



**Department of Permitting Services**  
 Division of Building Construction  
 255 Rockville Pike, 2nd Floor, Rockville, Maryland 20850

**CODE INTERPRETATION/POLICY**

**Policy Name:** Permit for Tents (Temporary Structures)

<b>Code/Year</b>	<b>Section of Code</b>	<b>Title of Code Section/Subsection</b>
International Building Code (IBC) 2015	3103.1	Temporary Structures (General)
Fire Code (NFPA 1) 2015	3103.1.2	Permit Requirements
	Table 1.12.8(a) 25.1.2	Temporary Tents and Membrane Structures

**Statement/Background of Issue**

Tents and other membrane structures require a building permit in accordance with IBC Section 3103.1.2, NFPA 1 Section 25.1 and Table 1.12.8(a) of NFPA 1. Since many of these structures are erected for special events of short duration, it is impractical to review and approve permits according to regular procedures. Therefore, the purpose of this policy is to identify permitting requirements for temporary (less than 180 days) structures, and to ensure that these structures are inspected and certified for use prior to occupancy. Section 3103.1 of the 2015 IBC references permitting and code requirements in the Fire Code for all Tents and other membrane structures erected for a period of less than 180 days

**Division(s) Interpretation/Policy**

For tents and membrane structures having an area of 200 ft<sup>2</sup> or less and not occupied for 3 consecutive days, neither building permits nor use and occupancy certificates are required.

A. Use and Occupancy certificates only are required for tents and membrane structures which are erected and occupied for one or more days, but not for more than three consecutive days, which exceed 200 ft<sup>2</sup> in area. The use and occupancy certificate will be conditioned according to the requirements of the International Building Code, Fire Code, the National Electrical Code, Accessibility code and other applicable Montgomery County codes and regulations.

B. Building permits and use and occupancy certificates are required for tents and membrane structures which are erected and occupied for more than three consecutive days, which exceed 200 ft<sup>2</sup>.

C. An electrical permit is required for any electrical installations, including portable generators with wattage 6500 watts (6.5KW) or more, and temporary electrical wiring. All electrical installations must comply with the requirements of the electrical code.

D. Applications for use and occupancy certificates must be accompanied by the following:

1. Site plan drawn to scale; and

2. Seating plan, if applicable, drawn to scale; and
3. Affidavit of fabric flame resistance including:
  - a. Name and address of the owners of the tent or membrane structure;
  - b. Date the fabric was last treated with flame resistant solution;
  - c. Trade name or chemical used in treatment;
  - d. Name of Person or firm treating the material; and
  - e. One of the following shall serve as the evidence that the tent fabric materials have the required flame propagation properties:
    1. The AHJ shall require a certificate or other evidence of acceptance by an organization acceptable to the AHJ; or
    2. The AHJ shall require a report of tests made by other inspection authorities or organizations acceptable to the AHJ.

E. Building permit applications must be accompanied by the following:

1. Five copies of the site plan drawn to scale;
2. Two copies of the construction plans and details (architect/engineer seals & signatures is required);
3. Two copies of the seating and exit plan, if applicable, drawn to scale;
4. Code analysis (use group and type of construction only); and
5. Affidavit of fabric flame resistance including:
  - a. Name and address of the owners of the tent or membrane structure;
  - b. Date the fabric was last treated with flame resistant solution;
  - c. Trade name or chemical used in treatment;
  - d. Name of person or firm treating the material; and
  - e. One of the following shall serve as the evidence that the tent fabric materials have the required flame propagation properties:
    - 1 The AHJ shall require a certificate or other evidence of acceptance by an organization acceptable to the AHJ; or
    - 2 The AHJ shall require a report of tests made by other inspection authorities or organizations acceptable to the AHJ.

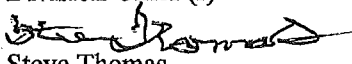
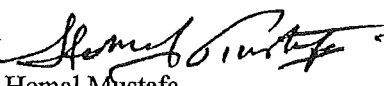
TENTS & MEMBRANE STRUCTURES (LESS THAN 180 DAYS)

LENGTH OF OCCUPANCY (DAYS)

	<u>1 to 3 days</u>	<u>3 or more days</u>
Building Permit Required	No	Yes
Use and Occupancy Certificate Required	Yes	Yes
Special Event Permit Required	Yes*	Yes

\* Fire Marshal determines if not required.

Note- Enclosed or unenclosed tents and membrane structures containing grandstand seating, raised floor, platform or stage located more than 30" measured vertically to the floor or grade, other structural components subject to human occupancy loads, commercial cooking equipment, heating equipment, or open flame require a Building Permit and Use and Occupancy certificate, regardless of the duration. All tents, regardless if a permit or U & O is required or not, shall comply with all applicable sections of NFPA 101 and NFPA 1.

<b>Interpretation/Policy No.</b>  Building/FP&CC DPS 03-2018	<b>Date: 5-18-2018</b>	<b>Division Chief (s)</b>  Steve Thomas  Hemal Mustafa
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