For tents with non-combustible (steel, etc.) frames or poles (2B Construction type) used for:
 - a. Assembly purposes (eating, congregating, display, or viewing under A-2/A-3/A-4 use groups): a single tent or a group of tents with aggregate areas of not more than 9,500 square feet can be applied under one application for approval.
 - b. Mercantile uses (retail sales): a single tent or group of tents with aggregate area of not more than 12,500 sf can be applied for under one application for approval.
2. For tents with combustible (wood, etc.) frames or poles (5B Construction type) used for:
 - a. Assembly purposes (eating, congregating, display, or viewing under A-2/A-3/A-4 use groups): a single tent or a group of tents with aggregate areas of not more than 6,000 square feet can be applied under one application for approval.
 - b. Mercantile uses (retail sales): a single tent or group of tents with aggregate area of not more than 9,000 sf can be applied for under one application for approval.

A single tent or a group of tents under one permit shall be separated from another tent or group of tents, or other existing structures by a minimum distance of 20 feet. Otherwise, the adjacent sides of the tent(s) shall have a minimum one-hour fire resistance rating tested and approved by acceptable standards in OBC. Please see section 3102 OBC for other requirements of various types of tent structure.

Approval Procedures:

Complete and submit an application for plan approval, submit applicable fees, and submit a minimum of three (3) sets of construction drawings showing the location and construction details of the tent structure(s) as follows:

1. Site plan showing all property lines, all existing structures, utilities, locations of toilet rooms (permanent and temporary), locations of accessible parking and the route from the parking to the tent(s), proposed tent location and dimensions of such items.
2. Floorplan showing the use of the tent and layout of areas, seating, aisles, egress/evacuation routes, etc.
3. A letter signed by the Property Owner indicating:
 - a. direct contact information for the Property Owner.
 - b. approval of the tent to be placed on the property.
 - c. acknowledgement of the method(s) in which the tent will be anchored (i.e. stakes driven through parking lot, etc.).
 - d. acknowledgement of any evacuation plans or procedures required during occupancy of the tent.
 - e. the length of time the tent will be installed and the approximate date when the tent will be removed
4. A statement from Tent Manufacturer showing design wind loads and required anchoring methods.
 - a. Provide the minimum number of anchoring points and details and/or photos of the anchoring methods to be used.
 - b. For tents not meeting the required Wind Speed of 90 mph for a 3-second gust in accordance with OBC 1609, provide an emergency evacuation and take down plan for the tent. Include:
 - i. What will prompt an evacuation
 - ii. How will the occupants be notified
 - iii. How will the tent be taken down and secured
5. Submit certificate(s) for the membrane materials meeting the provisions of section 703.4 OBC or fire propagation performance criteria in NFPA 701 and the manufacturer's test protocol.
6. Electrical Information
 - a. Electrical service source, ampacity, voltage, and phase configuration.
 - b. Methods of grounding of tent structure, disconnecting means, and electrical circuits.
 - c. Lighting and wiring methods
 - i. For tents that are not provided with lighting, include the hours of operation of the tent. Occupancy of the tent may be limited to daylight hours only if lighting is not provided.
7. Accessibility
 - a. Parking Spaces
 - b. Route from parking or site arrival points to the entrance(s) to the tent.
 - c. Amenities- toilets, sales counters, parking signage, entrance signage, toilet room signage
8. Cooking equipment
 - a. If cooking is to be performed under the tent where grease vapors will be produced, then a kitchen exhaust hood and fire suppression system shall be provided for tents intended for interior lighting and cooking activities. A separate approval is required for the exhaust hood and fire suppression system.

A walk-in plan review appointment can be scheduled for tent approvals.

Fees shall be charged by the base fee for the scope of work (building, electric) for new construction regardless of the size of the tent.

The applicant shall be responsible to call for the required inspections when the tent is erected and prior to occupancy of the tent.

A Certificate of Occupancy for Temporary Structures will be issued in accordance with OBC 111.1.6 after plan approval has been given and required inspections have been performed.

COMPLETE YOUR OUTDOOR EVENT PLANNING WITH AN EMERGENCY PLAN

Tents can provide protection from moderate weather and comfort for your guests but are not designed for use as a shelter in severe weather. In addition, tents may need to be evacuated for other types of emergency situations.

_____ will not be on site during your event. **It is your responsibility to ensure your guest's safety.** We recommend that you develop an emergency evacuation plan so you are prepared to act decisively in the event of an emergency during your event. The following are suggested guidelines for developing an emergency evacuation plan.

1) PRIOR TO THE EVENT

- a) **Designate a person or persons to be in charge of the emergency plan and educate them regarding what is expected of them.**
 - i) for a wedding: a family member or wedding planner.
 - ii) for a corporate event: a safety director, risk manager, an event planner.
 - iii) for a public gathering: a show manager, representative of the venue, or the fire chief.
- b) **Determine what conditions will trigger an evacuation** (see #3 below for examples) and make that information available to the designated person(s) who will make the evacuation decision and assist in an evacuation.
- c) **Select an emergency shelter(s) and a safe evacuation route(s) to the shelter(s) in the event of an evacuation.** A nearby building, vehicles, an open area away from the tent or other locations recommended by the *National Weather Service* or *Emergency Alert System* can serve as emergency shelters.
- d) **Make sure you have telephone and other methods of communication in the event of injuries.** Pre-program emergency numbers in your mobile phone so you can act quickly to call police and/or emergency response personnel if necessary. Depending on the size of the event, backup communications may be needed in situations where there is no electrical power, cell phone signals are interrupted, etc.

2) DAY OF THE EVENT - YOUR DESIGNATED PERSON(S) WILL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR:

- a) **Monitoring** a weather source (like *National Weather Service*) two or more hours before the event begins, checking specifically for **SEVERE WEATHER ALERTS.**
- b) **Deciding** whether or not to proceed with the event under the tent based on that information.
- c) **Checking** the tent structure for any changes since installation – stakes pulling out of the ground, loose poles, ropes or straps etc. If you notice anything unusual call _____.

3) DURING THE EVENT: Monitor the weather and implement your evacuation plan in any the following conditions.

- a) If a **Severe Weather Alert** is posted by the *National Weather Service*.
- b) If **lightning** strikes within 1 mile (count of less than 5 seconds between lighting and thunder).
- c) **Dark clouds** are approaching.
- d) **Damaging winds** causing large trees to sway or leaves to be ripped off trees.
- e) **Fire or explosion.**
- f) **Heavy rain** begins falling so hard that it runs off the tent walls in sheets.
- g) **Water running through the tent or surrounding area.**

**COMPLETE YOUR OUTDOOR EVENT PLANNING
WITH AN EMERGENCY PLAN (CONTINUED)**

- h) Hail or sleet falls.
- i) Gas leak.
- j) Snow or ice accumulation.
- k) Any of the tent anchoring devices fail or the tent begins to move.

4) IF A DECISION IS MADE TO EVACUATE YOU MUST:

- a) Announce immediately that there is weather or other emergency and that it is unsafe to stay under the tent. Tell your guests that they must leave the tent without delay and take shelter in the location(s) you've chosen as emergency shelters.
- b) Assist your guests along the evacuation route to the emergency shelter.

5) AFTER AN EVACUATION:

Even if the tent appears intact, it may not be safe to return. If stakes have pulled out of the ground or there are loose poles, ropes or straps, contact _____ so we can re-secure the tent before resuming your event.

6) PRE & POST EVENT SECURITY:

Remember that you are also responsible for making sure the tent is not used as a shelter from inclement weather during the periods after the tent has been set up and your event happens and after your event until _____ arrives to take down the tent. This is especially important if the tent is set up in a public area. Use caution tape to rope off the area under the tent or place DO NOT ENTER signs around the tent. If there are sides on the tent close all four sides to deter people from entering.

I have been informed of my responsibility to have an emergency evacuation plan and need to be prepared to carry out this plan in case of a weather-related or other emergency.

Name on order _____ Reservation # _____
(upper right hand corner of Canton Chair Rental contract)

Signature/ _____
Electronic signature _____ Date _____
(Electronic signature – please type your first and last name)

I understand that checking this box constitutes a legal signature confirming that I acknowledge and agree to my responsibilities listed above.

Print Name _____